

CABINET

4 JULY 2016

Present: Councillors Chowney (Chair), Forward, Cartwright, Poole, Atkins, Davies, Fitzgerald and Lee

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2016

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2016 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record of the meeting

RESOLVED the Chair called over the items on the agenda, under rule 13.3 the recommendations set out in minute numbers 16 and 18 were agreed without being called for discussion.

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

14. HOUSING STRATEGY

The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, presented a report which advised of the results of a 12 week public consultation on the draft housing strategy 2016/19 and recommended the adoption of the strategy.

Although local authorities were no longer required to produce a housing strategy by law, it was good practice for the council to set out how it intended to meet local housing need. The report acknowledged significant changes to economic conditions and central government policy since the previous housing strategy was adopted. The refreshed strategy built on the achievements delivered under the previous strategy and highlighted the three priority areas of; meeting housing needs and aspirations, improving access and opportunities and supporting economic regeneration. The draft strategy had been revised further during the public consultation to reflect changes brought about by the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The strategy was supported by an action plan, which would be subject to ongoing review.

The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, agreed to include a link to the council's homelessness strategy within the document.

Councillor Forward proposed approval of the recommendations to the report, which was seconded by Councillor Fitzgerald.

Councillor Lee proposed an amendment to the draft strategy relating to priority 1, specifically the council's approach to tackling rough sleeping.

Councillor Lee was keen that the council moved to a housing first model and seek to adopt best practice in addressing the issue with other partners locally.

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It was agreed that the Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, in consultation with Councillors Forward and Lee would agree any final wording to be incorporated into the strategy.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that:

- 1) **The Housing Strategy 2016-19 is adopted by Cabinet, and;**
- 2) **Delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, in consultation with Councillors Forward and Lee to agree the final wording of the amendment proposed by Councillor Lee**

The reason for this decision was:

Whilst it is no longer a legislative requirement to produce a housing strategy, it is important for the council to outline plans for addressing local housing needs to provide a framework for partners and interested parties operating in the local housing market.

The previous strategy covered the period from 2010 and is now in need of renewal.

The draft Hastings and St Leonards Housing Strategy 2016/19 has been informed by a range of partnership work and has undergone a 12 week public consultation.

The new strategy takes account of new government policy and guidance and reflects a range of changes that have taken place over the life of the previous strategy.

MATTERS FOR CABINET DECISION

15. CUSTOMER FIRST COMMUNICATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Corporate Customer Services Manager presented a report to consider the adoption of a customer first strategy.

The purpose of the strategy was to set out to the public and staff how the council intended to deal with enquiries, it is based on four key principles of meeting customer needs, being accessible, improving customer experience and providing value. The strategy would help to ensure a consistent approach across the organisation and ensure all council services remained focused on meeting customer needs.

The strategy reflected the council's broader organisational transformation programme, which included implementing new systems and working practices to make an increased number of council services available online. It was noted that this would provide customers with increased flexibility and choice about how to engage with the council.

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The strategy was supported by an action plan, which would be reviewed regularly. These activities would also be informed by available data, customer satisfaction surveys, mystery shopping and service reviews.

Councillor Cartwright proposed approval of the recommendations to the report which was seconded by Councillor Poole.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the customer first strategy be adopted

The reason for this decision was:

The customer first strategy is all about putting our customers at the heart of what we do. We are committed to providing excellent services which our customers can access when and how they need to. The strategy states how we will improve access to services and the customer experience. It is our public commitment to customer first.

The strategy provides a framework for the management of customer contact, information management and access to our services, bringing together a number of projects all working towards the same objectives.

The action plan provides the details of how we will achieve and implement the strategy, which will be reviewed and updated regularly.

16. CORPORATE PLAN RETROSPECTIVE REPORT ON PERFORMANCE DURING 2015-16 AND PROPOSED PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TARGETS FOR 2016-17

The Director of Corporate Services and Governance submitted a report which advised Cabinet of the year-end performance for 2015/16 and proposed performance indicator targets for 2016/17

At its meeting on 24 February 2016, Full Council adopted the corporate plan for the period 2016/17 to 2018/19, Cabinet was also given delegated authority to agree year-end performance for 2015/16 and set performance indicator targets for the year ahead. The corporate plan set out the organisation's strategic direction and identified key activities that would be undertaken throughout 2016/17 to achieve the council's corporate priorities.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had received an update on year-end performance at their meeting on 14 June 2016, at the meeting the Director of Corporate Services and Governance and Director of Operational Services briefed the committee on performance across the year and identified key areas of work which had been undertaken in addition to the corporate plan targets. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had supported the proposed performance indicator targets for 2016/17, including the introduction of an additional measure to monitor the effectiveness of the council's website and the take up of online services. The committee's comments on specific targets were included in the report.

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The report highlighted that the council would continue to review its performance management arrangements in line with the broader organisational transformation programme.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be considered;**
- 2. The year-end performance for 2015/16 and proposed performance indicator targets for 2016/17 be approved for publication (the Council meeting on 24 February 2016 delegated authority to Cabinet to approve these), and;**
- 3. Cabinet support intentions to continue to review corporate performance planning arrangements in line with the council's transformation intentions**

The reason for this decision was:

The council's corporate plan is one of the key documents by which the council is held to account for its performance, therefore honest and transparent reporting back on how well we performed against targets in the previous year is essential.

Local people and staff also need to be aware of the targets and standards we have set ourselves, and where any of these targets have changed from previous years we need to be clear about the reasons why.

17. INCOME GENERATION

The Director of Operational Services presented a report which updated Cabinet on work to identify potential additional income streams for the council, and proposed how these could be explored further.

The council continued to face significant financial pressure and it was therefore important that it continued to maximise its existing income and identify new sources of revenue to offset the savings it would need to achieve over the coming years. A number of local authorities had already begun exploring different models to support income generation, including establishing an independent company to deliver these activities.

The report identified a number of priority areas for consideration, including housing, property investment, beach huts, chalets and seafront assets, income for park and energy generation. However, it was noted that additional opportunities may be identified over time. Cabinet acknowledged that a number of the priority areas identified, including interventions in housing and sustainable energy, may also assist the council in meeting its corporate objectives in the long term.

The report recommended that funding be allocated from the invest to save budget to fund staff support for further studies of the priority areas for consideration identified in the report. Expertise will also need to be shared within the organisation to develop

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capacity to explore other income generation opportunities in the future. An Income Generation Board would be formed to oversee these activities and the Local Government Association (LGA) will be invited to review the programme.

Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the recommendations to the Director of Operational Services' report, which was seconded by Councillor Fitzgerald.

RESOLVED (unanimously) that:

- 1. The programme for income generation is agreed together with the establishment of an Income Generation Board;**
- 2. The future invest to save budget is committed to this work and proposals for funding studies and the required staff support should be taken from this source;**
- 3. The Local Government Association (LGA) is invited to review this programme and recommend any changes to it, and the support arrangements they consider appropriate that work to deliver the additional income generation activity on the seafront is agreed, and;**
- 4. A further update on the work of Income Generation Board is considered in 6 months' time**

The reason for this decision was:

Income generation work is now sufficiently developed to require decision making structures and staff support commensurate with its significance in terms of financial and staff resources.

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL DECISION

18. UPDATES TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

The Chief Legal Officer submitted a report on amendments to the council's constitution in respect of a revised planning protocol.

The constitution formed the basis of the council's corporate governance. It was necessary to review and refresh the constitution, including the planning protocol, on an ongoing basis.

The planning protocol had been revised to reflect changes in practice and procedure as well as learning for a number of high profile planning applications which had recently come before Planning Committee. The revised protocol had been subject to consultation amongst officers and the proposed amendments were agreed by the Working Arrangements Group.

RESOLVED to recommend that Council approves the revised planning protocol as part of the constitution of the council

The reason for this decision was:

To agree the revised planning protocol giving clear guidance to Councillors about how they should carry out their duties in relation to planning and development proposals.

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(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 6.53 pm)