

Minutes of Cabinet

29 January 2013

Present:

Councillor R.L. Watts (Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Cabinet and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Corporate Governance)
Councillor T.J.M. Evans (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources)
Councillor P.C. Forbes-Forsyth (Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Young People)
Councillor N. Gething (Cabinet Member for Economic Development)

Apologies: Councillor J.M. Pinkerton (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Independent Living)

In attendance: Councillor A. J. Mitchell

1883. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2012 and the extraordinary meeting held on 21 January 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

1884. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

1885. Corporate Risk Management – Recommendation from the Audit Committee

Cabinet considered the recommendation from the Audit Committee on the review of the Corporate Risk Register.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the Corporate Risk Register as submitted.

1886. Local Development Framework (LDF) Working Party minutes

Cabinet received the minutes and recommendations of the meeting held on 7 January 2013.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

1. Agrees the technical assessments at Appendix A and B of the report of the Assistant Chief Executive as a formal record of the Council's detailed consideration of the implications of the NPPF.
2. Notes the planning issues arising from the assessments which are set out in paragraph 2.13 of the report.
3. Reaffirms the 'top' priority to progressing work to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy system by April 2014, if not sooner.
4. Notes that the Working Party will consider a high level project plan at its next meeting to progress the following studies in the context of existing work commitments:
 - Local Economic Assessment
 - Traveller Needs Assessment
 - Housing Needs Assessment
 - Retail Assessment

Housing Land Availability Assessment

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

5. Notes the need for additional resources to undertake the studies identified in 4. above, which the Working Party will quantify further in its high level project plan.
6. Agrees a change of the Working Party's title to 'Local Plan Working Party' instead of 'Local Development Framework Working Party' to reflect the new name given in government policy to development plans.

1887. *Outline Budget 2013-14 to 2017-18 and draft Detailed Revenue Budget for 2013-14 – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report setting out the outline budget projections for 2013-14 to 2017-18 and a first draft of the detailed revenue budget for 2013-14.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council agrees:

1. The net budgeted expenditure (before investment and use of reserves) for 2013/14 be set at a maximum level of £11.702m
2. That, in order to reach this level, the Management Team, the Leader and Cabinet identify a package of options by which the budget can be balanced both in 2013-14 and 2014-15 and over the following three years of the outline period.
3. For planning purposes of the Outline Budget, an annual increase of 1% has been assumed for pay increases to staff and councillors for 2013/14.
4. That an agreed total reserves target minimum level (as measured on 31 March each year) be set at a level of £11m for 31/3/14.
5. That the financial health indicators set out in paragraph 2.45 of the report of the Chief Finance Officer be agreed.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted the importance of a balanced budget both in the short and long term.

1888. *Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2013-14 – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report updating members on the current treasury position and setting the Annual Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators for 2013-14.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council:

1. Approves the proposed Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2013/14 as set out in the report of the Chief Finance Officer.
2. Approves the Prudential Indicators for 2013/14 as set out in the report of the Chief Finance Officer.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that the Council's ability to generate maximum, net investment returns with minimal risk provides significant resources for the General Fund revenue budget and the subsequent financing of the Council's services to local residents.

1889. Christmas lights in Staines-upon-Thames town centre

Cabinet considered a report on whether or not the Council should continue to fund the hire and installation of Christmas lights in Staines-upon-Thames town centre.

Cabinet considered and rejected the option of continuing to fund the Christmas lights in Staines' town centre but limit the size of the display to just the main high street which would reduce the overall cost.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agrees:

1. Not to re-tender for a new contract for Christmas lights in Staines' town centre.
2. That the Cabinet member for Economic development will approach, and attempt to persuade, businesses to bear the cost of the Christmas lights in future years.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that businesses in Ashford and Shepperton now fund their own Christmas lights and that the savings to be made from not funding Staines town centre lights would contribute to the Council's revenue budget.

1890. Calendar of Meetings 2013-14

Cabinet considered a report on the calendar of meetings for the municipal year June 2013 to May 2014.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council agrees the draft Calendar of Meetings for the period June 2013 to May 2014 as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Monitoring Officer.

Reason for the decision:

The Calendar of Meetings planned for the municipal year ahead ensures that the Council can conduct its business through its Committees in the most efficient and effective way possible.

1891. Issues for Future Meetings

There were none.

1892. Urgent Items

There were none.

1893. Exempt Business

RESOLVED to move the exclusion of the Press and Public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**1894. Exempt report - Housing Benefit write-off
(Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding the information).**

Cabinet considered an exempt report on a proposal to write off a bad debt where recovery was no longer possible.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agrees to the write-off of the bad debt listed in the report of the Assistant Chief Executive.

NOTES:-

- (1) Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are reminded that under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule, the “call-in” procedure shall not apply to recommendations the Cabinet makes to the Council. The matters on which recommendations have been made to the Council, if any, are identified with an asterisk [*] in the above Minutes.**
- (2) Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are entitled to call in decisions taken by the Cabinet for scrutiny before they are implemented, other than any recommendations covered under (1) above.**
- (3) Within three working days of the date on which a decision of the Cabinet or a Cabinet Member is published, not less than three members [one of whom must be the Chairman] of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are able to "call in" a decision;**
- (4) To avoid delay in considering an item "called in", an extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be convened within seven days of a "call in" being received if an ordinary meeting is not scheduled in that period;**
- (5) When calling in a Cabinet decision for review the members doing so should in their notice of "call in":-**
Outline their reasons for requiring a review;

 - Indicate any further information they consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to have before it in order to conduct a review in addition to the written report made by officers to the Cabinet;**
 - Indicate whether, where the decision was taken collectively by the Cabinet, they wish the Leader or his nominee (who should normally be the Cabinet Member) or where the decision was taken by a Cabinet Member, the member of the Cabinet making the decision, to attend the committee meeting; and**
 - Indicate whether the officer making the report to the Cabinet or the Cabinet Member taking the decision or his/her representative should attend the meeting.**
- (6) The deadline of three working days for "call in" by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the above decisions by the Cabinet is the close of business on 5 February 2013**