

Agenda Item No:

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny (Services)

Date of Meeting: 17 November 2011

Report Title: Monitoring the Implementation of Cabinet Decisions

Report By: Katrina Silverson
Scrutiny and Electoral Services Officer

Purpose of Report

To provide members with detailed information on Cabinet decisions taken since the last O&S meeting that fall within the remit of this Committee

Recommendation(s)

- 1. That members note the report and consider any items that they would like to bring before the Committee**

Reasons for Recommendations

To inform members of decisions taken by Cabinet since their last meeting on 1 September 2011.

Background

Cabinet Meeting held on 5 September 2011

27. PLAY SPACE STRATEGY – AUDIT OF EQUIPPED PLAYGROUNDS

Decision:

that the new Hastings & St Leonards Play Strategy be approved.

**Responsible Officer: Richard Homewood, Corporate Director,
Environmental Services**

Lead Member: Councillor Trevor Webb

The reason for this decision was:

AmicusHorizon and HBC are the principle providers of equipped play spaces in Hastings. Both AmicusHorizon and HBC recognised the need for a joint approach and to work with other local partners and communities.

The joint AmicusHorizon and HBC strategy set out an agreed framework for determining a sensible distribution of play provision that could be sustained within reducing budgets. Our aim remained that of ensuring access to good quality equipped play spaces for a maximum number of children from across the Borough within a reasonably short distance of their homes.

28. CONTACT CENTRE UPDATE

Decision:

that further progress on establishing the contact centre is noted, and that the principle of alterations to the ground floor of the Town Hall is approved subject to listed building consent being granted, and the funding being found. The details of the alterations to be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the opposition or their nominees.

**Responsible Officer: Kevin Boorman, Head of Communications and
Marketing**

Lead Member: Councillor Jay Kramer

The reason for this decision was:

To ensure that the work necessary to accommodate all 'front of house' HBC services in the Town Hall was carried out in good time, to allow the majority of services to be transferred into the contact centre by the end of March 2012.

30. HASTINGS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT UPDATE

Decision:

that the changes made to the revised Statement of Community Involvement be endorsed and it be published on the Council's website.

Responsible Officer: Tim Cookson, Borough Planning Officer

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Chowney

The reason for this decision was:

To ensure that we had an up-to-date and relevant Statement of Community Involvement, in line with the guidance set out in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning.

31. RESPONSE TO ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL'S LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PROPOSED SUBMISSION CORE STRATEGY

Decision:

that the suggested representations on the Rother District Council Proposed Submission Core Strategy be endorsed set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

Responsible Officer: Jane Jackson, Planning Policy Manager

Lead Member: Councillor Jeremy Birch

The reason for this decision was:

To ensure the Hastings and Rother Core Strategies were adequately linked and shared strategic direction on cross boundary issues.

Cabinet Meeting held on 3 October 2011

40. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

Decision:

that the representations set out in Appendix A to the report of the Borough Planning Officer be agreed and submitted to the Government.

Responsible Officer: Tim Cookson, Borough Planning Officer

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Chowney

The reason for this decision was:

To agree representations to be submitted to the Government.

42. HOUSING RENEWAL ACTION PLAN

Decision:

- (1) the Housing Renewal Action Plan is endorsed;
- (2) the Council's financial assistance and enforcement policies are updated to reflect changes set out in the report; and
- (3) the implementation of the Council's enforcement policies in the renewal area and any potential financial contribution from Local Space be further explored.

Responsible Officer: Andrew Palmer, Head of Housing Services

Lead Member: Councillor Trevor Webb

The reason for this decision was:

The Council's existing approach to housing renewal had been subject to adjustment since the Government announced that no new funding would be made available to Council's for private renewal purposes over the period of the 2011-2014 spending programme. It was necessary therefore for the Council to modify its existing financial assistance and enforcement policies to take account of recent changes.

43. LOCAL SPACE UPDATE

Decision:

- (1) progress with the project to date is noted; and
- (2) in principle the establishment of a special purpose vehicle be considered and the Council participate in discussions about its financing, subject to a sound business case being made and due diligence undertaken.

Responsible Officer: Simon Hubbard, Corporate Regeneration, Homes and Communities

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Chowney

The reasons for this decision were:

Establishing a special purpose vehicle for delivery of this project might be financially advantageous for partner organisations, mitigate risk and improve the chances of the successful delivery of a major regeneration intervention in St Leonards.

44. EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY: COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS FOR FOURTEEN LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES

Decision:

that the detailed recommendations set out in the report included in Part 2 of the agenda and the making of Compulsory Purchase Orders in respect of each of the fourteen long term empty properties be approved.

Responsible Officer: Andrew Palmer, Head of Housing Services

Lead Member: Councillor Trevor Webb

The reasons for this decision were:

The Council's Empty Homes Strategy set out a number of enforcement powers available to the Council, including the compulsory purchase of suitable properties. In addition to taking action to bring individual empty properties back into use, it was hoped that taking this action would demonstrate to the owners of empty homes that it was unacceptable to leave property empty for an unreasonable time. This action would also demonstrate to owners of these empty homes that the Council will take the necessary action to bring these back into use again for the benefit of the community.

45. COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER MALVERN WAY PUBLIC HOUSE

Decision:

that the process for Compulsory Purchase in respect of the Malvern Way Public House site be commenced.

Responsible Officer: Andrew Palmer, Head of Housing Services

Lead Member: Councillor Trevor Webb

The reasons for this decision were:

The Malvern Way Public House was a source of ongoing nuisance to local residents and was visually unattractive. Amicus Horizon planned to comprehensively redevelop the adjacent shop site and would like to acquire the public house site for landscaping and amenity purposes. This would improve the scheme greatly and bring about an overall improvement to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area. Demolishing the existing structure and landscaping the site would in itself constitute a significant improvement to the area.

49 (E) EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY: COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS FOR FOURTEEN LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES

Decision:

- (1) Compulsory Purchase Orders be made for 14 long term empty homes, as listed in recommendation 1 to the report, under Compulsory Purchase powers set out in Section 226(1)(a) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 2004);
- (2) the Chief Executive or his delegated nominee be authorised to execute all relevant documentation required for the Compulsory Purchase of the fourteen properties set out in Recommendation 1 of this report; and
- (3) the Chief Executive or his delegated nominee be authorised to execute and complete the onward sale of the properties set out in Recommendation 1 of this report, once they have been acquired.

Responsible Officer: Andrew Palmer, Head of Housing Services

Lead Member: Councillor Trevor Webb

The reasons for this decision were:

The matrix in Appendix 1 to the report set out why Compulsory Purchase powers should be used to help bring these properties back into use.

These were long standing empty homes and without Compulsory Purchase action, Officers were of the view that these properties would continue to remain empty. Officers had spent time attempting to engage with the owners and assist them in bringing their properties back into use. These actions had not achieved the desired result and it was not believed that the properties would be returned to use without CPO action.

It was hoped that taking this action would demonstrate to the owners of empty homes that it was unacceptable to leave property empty for an unreasonable time. This action would also demonstrate to owners of these empty homes that the Council will take the necessary action to bring these back into use again for the benefit of the community. In deciding to take Compulsory Purchase action, regard had been given to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and, in the case of dwellings, Article 8 of the Convention. The Council had to weigh the human rights interest of public need as against private property rights and to consider that sufficient justification existed for the making of these Compulsory Purchase orders. By authorising these orders the Council was therefore of the opinion that a compelling case existed in the public interest.

The Borough Solicitor had advised that it was in the public interest that the detail of the properties and ownership should not be disclosed since the properties were the subject of report by reason of their being empty properties and disclosure of the detail would expose the properties to possible criminal activity as well as squatting and anti-social behaviour. Further, the Council's negotiating position might be prejudiced by disclosure of details of valuation.

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Cabinet Meeting held on 31 October 2011

54. APPRENTICESHIPS INITIATIVE 2011

Decision:

- (1) the pilot apprenticeship programme and the Council's role in supporting increased apprenticeship numbers across the Borough be endorsed; and
- (2) the protocol on vacant/new positions within HBC requiring them to be automatically considered as apprenticeships be noted.

Responsible Officer: Monica Adams-Acton, Head of Regeneration and Community Services

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Chowney

The reason for this decision was:

The Apprenticeship Initiative supported HBC Corporate Priority 1: To continue to do everything we can to promote economic growth, employment and economic inclusion in partnership with others. The objective was to increase skills levels in the workforce, benefiting employers and employees alike.

There was a critical need to develop new employment opportunities in Hastings, and to improve skills, especially for younger and lower-skilled residents. The current economic situation reinforced the need to address this issue.

It responded to the Government's aim of 1 in 5 young people being in apprenticeships.

HBC Apprenticeships also supported Corporate Priority no. 4 'Making sure we're efficient, customer focussed and a good organisation to work for'.

55. COMMUNITY COHESION FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN 2011 - 13

Decision:

- (1) the revised Community Cohesion Framework and Action Plan 2011 – 13 be adopted; and
- (2) the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) be recommended to also adopt the plans and that the Community Cohesion Steering Group continues to monitor progress and facilitate the involvement of partners in supporting community cohesion.

Responsible Officer: Monica Adams-Acton, Head of Regeneration and Community Services

Lead Member: Councillor Jay Kramer

The reason for this decision was:

The existing plan was out of date. The Borough Council remained committed to addressing cohesion issues and this was reflected by the inclusion of Priority 4 in the Corporate Plan - promoting equality and an inclusive, supportive community and narrowing the gap. The action plan set out how the Council would continue to address issues of cohesion in partnership with other organisations.

56. ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION - HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Decision:

that the Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights otherwise granted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2010 to change the use of a Class C3 dwelling house to a Class C4 house in multiple occupation with 6 or fewer occupants be confirmed, the Direction is to cover the whole Borough and to come into effect on the 2nd July 2012.

Responsible Officer: Tim Cookson, Borough Planning Officer

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Chowney

The reason for this decision was:

Approving the recommendation would require planning permission to be sought for changes to smaller Houses in Multiple Occupation in the future, and this was recommended in order to be able to control their concentration within the Borough. The confirmation of an Article 4 Direction was a matter for Cabinet to decide.

57. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN CONSULTATION

Decision:

that the proposed response to the consultation set out in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed subject to the amendments set out above.

Responsible Officer: Tim Cookson, Borough Planning Officer

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Chowney

The reason for this decision was:

For Cabinet to agree a response to the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan consultation by the County Council.

58. JOINT WASTE COLLECTION CONTRACT PROCUREMENT – PROGRESS REPORT

Decision:

- (1) the progress with the procurement process to date be noted; and
- (2) at the appropriate time a further members briefing be held.

Responsible Officer: Tim Cookson, Borough Planning Officer

Lead Member: Councillor Peter Chowney

The reason for this decision was:

To ensure Cabinet Members were up to date with the progress being made with the procurement process and aware of the forthcoming key stages in the process.

Wards Affected

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

Area(s) Affected

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St. Leonards, South St. Leonards

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	Yes
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	Yes
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	Yes
Organisational Consequences	Yes

Supporting Documents

Cabinet Minutes: 5 September, 3 and 31 October 2011

Officer to Contact

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