

# Public Document Pack

## FULL COUNCIL

13 DECEMBER 2017

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Judy Rogers) in the Chair, Councillors Sinden, Batsford, Cartwright, Chowney, Cooke, Davies, Forward, Howard, Dowling, Poole, Sabetian, Scott, Street, Webb, Westley, Wincott, Beaver, Charman, Lee, Fitzgerald, Beaney, Atkins, Edwards, Clarke, Bacon, Patmore and Rankin

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Lee Clark, Roberts, Turner and Terri Dowling

**21. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2017**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the council meeting held on 18 October 2017 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings**

**22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors declared an interest in the minutes:

| Councillors | Committee                         | Minute  | Interest   |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Beaney      | Cabinet, 4<br>December 2017       | 52 – Sports<br>Village<br>Development                       | Prejudicial – she<br>is a Director of<br>Hastings Housing<br>Company   |
| Forward     | Cabinet, 4<br>December 2017       | 52 – Sports<br>Village<br>Development                       | Prejudicial – she<br>is a Trustee of<br>the Education<br>Futures Trust |
| Poole       | Full Council, 13<br>December 2017 | 27 – Motion (Rule<br>14)                                    | Personal – she is<br>a governor of<br>Dudley Infants<br>Academy        |
| Rankin      | Cabinet, 6<br>November 2017       | 44 – Treasury<br>Management –<br>Mid Year report<br>2017/18 | Personal – he<br>works in the<br>property industry                     |

**23. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND LEADER**

The Mayor announced the deaths of former Councillor Trevor May and Mr Owen Thompson. Mr Thompson had been awarded the Order of 1066 in 2014 in recognition of his work to promote equalities and as a founder of Hastings Intercultural Organisation. Members stood and observed one minute's silence in their memory.

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The Mayor announced that there would be a procession and service at the Priscilla Mac Bean lifeboat on Saturday, 18 December. The service would remember members of the fishing community and lifeboat crews who had lost their lives at sea.

### 24. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC RULE 11

A written question had been received from Mr Bob Hart regarding the Roman Baths in Summerfields Woods. Councillor Chowney replied to the question. Copies of the question and response were circulated.

A written question had been received from Ms Barbara Rogers regarding future management options for the White Rock Theatre. Councillor Chowney replied to the question. Copies of the question and response were circulated.

Ms Rogers asked a supplementary question as to whether the council had considered alternative uses for the building, such as visitor centre. Councillor Chowney replied that the contract extension was intended as an interim measure, while the long term options to create a suitable performance venue in the town were considered. The subsidy paid by the council during the 5 year contract would be reduced and the contractor would be encouraged to involve a consortium of local groups in running the venue and developing plans for the future.

### 25. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS UNDER RULE 12

A written question had been received from Councillor Patmore regarding graffiti in the town. Councillor Fitzgerald replied to the question. Copies of the question and response were circulated at the meeting.

A written question had been received from Councillor Patmore regarding the former Harold Place toilets. Councillor Chowney replied to the question. Copies of the question and response were circulated at the meeting.

A written question had been received from Councillor Lee regarding the cost of consultancy services. A copy of the initial response to the question was circulated at the meeting.

Questions to the Leader, Deputy Leader and other Lead Members were asked and answered in accordance with Rule 12.1 as follows:

| Questioner and Councillor | Subject  | Reply Given By Councillor |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Lee                       | <u>St Leonards Crown Post Office</u> will the Leader of the Council provide an update on progress to purchase the freehold of St Leonards Crown Post Office?<br>Councillor Chowney replied that the council had met with officers from the Post Office and | Chowney                   |

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|        |  |            |
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|        | <p>submitted an expression of interest in the site. In addition to purchasing the freehold of the building, the council would need to operate the Post Office franchise as well. Councillor Chowney added that there may be additional opportunities to develop residential accommodation within the site. The closing date for expressions of interest was 15 December 2017.</p>  |            |
| Atkins | <p><u>Food Bank</u> there has been a 21% increase in referrals to the Food Bank over the past month. Will the Leader of the Council write to staff at the Food Bank to thank them for their efforts and will he also encourage people to make donations to the Food Bank?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney said that he would write to staff at the Food Bank to thank them for their efforts. He commented that a collection was being arranged amongst council staff and members for donations to the Food Bank.</p>  | Chowney    |
| Street | <p><u>Awards for Alexandra Park and Hastings Country Park</u> will the Lead Member congratulate staff and contractors at Alexandra Park and Hastings Park on their recent award from the Green Flag and explain more about what this means?</p> <p>Councillor Fitzgerald congratulated staff and contractors at Alexandra Park and Hastings Country Park. He explained that the award from Green Flag recognised innovation in the management of green spaces. In Alexandra Park a new water filtration system had been installed. In Hastings Country Park, works had been undertaken to remove gorse to support the natural habitat.</p> | Fitzgerald |
| Beaver | <p><u>West Marina</u> will the Leader of the Council provide an assurance that any development of housing at the West Marina site will be accompanied by a significant development of leisure facilities?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney confirmed this was the case. Following initial expressions of interest in the site, the council had requested more information on some of the proposals. Any housing development on the site was intended to support the development of more comprehensive leisure facilities in the area.</p>   | Chowney    |
| Bacon  | <p><u>Keeping fit</u> what keep fit opportunities will there be in the new year?</p>   | Batsford   |

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|                      |  |                   |
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|                      | <p>Councillor Batsford said that park run would be offering new walk and run sessions on the seafront from 2 January 2018. Beat the Blues will also be taking place at Summerfields Leisure Centre on 14 January, offering access to the gym for £1. A beginners fitness class, First Step Fit, is also being organised at the Salvation Army Hall in Old London Road.</p>   |                   |
| <p>Martin Clarke</p> | <p><u>Litter and detritus</u> it was previously reported that collection of litter and detritus over the summer period was below the required standard, will the lead member provide an update on current performance?</p> <p>Councillor Fitzgerald replied that the council continued to monitor this issue closely. A series of meetings have been held between council officers and senior managers at Kier. The Joint Waste Committee also monitors performance across the partnership area. An action plan has been developed by the contractor to improve standards of street cleansing. Councillor Fitzgerald noted that standards of street cleansing after events later in the year, including the bonfire had improved. However, these improvements will need to be maintained throughout the remainder of the contract.</p> | <p>Fitzgerald</p> |
| <p>Scott</p>         | <p><u>Local Government Funding</u> whilst the final settlement from the government is not yet known, are there likely to be further cuts to the council's funding as part of this year's budget?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney replied that the council was likely to receive its funding settlement over the next week, although details of some grants may not be known until early in 2018. The council had previously secured a 4 year settlement from the government and was anticipating a reduction of £496,000 to its revenue support grant in 2018/19. Councillor Chowney commented that reductions to government funding had a particular impact on areas with high levels of deprivation. The council was aiming to offset some of the reductions in its government funding by generating additional income.</p>                | <p>Chowney</p>    |
| <p>Edwards</p>       | <p><u>Hastings Pier</u> it has been reported that the council gave funding of £20,000 to Hastings Pier. Who agreed this grant, what was it spent on and will the council get its money back?</p> <p>Councillor Chowney explained that the grant from the council formed part of a funding</p>  | <p>Chowney</p>    |

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|          | package, led by the Heritage Lottery Fund, to ensure the pier remained open until after Christmas. Administrators had been appointed to seek a new operator for the pier. The new management arrangements would need to reflect the conditions of the original grant from Heritage Lottery Fund, which funded the restoration of the structure. Councillor Chowney, added that in the future, the council may need to consider its planning policy in respect of the pier, to ensure it can operate on a more commercial basis.      |         |
| Sabetian | <u>Investment in Commercial Property</u> how many jobs would have been lost, or services cut, if the council had not secured additional income by investing in commercial property?<br>Councillor Chowney had said that the council had gained additional income of £500,000 by investing in commercial property, which was the equivalent of around 12 posts. He added that it was particularly important that the council generate additional income, to maintain the discretionary activities it carries out to improve the town. | Chowney |

### 26. MOTION (RULE 14)

Councillor Chowney proposed a motion, as set out in the resolution below, which was seconded by Councillor Westley.

The Mayor ruled that Councillor Forward was unable to participate in the debate on this item, as she arrived during the debate.

#### RESOLVED (unanimously) that:

**“This council is committed to welcoming asylum seekers and refugees to the Borough of Hastings, and including them in our activities. Hastings Council recognises their potential contribution to our town, and also recognises that a comprehensive, co-ordinated and forward-looking approach is needed if the welfare of people moving into the town, and community cohesion between new and existing communities, are to be supported effectively. To this end, we pledge to:**

- **Support Hastings bid to become a place of sanctuary;**
- **Welcome to Hastings and St Leonards those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries;**
- **Value the contribution those seeking sanctuary can make to our town;**

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- **Support taking practical steps to welcome and integrate all people into our communities, activities and culture;**
- **Add our organisation's name to the body of supporters and we will offer relevant and practical action as appropriate.**

**This council will work to implement the City of Sanctuary pledges through its actions and policies, and with its partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors."**

### **27. MOTION (RULE 14)**

Councillor Rankin proposed a motion, as set out in the council agenda, which was seconded by Councillor Batsford.

Councillor Street proposed an amendment to the motion, seconded by Councillor Scott, as follows:

"After the recent publication of negative Ofsted reports of a number of Hastings schools, we ask that the Leader of Hastings Borough Council writes to the Regional Schools Commissioner expressing our concerns about this situation".

The amendment was accepted by Councillor Rankin, as the proposer of the original motion.

The Mayor ruled that Councillor Cooke was unable to participate in the vote on this matter, as he arrived during the debate.

#### **RESOLVED (unanimously) that:**

**"After the recent publication of negative Ofsted reports of a number of Hastings schools, we ask that the Leader of Hastings Borough Council writes to the Regional Schools Commissioner expressing our concerns about this situation"**

### **28. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

Councillor Chowney proposed a motion regarding the membership of committees, as set out in the resolution below.

**RESOLVED that the council adopt the following arrangements for the membership of committees:**

- 1. Councillor Bacon be appointed to Planning Committee, in place of Councillor Cartwright**

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### 29. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Mayor having called over the minutes set out in the agenda, the under mentioned minutes were reserved for discussion.

The Mayor advised that minute 52 of Cabinet on 4 December 2017, Sports Village Development, was a matter on which the Council was required to make a decision.

**RESOLVED that under rule 13.3 the reports and minutes of committees set out in the agenda, including those items on which a council decision was required, be received and agreed. Only those items which were reserved were discussed, as follows:**

| Meeting                  | Minute   | Councillor    |
|--------------------------|--|---------------|
| Cabinet, 6 November 2017 | 42 – Healthy Hastings and Rother Update                | Martin Clarke |
| Cabinet, 6 November 2017 | 43 – Medium Term Financial Strategy                    | Martin Clarke |
| Cabinet, 6 November 2017 | 44 (C) – Treasury Management – Mid Year Report 2017/18 | Rankin        |
| Cabinet, 6 November 2017 | 45 (C) – Social Media Policy                           | Lee           |
| Cabinet, 4 December 2017 | 48 (C) – Council Tax Support Scheme                    | Davies        |
| Cabinet, 4 December 2017 | 49 (C) – National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) Relief      | Lee           |
| Cabinet, 4 December 2017 | 50 (C) – An Energy Transition for Hastings             | Rankin        |
| Cabinet, 4 December 2017 | 52 (C) – Sports Village Development                    | Beaver        |
| Cabinet, 4 December 2017 | 54 (E) - Property Purchase                             | Patmore       |
| Cabinet, 4 December 2017 | 55 (E) - Property Purchase                             | Martin Clarke |

Minute number 44 of Cabinet on 6 November 2017, Treasury Management – Mid Year Report 2017/18, was a matter on which the Council was required to make a decision. Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Poole and agreed by 19 votes for to 8 against.

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Minute number 45 of Cabinet on 6 November 2017, Social Media Policy, was a matter on which the Council was required to make a decision. Councillor Poole proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Fitzgerald and agreed unanimously. Minute number 48 of Cabinet on 4 December 2017, Council Tax Support Scheme, was a matter on which the Council was required to make a decision. Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Lee and agreed unanimously.

Minute number 49 of Cabinet on 4 December 2017, National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) Relief, was a matter on which the Council was required to make a decision. Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Lee and agreed unanimously.

Minute number 50 of Cabinet on 4 December 2017, An Energy Transition for Hastings, was a matter on which the Council was required to make a decision. Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Patmore and agreed unanimously.

Minute number 52 of Cabinet on 4 December 2017, Sports Village Development, was a matter on which the Council was required to make a decision. Councillors Beaney and Forward, having declared a prejudicial interest in this item, left the chamber during the debate. Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Batsford and agreed 27 votes for 0 against with 1 abstention.

Minute numbers 54 and 55 of Cabinet on 4 December 2017, both of which concerned property purchases, were exempt items. When these items were reached, Councillor Street proposed a motion for the exclusion of the public from the meeting.

**RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of minute numbers 54 and 55 of the Cabinet meeting held on 4 December 2017, Property Purchases, 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 reports**

No motions for reference to Overview and Scrutiny Committee or reference back to Cabinet were approved in respect of the items reserved for discussion and they were therefore received.

(The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 9.43 pm)