

Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held in Court Room at Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road, BN21 4UG on 5 February 2020 at 6.00 pm

Present:

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)

Councillors Alan Shuttleworth (Deputy-Chair), Margaret Bannister, Jonathan Dow, Stephen Holt, Colin Swansborough and Rebecca Whippy

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Homira Javadi (Chief Finance Officer), Ian Fitzpatrick (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning), Tim Whelan (Director of Service Delivery), Becky Cooke (Assistant Director for Human Resources and Transformation), Peter Finnis (Assistant Director for Corporate Governance), Gary Hall (Head of Homes First), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance), Ola Owolabi (Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Corporate Finance)), Simon Russell (Committee and Civic Services Manager) and Seanne Sweeney (Strategy and Commissioning Lead for Community and Partnerships)

40 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2020 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

41 Apologies for absence

None were reported.

42 Declaration of members' interests

Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in agenda item 13 (Corporate Plan 2020-24) as an employee of Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce and his connection to the Business Investment District. He remained in the room and took part in the discussion.

43 Portfolio progress and performance report 2019/20- Quarter 3

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning regarding the Council's progress and performance in respect of key projects and targets for the third quarter of the year (October to December 2019). The performance out-turn for the second quarter of the year was also contained in the report.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

To note the progress and performance from Quarters 2 and 3.

Reason for decisions:

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the Council's progress and performance.

44 General fund budget 2020/21 and capital programme

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer regarding the updated General Fund budget and medium term financial strategy, together with the updated capital programme position.

Thanks were conveyed to the Cabinet members, Heads of Service and the finance team for their work as part of the process in producing the budget.

The Cabinet commented on the pressures facing local authorities across the country to provide affordable housing and significant reduction in central government funding.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework)

(1) To agree the General Fund budget for 2019/20 (Revised) and 2020/21 (Original) at Appendix 1 to the report, including growth and savings proposals for 2020/21 as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

(2) To agree an increase in the Council Tax for Eastbourne Borough Council of 2% resulting in a Band D charge for general expenses of £251.71 for 2020/21.

(3) To agree the revised General Fund capital programme 2020/21 revised as set out at Appendix 3 to the report.

Reason for decisions:

The Cabinet has to recommend to Full Council the setting of a revenue budget and associated council tax for the forthcoming financial year by law.

45 Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators 2020/21, Capital Strategy & Investment Strategy

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Office regarding the Council's annual treasury management strategy, capital strategy and investment strategy together with the treasury and prudential indicators for the next financial year.

Ola Owolabi, Deputy Chief Finance Officer presented the report and was welcomed to his first meeting of the Cabinet.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

- (1) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21 as set out at Appendix A to the report;
- (2) To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2020/21 as set out at paragraph 8 of the report;
- (3) To approve the Prudential and Treasury Indicators 2020/21 to 2022/23, as set out at paragraph 6 of the report;
- (4) To approve the Capital Strategy set out at Appendix E to the report.

Reason for decisions:

It is a requirement of the budget setting process for the Council to review and approve the Prudential and Treasury indicators, Treasury Strategy, Capital Strategy and Investment Strategy.

46 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30-Year Business Plan Update

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer and Director of Regeneration and Planning, presenting a new Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan covering the years from 2019/20 to 2048/49, describing the assumptions that underpin it and highlighting the changes in approach, policy and aspirations when compared to previous plans.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (1) To adopt Eastbourne's HRA 30-Year Business Plan as a basis for operating the future HRA Business.
- (2) To agree the assumptions underpinning it.
- (3) To note that the plan has been used as the starting point for setting the 2020/21 HRA Revenue Budget and Rents and the HRA Capital Programme 2019-23, which is considered as the next report on the listed agenda.

Reason for decisions:

The Council now has an opportunity to increase its HRA stock holding and improve its offer to tenants and leaseholders (both current and future) as a result of the HRA debt cap being lifted and HRA rents increasing each year (with effect from 1st April 2020).

47 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Revenue Budget and Rent Setting 2020/21 and HRA Capital Programme 2019-23

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Office, regarding the detailed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget proposals, rent levels, service charges and heating costs for 2020/21, and the HRA Capital Programme 2019/23.

Cabinet unanimously agreed to an additional resolution and this was detailed at point 11 below.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

- (1) To agree the HRA budget for 2020/21 and revised 2019/20 budget as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.
- (2) To agree that social and affordable rents (including Shared Ownership) are increased by 2.7% in line with government policy.
- (3) To agree that service charges for general needs properties are increased by 2.7% (CPI +1%).
- (4) To agree that the service charge for the Older Persons' Sheltered Accommodations increases by an average of 0.5%.
- (5) To agree that the Support charges for Sheltered Housing Residents are set at £7.70 per unit, per week, an increase of 20p.
- (6) To agree that heating costs are increased by 2.7% (CPI+1%) in line with estimated costs set at a level designed to recover the actual cost.
- (7) To agree that water charges are increased by 2.7% (CPI+1%) designed to recover the estimated cost of metered consumption.
- (8) To agree that Garage rents are increased by 3.4% (September RPI+1).
- (9) To give delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio holders for Financial Services and Direct Assistance Services and the Chief Finance Officer to finalise Eastbourne Homes' Management Fee and Delivery Plan.
- (10) To agree the HRA Capital Programme as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (11) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and Planning, following consultation with the Cabinet member for Direct Assistance Services to acquire properties as per the approved capital programme under terms that best protect the council's interest.

Reason for decisions:

The Cabinet has to recommend to Full Council the setting of the HRA revenue and capital budget and the level of social and affordable housing rents for the forthcoming year.

48 Council tax and business rate base 2020/21

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer to approve the Council tax base and net yield from Business Rate Income for 2020/21, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended 2018/19.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To agree the provisional Council Tax Base of 34,848.6 for 2020/21.

(2) To agree that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, determine the final amounts for the Council Tax Base for 2020/21.

(3) To agreed that the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, determine net yield from Business Rate income for 2020/21.

Reason for decisions:

Cabinet is required to approve the Tax Base which will be used for the purposes of calculating the 2020/21 Council Tax.

49 Corporate Plan 2020-24

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning regarding the draft Eastbourne Borough Council Corporate Plan 2020-24.

Visiting member and Chair of Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tony Freebody addressed the Cabinet on this item.

The draft Plan was currently out for consultation with key partners in advance of its submission to Full Council in February 2020.

Subject to a reference to high speed broadband, the Cabinet unanimously agreed the report recommendations.

Thanks were conveyed to Jo Harper, Head of Business Planning and Performance and Millie McDevitt, Performance and Programme Lead for their working in producing the Plan.

Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in this item. He remained in the room and took part in the discussion.

Resolved (Non-key decision)

That the draft Corporate Plan for 2020-2024 be considered.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

That the new Corporate Plan for 2020-2024 be adopted.

Reason for decision:

To enable the Council to set out its strategic vision, objectives and priority projects for the next four years and provide a firm basis for forward planning and performance management.

50 Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning, providing an update on Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030.

Visiting member and Chair of Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tony Freebody addressed the Cabinet on this item.

The Cabinet praised the action already taken by the Council and conveyed their thanks to Jo Harper, Head of Business Planning and Performance and Kate Richardson, Strategy and Corporate Projects Officer (Quality Environment).

Following the successful “Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030” launch event in January, the next focus would be to prepare a detailed and costed strategy and action plan in order for the council to achieve their carbon reduction ambitions.

Resolved (Key decision)

(1) To delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Lead Member for Climate Change, to:

(i) investigate the viability of moving the Council on to a green electricity tariff; and

(ii), if appropriate, to sign the Council up to this tariff.

(2) To approve the short term actions outlined within section 4 of the report.

Reason for decisions:

To progress towards the aims of achieving Eastbourne Carbon Neutral 2030 as resolved in July 2019.

51 Downland Whole Estate Plan

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning seeking approval for the Downland Whole Estate Plan, subject to further consultation during February and April 2020.

The Cabinet made reference to a letter that had been received from the Chair of Eastbourne Downland Group, commending the Council for the way it had progressed the project forward. It was clarified that any substantive changes to the Plan going forward would require a report to Cabinet at a future meeting.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To agree the draft Downland Whole Estate Plan, subject to the outcome of public consultation;

(2) To delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change to approve the final Downland Whole Estate Plan, following completion of consultation on the draft Plan.

Reason for decisions:

The Downland Whole Estate Plan requires formal adoption by the Council prior to endorsement by the South Downs National Park Authority.

52 Exclusion of the public**Resolved:**

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as otherwise there was a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The relevant paragraph of schedule 12A and a description of the exempt information was shown below. (The requisite notice having been given under regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.)

53 Community grants programme - small grants

The Cabinet considered the exempt report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning seeking agreement for the allocation of the Small Grants budget in 2020/21, the priorities for 2021/22, an amendment to the Community and

Housing Grants policy and the allocation of income received from the Eastbourne Lottery from 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Resolved (Key decision):

- (1) To approve the allocation of the 2020/ 21 Small Grants budget as set out in paragraph 2.5 of the exempt report.
- (2) To approve the priorities for 2021/ 22 Small Grants as set out in paragraph 2.9 of the exempt report.
- (3) To approve the amendment to the Community and Housing Grants policy as set out in paragraphs 2.11-2.12 of the exempt report.
- (4) To approve the model for allocating funds generated from the Eastbourne Lottery as set out in paragraphs 2.14- 2.15 of the exempt report.

Reason for decisions:

To enable the council to make awards to local voluntary and community groups, and use available resources in a targeted and effective way.

Notes: (1) The report remained exempt. (2) Exempt information reason 3 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting ended at 7.07 pm

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)