

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY CABINET

MINUTES

Wednesday, 14th December, 2022

Present: Cllr M D Boughton (Chair), Cllr R P Betts, Cllr P J Montague and Cllr K B Tanner

Virtual: Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, Mrs P A Bates, Mrs A S Oakley, M R Rhodes, T B Shaw, M Taylor and J L Sergison participated via MS Teams and joined the discussion when invited to do so by the Chair in accordance with Access to Information Rule No 23.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V M C Branson, M A Coffin, D A S Davis and D Keers

PART 1 - PUBLIC

CB 22/107 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION

EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISIONS

CB 22/108 CORPORATE STRATEGY - CONSULTATION DRAFT

Decision Notice D220115CAB

The report provided an update on the Corporate Strategy Consultation Draft with particular focus on feedback received from staff and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In addition, approval to proceed towards a community engagement exercise during winter 2023 was sought.

Details of the feedback received to date was set out in 1.3 of the report and the comments and points raised were noted. As a result, a number of minor changes were proposed and these were summarised in 1.3.4 (Table 2). A five-week period of public and community consultation would start in January 2023 as detailed in 1.4 of the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Corporate Strategy Consultation Draft, as set out in Appendix 1 and including the amendments set out in 1.3.4 (Table 2) be endorsed;
- (2) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Leader of the Council, to approve any necessary further minor changes to the Corporate Strategy Consultation Draft that might be required for reasons of clarity or presentation; and
- (3) the programme for community consultation, as set out in 1.4, be approved.

CB 22/109 LOWER THAMES CROSSING - DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER

Decision Notice D220116CAB

The report set out details in respect of an application for a Development Consent Order for the nationally significant infrastructure project at the Lower Thames Crossing. Details of the examination process to be undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate were also set out. It was reported that the Borough Council would be required to prepare a Local Impact Report as part of this process.

Whilst the Borough Council were supportive of the project it was felt that there should be investment in local highways infrastructure to mitigate the impact on the A228 and A229 between the M2 and M20. This was due to the expected displacement of traffic away from the Dartford Crossing, together with additional demand to cross the River Thames, increasing traffic on the local road network.

RESOLVED: That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health to formally engage with the Lower Thames Crossing Examination and related negotiations with LTC staff and consultants, to support the Borough Councils efficient engagement in the process.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

CB 22/110 DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBERS

Details of the Decisions taken in accordance with the rules for the making of decisions by executive members, as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, were presented for information.

CB 22/111 URGENT ITEMS

The requisite notice having been given to the Chief Executive and in accordance with s100B (4) of LGA 1972, the Chair was of the opinion that the Household Support Fund (Round 3) should be considered as a

matter of urgency by reason of special circumstance regarding the funding timescales and distribution to relevant parties before year end.

CB 22/112 HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND (ROUND 3)

Decision Notice D220117CAB

Approval was sought for the Borough Council's approach in the use of the current grant of Household Support Fund. Tonbridge and Malling had been allocated £139,263.24 to provide support to vulnerable households struggling with the cost of living. This grant allocation had to be used by 31 March 2023 and any unspent monies could not be rolled over into April, beyond honouring any expenditure committed to before the end of the financial year.

A number of options had been considered, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property, and proposals were set out in the draft Household Support Fund Scheme October – March 2022/23 (attached at Annex 2).

In summary, it was proposed that funding should be used to support:

- food banks (funding allocation of £45,000);
- fuel voucher schemes (funding allocation of £20,000); and
- households facing a disproportionate impact of cost of living increase or exceptional needs (contingency balance of £25,000);

In addition, it was proposed that the balance of funding be targeted at those identified as most in need when the Scheme was evaluated in late January 2023.

Careful consideration was given to the proposals set out in the Household Support Fund Scheme October – March 2022/23 (as set out in Annex 2), together with the Kent County Council plan to assist vulnerable households (as set out in Annex 1) and the legal, financial and value for money implications. Cabinet recognised the role and importance of foodbanks in the Borough, considered alternative solutions for the use of the Household Support Fund and supported the need to help those struggling to afford food, energy and water bills and other related essentials in the current cost of living crisis. In particular, Cabinet supported the distribution of funding as soon as possible as the recent extreme cold weather increased the pressure on family's use of heating.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Household Support Fund Scheme October – March 2022/23 (attached at Annex 2) be approved; and

- (2) delegated authority be granted to the Director of Finance and Transformation to establish an effective operational scheme to disburse funds in accordance with the detail in the approved Policy.

[In accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 15 (i) this decision was not subject to call-in since in the opinion of the Cabinet it was urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interest.]

CB 22/113 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman moved, it was seconded and

RESOLVED: That as public discussion would disclose exempt information, the following matters be considered in private.

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION

EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS

CB 22/114 TONBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE ASSET REVIEW - PHASE 2 PROPOSAL

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

Decision Notice D220118CAB

Consideration was given to the proposal for Phase 2 of the Tonbridge Town Centre Asset Review. Details of the work programme, funding arrangements and implications, management of Phase 2 and a parking study were also outlined in the report. It was also noted that expenditure related to the Phase 2 works would be regularly monitored.

Cabinet were reminded that the procurement of the work in respect of the Tonbridge Town Centre asset review had been secured under Scape's Place Shaping framework.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Phase 2 proposal (attached at Annex 1) be approved; and
- (2) the various work streams and timescales set out in the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm
having commenced at 6.00 pm