

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

Decision Taken By: Cabinet

Decision No: D170030CAB

Date: 21 March 2017

Decision(s) and Reason(s)

Revenue and Benefits - Potential Shared Service

(Report of Director of Finance and Transformation)

The report described progress towards a proposed shared Revenue and Benefits service between the Council and Gravesham Borough Council which would offer a number of service and efficiency benefits, contributing to the Savings and Transformation Strategy as well as improving resilience.

Reference was made to accommodation and IT issues and it was noted that a more detailed financial analysis of all elements and full staff consultation would be undertaken once both authorities had agreed to progress towards a fully shared service.

Members discussed potential scenarios in terms of the “hosting” of a combined Revenue and Benefits team and confirmed that none of these should prove to be a barrier in agreeing to the establishment of a shared service.

The Cabinet resolved that:

- (1) the establishment of a Shared Service for Revenue and Benefits between Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Gravesham Borough Council be approved as set out in the report;
- (2) the Director of Finance and Transformation, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property and Leader, be authorised to progress detailed negotiations with Gravesham Borough Council accordingly;
- (3) Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council would prefer to be considered as the lead authority (and site provider) for the Shared Service and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be advised accordingly for the purposes of the accommodation review;
- (4) the Director of Finance and Transformation be authorised to commence consultation and discussion with staff as appropriate;

- (5) the target implementation date of July 2018 be noted; and
- (6) further progress reports setting out detailed proposals for the implementation of the shared service be presented to either Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board, General Purposes Committee or directly to Cabinet as appropriate.

Reasons: As set out in the report of the Director of Finance and Transformation.

Signed Chief Executive: J Beilby

Date of publication: 24 March 2017

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Policy on Managing Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour

(Report of Director of Central Services)

The report presented proposed revisions to the existing policy adopted by the Council in relation to unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainants. A copy of the updated guidance from the Local Government Ombudsman on managing unreasonable complainant behaviour was annexed to the report.

The Cabinet resolved that:

The revised policy on managing unreasonable complainant behaviour, as set out at Annex 3 to the report, be adopted.

Reasons: As set out in the report of the Director of Central Services.

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Planning Application Fees: the Government's Offer

(Report of Management Team)

The report gave details of a proposal from the Government to offer local authorities an increase in planning fees providing they committed to invest the whole additional income in their planning department. Approval was sought for action taken on behalf of the Council to accept the offer by the deadline of 13 March 2017.

The Cabinet resolved that:

- (1) retrospective approval be given to the urgent decision taken by the Management Team in liaison with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property and Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure to accept the offer from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to increase planning fees by 20% from July 2017; and
- (2) it be noted that the Director of Finance and Transformation submitted the required certified return to the DCLG prior to the deadline of 13 March 2017.

Reasons: As set out in the report of the Management Team.

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Parking Action Plan - Phase 8A

(Item JTB 17/3 referred from Joint Transportation Board minutes of 13 March 2017)

Consideration of recommendations to the Cabinet from the Joint Transportation Board of 13 March 2017.

The Cabinet resolved that:

The recommendations of the Joint Transportation Board be approved as follows:

- (1) the objection to the extension of the parking restriction within Cage Green Road, Tonbridge, be set aside and the restrictions, as advertised, be introduced;
- (2) in light of the level of response from residents and the potential for the resident of No 3 Offham Road to change their entrance to ease the access issues, the proposal to shorten the parking bays in respect of Offham Road, West Malling be abandoned and the existing on-street parking and yellow line restrictions be retained;
- (3) the objections to the revised proposal in respect of Norman Road, West Malling be set aside and the restrictions, as advertised, be introduced; and
- (4) the proposed changes to the draft Amendment 13 to the Borough Council's On-Street Traffic Regulation Order be made and the Order be sealed.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Joint Transportation Board of 13 March 2017.

Signed Chief Executive: J Beilby

Date of publication: 24 March 2017

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Cessation of Council Usage of Co-operative Bank

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

(Report of Director of Finance and Transformation)

The report advised that notice had been received from the Co-operative Bank that it would be withdrawing from the local government market from March 2018, affecting council taxpayers who used payment cards. A review of the Council's usage of the bank had been undertaken and consideration was given to possible alternatives and a recommended way forward.

The Cabinet resolved that:

- (1) the termination of the contract with Co-operative Bank by 31 December 2017 at the latest and withdrawal of payment cards as a method of payment be approved;
- (2) authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Transformation and the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property, to implement termination of the contract at the appropriate time;
- (3) officers be authorised to contact all existing card holders giving them early warning of the withdrawal of the facility that will occur sometime during the calendar year 2017 and promote the alternative options; and
- (4) the preparation of a 'fast track capital plan evaluation' to expand the current payment facilities be agreed if required.

Reasons: As set out in the report of the Director of Finance and Transformation (contains exempt information).

Signed Chief Executive:

J Beilby

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Debts for Write Off

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 2 – Information likely to reveal information about an individual)

(Report of Director of Finance and Transformation)

The report sought approval of the writing-off of debts considered to be irrecoverable. Details were also given of debts under £1,000 which had been written-off in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 17.2 together with cumulative totals of debts in the current and previous financial years and information on budgeted bad debt provision.

The Cabinet resolved that:

The 20 items shown in the schedule of amounts over £1,000, totalling £76,206.99 be written-off for the reasons stated within the schedule.

Reasons: As set out in the report of the Director of Finance and Transformation (contains exempt information).

Signed Chief Executive: J Beilby

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Proposed Action on a Long Term Empty Property in Burham

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 1 – Information relating to an individual)

(Item CH 17/14 referred from Communities and Housing Advisory Board minutes of 28 February 2017)

Consideration of recommendations to the Cabinet from the Communities and Housing Advisory Board of 28 February 2017

The Cabinet resolved that:

The recommendations of the Communities and Housing Advisory Board be approved as follows:

In the event of the owner of the property refusing to take steps to bring the property back into use by way of occupation or voluntary sale to another party for occupation, the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order be approved, subject to the Director of Central Services and Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health being satisfied of the results of the surveys and valuations described in the report.

Reasons: As set out in the report submitted to the Communities and Housing Advisory Board of 28 February 2017 (contains exempt information).

Signed Chief Executive: J Beilby

Date of publication: 24 March 2017

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