

## TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET

Thursday, 7 March 2019

**Present: Councillor David Jukes (Chairman)**

**Councillors McDermott (Vice-Chairman), Dr Basu, March, Moore, Reilly and Weatherly**

**Officers in Attendance:** William Benson (Chief Executive), Lee Colyer (Director of Finance, Policy and Development (Section 151 Officer)), Patricia Narebor (Head of Legal Partnership), Jane Fineman (Head of Finance and Procurement), Finbar Gibbons (Head of Policy and Governance), Karin Grey (Sustainability Manager), David Scully (Landscape and Biodiversity Officer) and Mark O'Callaghan (Democratic Services Officer)

**Other Members in Attendance:** Councillors Backhouse and Mackonochie

### APOLOGIES

CAB139/18 There were no apologies.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

CAB140/18 There were no disclosable pecuniary or other significant interests declared at the meeting.

### NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

CAB141/18 There were no Visiting Members who had registered as wishing to speak.

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 07 FEBRUARY 2019

CAB142/18 Members reviewed the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting dated 07 February 2019 be approved as a correct record.

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

CAB143/18 There were no questions from members of the Council.

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

CAB144/18 There were no questions from members of the public.

### CONSIDERATION OF THE FORWARD PLAN AS AT 30 JANUARY 2019

CAB145/18 Members considered the plan. The Democratic Services Officer confirmed that a revised Forward Plan had been published since the agenda had been published, the main changes were as follows:

- New Local Government Association Corporate Peer Review (Leader's Portfolio) in April;
- New Cemetery Depot Benhall Mill Road (Leader's Portfolio) in June;

- New Annual Corporate Health and Safety Report (Finance and Governance Portfolio) in June;
- New Revised JTB Agreement (Planning and Transportation Portfolio) in June;
- New Kent Joint Municipal Waste Strategy Refresh (Sustainability Portfolio) in April; and
- Draft Ashdown Forest SPD (Planning and Transportation Portfolio) moved from April to September.

**RESOLVED –** That the Forward Plan as at 30 January 2019, as amended, be noted.

### **PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: QUARTER 3**

CAB146/18 Councillor Reilly and Finbar Gibbons, Head of Policy and Governance, introduced the report set out in the agenda which included the following comments:

- Performance indicators for the percentage of household waste sent for recycling or composting which were unavailable at the time the report was published were now available.
- Requested comparative data on homeless acceptances for before and after the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act would be taken forward by the Head of Housing, Health and Environment.
- Figures regarding the time taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit had been confirmed as correct by the Head of Revenue and Benefits, further improvements had continued into January and February of 2019.

The discussion included consideration of the following additional matters:

- The recycling rate had increased since the close of the previous quarter and was currently nearly 50 per cent.

### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the summary of priority project performance over quarter 3, as at Appendix A to the report, be noted;
2. That the summary of service performance over quarter 3, as at Appendix B to the report, be noted; and
3. That the performance indicator Recovery Plans for quarter 3, as at Appendices C-G to the report, be noted.

### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

To monitor the effectiveness of the Council's actions and plans to meet all of the objectives within the Five Year Plan, highlight underperforming areas, and propose actions to remedy any underperformance to ensure the key objectives are met.

## **REVENUE MANAGEMENT REPORT: QUARTER 3**

CAB147/18 Councillor Reilly and Jane Fineman, Head of Finance and Procurement, introduced the report set out in the agenda.

The discussion included consideration of the following additional matters:

- Members had confidence in the Finance team and the results were welcomed.

### **RESOLVED –**

1. That at Quarter 3 the net expenditure on services year to date was £10,026,000, £314,000 less than forecast, be noted;
2. That by year end the Council anticipated net expenditure of £13,910,000 on services, £8,000 under budget and an improvement since Quarter 2 of £170,000, be noted;
3. That the establishment of a 'Waste Bin Replacement Reserve' which will hold an annual contribution towards the purchase of new waste bins, be approved; and
4. That the Write Offs set out in paragraph 2.29 and detailed at Appendix J to the report be approved.

### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

To show the actual expenditure on services compared to the revised budget for the period ended 30 December 2018, and the forecast outturn position, highlighting significant variances from the revised annual budget.

## **CAPITAL MANAGEMENT REPORT: QUARTER 3**

CAB148/18 Councillor Reilly and Jane Fineman, Head of Finance and Procurement, introduced the report set out in the agenda.

The report was taken as presented.

### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the actual gross and net expenditure for the year and the sources of finance as shown in Appendices B to D to the report be noted;
2. That the proposed movement between years set out in paragraph 4.3 be approved;
3. That the proposed variations to the 2018/19 Capital programme, set out in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.13, be approved; and
4. That the new proposed schemes for 2019/20 to be approved by full Council, to be included in the capital programme as set out in paragraph 4.14, be approved.

### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

Managing and forecasting capital expenditure effectively was vital in order to support all of the services provided by the Council.

## **TREASURY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR MANAGEMENT REPORT: QUARTER 3**

CAB149/18 Councillor Reilly and Jane Fineman, Head of Finance and Procurement, introduced the report set out in the agenda.

The discussion included consideration of the following additional matters:

- The gross value of the investment in the property fund as at 31 December 2018 was £10.943 million. The decision to invest had proven to be prudent.
- The Finance team were congratulated for the excellent results.

### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the 2018/19 Treasury Management and Prudential Indicator position be noted; and
2. That a further increase in the forecast for investment and bank interest of £30,000, which increases the forecast budget from £693,000 to £723,000, be noted.

### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

Ensuring effective cash flow management was vital in order to support all the services provided by the Council. The interest received from investments was an important source of income in helping to set a balanced budget.

## **HIGH WEALD AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB) MANAGEMENT PLAN**

CAB150/18 Councillor McDermott and David Scully, Landscape and Biodiversity Officer, introduced the report set out in the agenda.

The discussion included consideration of the following additional matters:

- Climate change was of great concern to many people so it was reassuring that the management plan included aspects which would benefit the environment.
- The management plan would go to the Secretary of State but also needed to be adopted for planning purposes.

### **RESOLVED –**

1. That the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 (4th Edition), required by Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 for that part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that falls within the Borough, be adopted;
2. That the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) be authorised to publish and submit the Plan to the Secretary of State on the Council's behalf.

### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

To comply with statutory duties to have an up-to-date Plan. The revised plan will ensure that the valued high quality environment of the High Weald is conserved and enhanced for current and future residents of the Borough.

## KENT HIGH WEALD PARTNERSHIP REVIEW

CAB151/18 Councillor McDermott and David Scully, Landscape and Biodiversity Officer, introduced the report set out in the agenda.

The discussion included consideration of the following additional matters:

- The Kent High Weald Partnership worked closely with parks teams and their enthusiastic support of volunteer groups was much appreciated.

### RESOLVED –

1. That the funding for the Kent High Weald Partnership (KHWP) be reduced by 10% to £69.5k for the period of a new Service Level Agreement (SLA) to run from April 2019 until March 2022.
2. That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation and the Head of Planning be delegated authority to agree a new SLA with KHWP which includes a requirement to consider means of reducing its dependence on Council funding through investigating in:
  - i. Alternative structures for the KHWP such as Charitable or Trust status;
  - ii. New sources of grants to replace Council funding;
  - iii. Opportunities associated with housing growth in the Borough and management of Council owned sites to provide further sources of revenue; and
  - iv. A new basis for Council funding on agreed requirements for site management and specific outcomes such as number of volunteer events on Council owned sites;
3. That the KHWP be instructed as part of the SLA to prepare a new business plan that responds to the requirements above and assumes continued management of Council Green Spaces for a fee to be agreed commencing in March 2021 and to cover the period 2022 to 2025 with a vision for the period 2025 to 2028; and
4. That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation and the Head of Planning be delegated authority to agree and sign a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with KCC that aligns with the purpose and period for the SLA.

### REASON FOR DECISION:

To enable the Council to meet existing commitments to projects and Council owned sites and minimises the risk to reputational damage and allow the partnership to continue.

## AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN

CAB152/18 Councillor Dr Basu and Karin Grey, Sustainability Manager, introduced the report set out in the agenda.

The discussion included consideration of the following additional matters:

- Air quality had improved since the last plan in 2014.

- The actions in the plan were based on levels of Nitrogen Dioxide but the council also monitored particulates of 10 microns which could affect health.
- Small particulates of 2.5 microns were not required to be monitored as these were monitored nationally. The Borough was not exceeding the World Health Organisation levels and any actions to reduce Nitrogen Dioxide or particulates of 10 microns would also reduce small particulates of 2.5 microns.
- The plan could be more ambitious in some areas and initiatives to encourage more walking and cycling were supported.
- Cabinet members and senior officers would be visiting a sustainable transport model in Waltham Forest to investigate potential best practice.
- Good air quality was good for tourism and more walking and cycling would improve health.

**RESOLVED** – That the Air Quality Action Plan 2018-2023 be adopted.

**REASON FOR DECISION:**

To comply with statutory duties to have an up-to-date Plan. The revised Plan will demonstrate the high priority and action taken to ensure good air quality for the Borough of Tunbridge Wells.

**URGENT BUSINESS**

CAB153/18 There was no urgent business.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

CAB154/18 The next meeting would be held on Thursday 11 April 2019 commencing at 10.30 am in Committee Room A at the Town Hall, Tunbridge Wells.

**NOTES:**

The meeting concluded at 11.05 am.

An audio recording of this meeting is available on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council website.