

**CABINET**  
9 May 2016

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held at the Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Monday 9 May 2016 at 11:00am.

Cabinet Members present: Councillors C.R. Maynard (Leader), Lord Ampthill, S.D. Elford, A.E. Ganly, I.R. Hollidge, Mrs J.M. Hughes, G.P. Johnson, J.M. Johnson, M.J. Kenward (Deputy Leader) and Mrs E.M. Kirby-Green.

Other Members present: Councillors A.K. Azad, J.J. Carroll (Chairman of the Council), R.V. Elliston, Mrs B.A. George, T.W. Graham, Mrs S. Hart, B. Kentfield, D.B. Oliver and M.R. Watson.

Advisory Officers present: Executive Director of Business Operations, Executive Director of Resources, Service Manager – Finance and Welfare, Service Manager – Community and Economy, Administrative Assistant and Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present: 2 members of the public.

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The decisions made under PART II will come into force on 19 May 2016 unless they have been subject to the call-in procedure.

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**CB15/81. MINUTES**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2016 as a correct record of the proceedings.

**PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL** – not subject to call-in procedure under Rule 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

**CB15/82. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE NEW ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS – CONSULTATION RESPONSE**  
(6.2)

Cabinet received and considered Minute OSC15/53 arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) meeting held on 18 April 2016. The OSC had considered this Council's proposed response from the Boundary Review Steering Group to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) current consultation on the new proposed electoral arrangements for Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council and had recommended its approval to Cabinet, as submitted. In order for the Council to meet the consultation deadline of 16 June 2016, it was necessary for Cabinet to recommend to full Council this Council's response to the consultation.

Cabinet was pleased to note that the LGBCE had supported and recommended all of RDC's proposals as submitted in November 2015, save for minor amendments in relation to Hurst Green, Ticehurst / Salehurst and Robertsbridge, and Battle, Netherfield and Whatlington / Battle and Telham which were accepted.

It had been recommended, that in order to define the areas more clearly, the two proposed Battle Wards be renamed to North Battle, Netherfield and Whatlington and South Battle and Telham; this was also supported.

With regard to the consequential changes to parish electoral arrangements for Battle Town Council and Icklesham Parish Council. It was noted that Battle Town and Icklesham Parish Councils needed to respond direct to the LGBCE should they wish to retain the existing warding patterns.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the following response be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's consultation on the new electoral arrangements:

"Rother District Council (RDC) welcomes the publication of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations in respect of RDC electoral arrangements which in the main reflect the submitted RDC proposals and accepts the suggested amendments to the warding pattern proposals in respect of Hurst Green and Ticehurst and Salehurst and Robertsbridge and Battle.

In order to define the areas more effectively, it is recommended that the names of the proposed two new Battle Wards be renamed as follows:

North Battle, Netherfield and Whatlington; and  
South Battle and Telham

RDC is also supportive of the proposals to the East Sussex County Council divisional boundary changes in relation to those within the RDC boundary."

**PART II – EXECUTIVE DECISIONS** – subject to the call-in procedure under Rule 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules by no later than 4:00pm on 18 May 2016.

CB15/83. **PUBLIC CONVENIENCE CLEANING SERVICES**  
(6.1)

Cabinet received and considered Minute OSC15/52 arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) meeting held on 18 April 2016. The OSC had considered a report on the public convenience cleaning service and recommended to Cabinet that the current contract be extended from 31 December 2016 to 31 March 2017 to enable ease of transfer, the specification be approved as submitted and the contract

be procured in partnership with Wealden District Council (WDC) and Hastings Borough Council by the East Sussex Procurement Hub.

Members asked a series of questions on how the price of the contract would be affected by the disposal of assets through the devolvement program. It was confirmed that a mechanism would be built into the new contract which would address the cost of the fixed and variable costs of the service should there be a reduction in the number of units. Any devolved units could continue to be serviced by the appointed contractor (and the costs be charged back to the relevant organisation) however there was also the ability for a parish and town council to make their own arrangements should they wish.

Cabinet was pleased to note that the Specification had been amended to include additional cleans for Bexhill conveniences located at Channel View East, East and West Parades, Egerton Park and Devonshire Square due to an increase in visitor numbers as a result of the Council's investment within the Town. It was confirmed that Compliance Officers visited the Council's public conveniences to check that they had been satisfactorily serviced; Members requested that consideration be given for the inclusion of a chart that detailed when the unit had been cleaned (for those units who had a number of scheduled cleans per day). It was considered that this would aid Officers with the management of the Contract.

The impact of the proposed uplift in service standards in Bexhill was expected to increase the Contract price by an estimated £8,000 to £11,000 per year. However, this would be offset by the reduction of two devolved units by an estimated £6,000 per annum leaving the total estimated increase in the order of £5,000 per annum before other cost pressures, such as the national minimum wage and staffing costs were taken into consideration.

Cabinet were supportive of the proposals and noted that the level of cleaning detailed in the Specification set out a level of cleaning which would maintain the required standards at an acceptable cost.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) the existing Public Conveniences Cleaning Contract with Specialist Hygiene Services Limited (SHS) be extended to 31 March 2017;
- 2) the specification for a new Public Conveniences Cleaning Contract commencing on 1 April 2017 be approved, as submitted; and
- 3) the Executive Director of Business Operations, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Value for Money, be authorised to enter into a procurement to secure public convenience cleaning services, in partnership with Wealden District Council and Hastings Borough Council as appropriate, and to return to Cabinet at a future meeting for approval to award the contract.

## **COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director of Business Operations that set out the recommendations of the Community Grants Panel who had recently met to consider three Community Grant Applications previously deferred by Cabinet, one application for the 1066 Grants Scheme and six applications for the Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration Grants Scheme.

The Community Grants Scheme offered a robust assessment process to ensure clear benefits to the communities applying for grants and also ensured that the Council's contribution promoted value and attracted other funding into the relevant proposal.

It was noted that should Cabinet agree the Community Grant recommendations as submitted, this would result in a maximum of £36,300 being allocated from the opening balance of £130,000, leaving £93,700 for the remainder of the year. Should Cabinet agree the 1066 Anniversary and the Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration Grant scheme recommendations as submitted, this would result in a maximum of £1,975 being allocated and a total of £10,745 allocated including those applications previously agreed.

Members gave due consideration to each of the applications. When considering the Bexhill Hive application, it was noted that the premises would be used as an inclusive community facility, with DV8 being the anchor tenant. The organisation had grown out of its current premises and wanted to expand its operation and had therefore secured a lease on a premises in St Leonards Road to fulfil its aspirations. The organisation had applied for a £30,000 grant with 40% of the funds being used to contribute towards the cost of a Project Manager to oversee the premises renovation and remainder to purchase and install high-spec equipment. Concern was expressed over the project's long term viability and also the funding of the Project Manager; the Community Grants Scheme precluded the funding of running costs (including salaries). It was therefore proposed and agreed that £18,000 be awarded to the organisation with the added caveat of a minimum 10 year lease on the premises to ensure its long term viability. Members noted that the funding would also be subject to the award of the funding applied for from Locate East Sussex and the Arts Council.

### **RESOLVED:** That

- 1) the following Community Grants be awarded, subject to any specific conditions relating to each application:  
  
1<sup>st</sup> Sidley All Saints Scouts - £1,500  
Bexhill Cricket Club - £4,800
- 2) Bexhill Hive be awarded £18,000 subject to a minimum 10 year lease on the premises (41 St Leonards Road) and match funding from Locate East Sussex and Arts Council England;

- 3) the following 1066 Anniversary and the Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration Grant be awarded, subject to any specific conditions relating to each application:

The Catsfield Triangle Association - £500

Brede Parish Council - £200

Etchingam Parish Council - £500

Fairlight Parish Council - £250

Pett Women's Institute - £125

Rother Seniors Forum - £400

- 4) the Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration Grant application for the Camber Community Group be declined.

CB15/85.  
(8.1)

#### **IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS**

Members gave consideration to the report of the Executive Director of Resources on irrecoverable debts. Debts in excess of £4,000 could only be written out of the Council's accounts with the consent of the Cabinet. Where it was apparent that the debts would not be recovered, it was financially prudent for these to be excluded from the accounts; this did not mean that the Council could not take action in the future if information was received indicating the debt could be recovered.

Cabinet was asked to write off two debts in respect of Housing Benefit overpayments totalling £13,665.61; details of the individual cases were available to Members on request.

**RESOLVED:** That the total debt of £13,665.61 be approved for writing out of the accounts.

#### **CHAIRMAN**

The meeting closed at 12:07pm

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6/6/2016.

