

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES

Tuesday, 7th March, 2023

Present: Cllr M D Boughton (Chairman), Cllr R P Betts, Cllr V M C Branson, Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr D A S Davis, Cllr D Keers, Cllr P J Montague and Cllr K B Tanner

Virtual: Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, Mrs P A Bates, M A J Hood, Mrs A S Oakley, M R Rhodes and R V Roud 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.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

CB 23/28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

CB 23/29 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14 February 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS

CB 23/30 FUTURE GAS AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLY CONTRACTS

Decision Notice D230016CAB

Careful consideration was given to a new four year flexible procurement arrangement with LASER for the supply of gas and electricity for the period October 2024 – September 2028. Following a tendering exercise, LASER had advised that the highest evaluated tender scores were obtained by Total Gas and Npower and these had retained the gas and electricity frameworks respectively.

Under Contract Procedure Rule 8.1, as set out in the Constitution, approval was required in advance of utilising a framework where the value exceeded the relevant EU threshold.

In addition, under the current framework the Borough Council had signed up to Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin (REGO) backed electricity supplies. This meant that electricity had been generated by a renewable source. As part of the new framework there would be a greater number of routes to assist the Borough Council in achieving its net zero ambitions as supported by the Climate Change Strategy. This included purchasing energy direct from renewable generators.

Finally, it was noted that the recommendations set out at 1.9 of the report were based on financial savings made under the current and previous flexible procurement contracts in place since 1 October 2008 and the energy procurement expertise available from LASER. Procurement of energy through this public body buying consortium using the Purchase within Period (PWP) framework had proved to be financially advantageous to the Borough Council.

After careful consideration of the legal, financial and value for money implications, Cabinet

RESOLVED: That

- (1) a further four year agreement with Npower, Total Gas and LASER (KCC) for the supply of electricity and gas (purchased under PWP) for the Borough Council's high and low volume sites for the period 2024-2028 be approved;
- (2) the utilisation of the LASER framework under Contract Procedure Rule 8.1 be approved; and
- (3) the continued use of the REGO backed electricity tariff be approved and that alternative 'green' options be considered.

EXECUTIVE NON-KEY DECISIONS

CB 23/31 GREEN BUSINESS GRANT SCHEME

Decision Notice D230017CAB

Following Government approval of the Tonbridge and Malling UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan, which set out a series of projects to help create a better borough for residents and businesses, details for a further round of the Green Business Grant Scheme 2023/24 were set out in the report.

It was reported that £66,000 of UKSPF funding had been allocated towards this Scheme in the Tonbridge and Malling Investment Plan. There was no requirement for the Borough Council to provide any match funding for this particular programme, although it was envisaged that

around £25,000 of Business Rates Retention Pilot Reserve Funding would be used to contribute towards the Scheme in 2023/24.

Members welcomed the proposals to support businesses in the low carbon and renewable energy economy and to provide help in lowering the carbon footprint of business premises. The Scheme was open to all independent businesses that operated from commercial premises and all were encouraged to promote the initiative as widely as possible.

After careful consideration of the legal and financial and value for money implications, Cabinet

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the UKSPF Green Business Grant Scheme, as set out in Appendix 1, be endorsed;
- (3) the Capital Plan and Revenue Budget be updated accordingly; and
- (4) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive in liaison with the Leader of the Borough Council to approve any necessary minor changes to the Scheme that might be required for the purposes of clarity.

CB 23/32 CORPORATE STRATEGY - COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Decision Notice D230018CAB

The report of the Chief Executive provided an update on the Corporate Strategy Community Consultation which was undertaken during January – February 2023 and sought approval to make final amendments to the Corporate Strategy ahead of it being finalised.

There had been a good response to the public consultation exercise and the report provided an overview of the responses and key messages received. There were a number of points or proposed amendments raised and it was recommended that the Strategy be amended to reflect these as detailed in Table 3 of the report. As a result of some of the comments received it was recommended that the period covered by the Corporate Strategy be extended to 2023-2027 as detailed in 1.3.6 of the report.

Finally, potential changes in respect of Key Performance Indicators were identified and these were set out in Appendix 2.

Whilst the recommendation to extend the period covered by the Corporate Strategy to five years was supported, Councillor Boughton

proposed, seconded by Councillor Coffin, that the Strategy be reviewed after 2 years. This proposal was supported.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Corporate Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1, together with the amendments set out in Table 3 of the report be endorsed;
- (3) it be commended to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, that the period covered by the Strategy be extended to 2023-2027, as referenced in 1.3.6, and that a review of the Strategy be undertaken after 2 years;
- (4) the proposed new Key Performance Indicators, as set out in Appendix 2, be endorsed;
- (5) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to consider views on the Corporate Strategy 2023/24 Action Plan, as set out in Appendix 3; and
- (6) 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 that might be required solely for reasons of clarity of presentation.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

CB 23/33 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 23/34 MINUTES OF PANELS, BOARDS AND OTHER GROUPS

The Minutes of the meetings of the Parish Partnership Panel and Tonbridge Community Forum of 9 February and 27 February 2023 respectively were received and noted.

CB 23/35 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items considered in private.

The meeting ended at 7.51 pm