

CABINET

6 SEPTEMBER 2021

Present: Councillors Forward (Chair), Batsford, Chowney, Evans, Rogers and Webb.

359. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Barnett.

360. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received.

361. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED (unanimously) that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2021 be approved as a true record.

The Managing Director gave an update on the Covid-19 situation in Hastings. Cases per 100,000 have increased since the cabinet meeting in July, fluctuating at around 400 cases per 100,000. Whilst there is comfort in the large number of people who have now been vaccinated, there remains a significant number of people who have not been vaccinated, particularly in younger age groups.

The Council continues to deliver a significant response to the pandemic, with the environmental health and covid support team now identifying and supporting individuals who need to self-isolate. The Council is also supporting workplaces and other locations where outbreaks have occurred in order to improve working practices and reduce further incidents.

Officers and councillors continue to play an important role in highlighting the availability of pop-up vaccine clinics in Hastings. The roll out of the third phase of the vaccine programme will begin shortly, with the community contact centre being utilised as a vaccine hub for the winter period. This is in addition to the Kings Church site and the regular pop-up vaccine clinics

The local testing site has now moved from the Ore College campus with a new location to be confirmed soon. However, there is a walk-in and drive-through mobile testing unit operating in Falaise Road car park.

RESOLVED: the Chair called over the items on the agenda, under rule 13.3 of the Council's Constitution the recommendations set out in minute number 362 are agreed without being called for discussion.

362. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT - 2020-21

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report to provide an opportunity for the cabinet to scrutinise the Treasury Management activities and performance of the last financial year.

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Under rule 13.3 the recommendations of the report were agreed without being called for discussion.

RESOLVED:

To consider the report – no recommendations are being made to amend the current Treasury Management Strategy as a result of this review.

Reasons:

To ensure that members are fully aware of the activities undertaken in the last financial year, that Codes of Practice have been complied with and that the Council's strategy has been effective in 2020-21.

Under the Code adopted the Full Council are required to consider the report and any recommendations made. There will be a further report forthcoming on Treasury Management covering a review of the current financial year i.e. the Mid-year review.

363. AMENDMENT TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

The Assistant Director, Housing and Built Environment, presented a report to request cabinet agree an amendment to the current Financial Assistance Policy (2019-2023), to increase the discretionary disabled facilities grant assistance for internal stair lift only applications from £5000 to £10,000.

The current discretionary policy has an option for internal stairlift only applications to be non-means tested provided the total cost of the stairlift and installation is under £5000. The rationale for this was to speed up the process when people are waiting to be discharged from hospital and/or would be struggling in their current home due to not being able to safely access bedroom and bathroom facilities.

The costs for curved stair lifts have increased resulting in some applications no longer meeting the discretionary £5000 funding limit. This means applicants must submit information on their financial circumstances and wait for a means test to be carried out.

It is therefore proposed that the current £5000 limit is raised to £10,000 to cover situations where internal curved stair lifts are required or more than one internal straight stairlift is required.

The cost of the amendment can be met from the existing budget and it is expected the total additional grant assistance going forward to be in the region of £70,000 a year.

Councillor Batsford proposed approval of the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Rogers.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the discretionary disabled facilities grant assistance for internal stair lift only applications is raised from £5000 to £10,000.

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364. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED (unanimously): that the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business listed below because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of “exempt” information as defined in the paragraphs of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 referred to in the relevant report.

The live stream ended, and the meeting proceeded in the private session.

365. 4 STANIER ROAD

The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues, presented a report to seek approval for a rent review.

Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Evans.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

To agree to settle the rent review.

Reasons:

This will be increased revenue income for the Council.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 6.28pm)