

## **Cabinet**

**Minutes of meeting held in Court Room at Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road, BN21 4UG on 14 March 2023 at 6.00 pm.**

### **Present:**

Councillor David Tutt (Chair).

Councillors Stephen Holt (Deputy-Chair), Margaret Bannister, Peter Diplock and Colin Swansborough.

### **Officers in attendance:**

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Homira Javadi (Director of Finance and Performance (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), Oliver Jones (Lead, Housing, Homelessness & Community Safety), Ola Owolabi (Deputy Chief Finance Officer - Corporate Finance), Leigh Palmer (Head of Planning First), Mark Walker (Head of Financial Planning), Simon Russell (Head of Democratic Services) and Kate Slattery (Solicitor).

### **Also in attendance:**

Councillor Penny di Cara (Opposition Deputy Leader), Councillor Kshama Shore OBE (Shadow Cabinet Member) and Councillor Robert Smart (Opposition Leader).

#### **46 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2023 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

#### **47 Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was reported from Councillor Shuttleworth.

#### **48 Declaration of members' interests**

Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership – Annual Report (Eastbourne)) as his employer contributed to the partnership work with the Kingdom Way Trust, outlined in the report. He remained in the room whilst the item was considered.

#### **49 Finance update - performance quarter 3 - 2022-2023**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and Performance, updating them on the Council's financial performance for the third quarter of

the year 2022-23.

Visiting member, Councillor Shore, addressed the Cabinet on this item. Following points raised, it was clarified that the figures detailed in the report were reflective of the Council's financial position as of 31 December 2022. An updated financial position at year end would be presented as part of the outturn report in July 2023.

Following a question around the extensive list of savings arising from the Recovery and Stabilisation programme, the Chief Executive advised that there would be an opportunity to forensically analyse the list at year end to potentially identify any additional savings and scope for any increase to income targets. This would then be reported back to the next Recovery and Stabilisation Member Board, as part of the next administration.

**Resolved (Non-key decision):**

To note the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Collection Fund financial performance for the quarter, as set out in the report.

**Reason for decision:**

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

**50 Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership – Annual Report (Eastbourne)**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery, enabling them to consider the 2022/23 performance of the Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership.

Key highlights, activities and achievements across the Partnership's 6 priorities were detailed in the report. Thanks were conveyed to officers for the achievements set out in the report.

The Lead for Housing, Homelessness & Community Safety advised that discussions were ongoing with Sussex Police to address the issues of anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre, factoring in the recent and upcoming strike days. Sussex Police had already issued several dispersal orders and had put additional resources in place for days when strike action was occurring. It was also being explored whether to utilise part of the £10,000, awarded from the recent round of *Safer Streets funding* as part of this ongoing work, exploring diversional activities etc, in consultation with external partners.

Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in this item and remained in the room whilst the item was considered.

**Resolved (Non-key decision):**

To note the achievements and activities of the Eastbourne & Lewes Community Safety Partnership in 2022/23.

**Reason for decision:**

For Cabinet to consider progress on delivery of the current Community Safety Plan.

**51 Eastbourne Local Plan**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, that provided a summary of the plan-making process, identified the main issues arising from the recent public consultation and outlined the next steps in the preparation of the Eastbourne Local Plan.

Visiting member, Councillor Smart, addressed the Cabinet on this item.

It was acknowledged that the Council's Local Plan would deliver several priorities, not just the delivery of new homes. This included the transitioning to delivery of new carbon neutral & environmentally friendly homes, help to maintain the heritage environment, encourage cycling, and use of public transport, enhance the biodiversity of public and open spaces and efficient processing of planning applications.

Following the Full Council motion on 22 February 2023, where it was resolved that the Fisherman's Green site be withdrawn from the draft Local Plan, the Head of Planning advised that significant work was ongoing to gather sufficient evidence for the removal of other sensitive sites. Full Council would have the opportunity to decide on the inclusion of any sensitive sites in the 'Proposed Submission' local plan at Regulation 19 stage, once all the evidence and information had been gathered and presented. The current Local Development Scheme anticipated that this would be presented by the end of 2023/early 2024.

The Head of Planning advised that there were strong reasons why the local housing need target of 738 homes per year could not be met. Based on an initial assessment and factoring in the removal of the Fisherman's Green site, the Growth Strategy indicated a potential capacity to accommodate 316 homes per year (less than half the housing need), with 80% of these homes being built on previously developed 'brownfield' sites. This number was not the proposed housing target, but an indication of what a target could be, to enable the local community to be part of the discussion, regarding how many homes should be delivered in the town.

**Resolved (Key decision):**

(1) To note the summary of the plan-making process that is outlined in the report

- (2) To note the risks in delaying the preparation of a 'sound' local plan
- (3) To note the initial summary of the main issues arising from the Growth Strategy consultation
- (4) To note the Full Council agreement that the Fisherman's Green site should be withdrawn from the Growth Strategy as the site is no longer available.
- (5) To agree that any further public consultation into the Eastbourne Local Plan is paused until all evidence on potential allocation sites is sought, available and assessed.
- (6) To agree to receive the Regulation 19 'Proposed Submission' draft local plan late 2023, early 2024.

**Reason for decisions:**

To receive and complete the required evidence base and to enable work to continue in the background on the preparation of the Eastbourne Local Plan.

**52 Message of thanks**

As this was the last Cabinet meeting of the current administration, the Chair expressed his thanks to officers and members cross-party for their contribution and work throughout a challenging four years for the authority.

The meeting ended at 6.40 pm

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)