

**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**FINANCE, REGENERATION AND PROPERTY SCRUTINY SELECT  
COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, 25th July, 2023**

**Present:** Cllr D Harman (Chair), Cllr C Brown (Vice-Chair), Cllr L Athwal, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr P Boxall, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr J Clokey (substitute), Cllr M A J Hood (substitute), Cllr W J Mallard, Cllr A Mehmet, Cllr W E Palmer, Cllr M R Rhodes and Cllr C J Williams

**Virtual:** Councillors Mrs S Bell, R P Betts, M A Coffin, D A S Davis, D Keers, Mrs A S Oakley and K B Tanner participated via MS Teams in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs T Dean and B A Parry.

**PART 1 - PUBLIC**

**FRP 23/18 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

- Councillor J Clokey substituted for Councillor T Dean
- Councillor M Hood substituted for Councillor B Parry

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 these Councillors had the same rights as the ordinary member of the committee for whom they were substituting.

**FRP 23/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**FRP 23/20 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the notes of the meeting of the Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee held on 13 June 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET**

**FRP 23/21 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2023-2027 -  
CONSULTATION DRAFT**

Member approval was sought on the consultation draft of the Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027, attached at Appendix 1, which was set within the context of the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027 recently approved by Council.

The draft Economic Development Strategy set out a vision that covered four key elements – resilience, dynamism, inclusivity and sustainability. Seven themes underpinning the vision were outlined in 1.2.2 of the report and detailed in Appendix 1, each with a number of actions identified with an aim to support the economy.

Subject to approval of the draft Strategy, a four-week public consultation was intended to be undertaken in September 2023 to seek views of the key economic partners, including members of the West Kent Partnership, local business support providers, business representative bodies, such as the Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses, as well as individual local businesses in the borough. Outcome of the consultation was anticipated to be reported to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Select Committee to seek formal adoption of the Strategy.

Members had an in-depth discussion in respect of the linkage between the Action Plan and the Economic Dashboard and the proposed plan to review the performance of the Strategy on an annual basis.

During discussion, the focus on the climate change agenda and sustainable growth was highlighted, with particular reference made to reducing carbon footprint and supporting the local business community to move towards carbon net zero. Collaborative working with education providers was considered another key in delivering the plan with regard to ‘a greener more productive economy’.

**RECOMMENDED\*:** That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the consultation draft of the Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved.

**\*Referred to Cabinet**

**MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION**

**FRP 23/22 WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

The Work Programme setting out matters to be scrutinised during 2023/24 was attached for information. Members were invited to suggest future matters by liaising with the Chair of the Committee.

**MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

**FRP 23/23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm