
EXECUTIVE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne on Wednesday 26th April 2006 from 7:00 pm to 7.42 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Bowles (Chairman), Councillor Gerry Lewin (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Christine Coles, Martin Goodhew, Jordan, David Simmons and John Wright.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Miss Waltham and Messrs Bessant, Bilsborough, Bucket, Goldhawk, Milne and Russell.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Mike Brown, Prescott and Stanford.

APOLOGY: Councillor Mike Cosgrove.

883 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th March 2006 (Minute Nos. 832 - 847) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

884 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In accordance with Standing Order No. 25(b) Councillor David Simmons declared a Personal Interest in reference to Minute No. 888 below (Swale Rural Forum Minutes), due to his ownership of Poly-tunnels. He did not vote on the matter.

Councillor Mike Brown declared a Personal Interest in Minute No. 890 below (Sheppey Wheels) due to his position as Chairman of Sheppey Matters.

PART A MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

885 **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DELEGATIONS TO THE HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

Executive Member for Engineering, Planning and Transport

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Development Services which requested that the scheme of delegation be amended for a trial period of one year, in accordance with recommendations that had been made by the Joint Working Party.

The Executive Member for Engineering, Planning and Transport drew Members attention to the Tabled letter that had been received from Ospringe Parish Council and informed the Executive that the recommendation had now been altered, to request that the proposed changes be subject to consultation with all Members, via the Planning Committee and the Kent Association of Parish Councils.

Recommended:

- (1) ***That the proposed revisions be subject to consultation with all Members and the Kent Association of Parish Councils.***

886 **LITTERING AND DOG FOULING FIXED PENALTY NOTICE FEES**

Executive Member for Environment

The Executive Member for Environment introduced the report of the Head of

Environmental Services, which sought approval to increase the Fixed Penalty Notice for Littering and Dog Fouling offences from £50.00 to £75.00, with immediate effect.

Members considered that the maximum fine of £80.00 should be implemented.

Recommended:

(1) That the Fixed Penalty Notice fee for dog fouling and littering offences under the provisions of Sections 87 and 88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, be increased from £50.00 to £80.00 with immediate effect.

(2) That no action be taken to remove previous signs placed in accordance with the Dog Fouling of Land Act.

887 FINANCIAL SERVICES - STAFFING

Executive Member for Finance and Administration (including Performance)

The Head of Finance introduced his report which sought approval for the switching of staffing budgets from the Benefits Service to the core Finance Team, within the Financial Services Unit, at no additional cost to the Council. It explained that there was a need to boost the Finance Core Team and the proposal was to create a new Management Accountant post to be funded by the deletion of a vacant Team Leader post within Benefits and a reduction of hours of another Benefit Post; where the postholder wished to return from maternity leave on reduced hours.

He also announced to Members that the Chief Accountant had handed in his resignation.

The Chief Executive clarified that the provision of adequate staff training, within the Benefits Service, may require some adjustments, within budget, which would be explored post-implementation of the new staffing arrangement.

Recommended:

(1) That the switching of staffing budgets from the Benefits Service to the core Finance Team within the Financial Services Unit as set out in the report be approved, at no additional cost to the Council.

(2) That the following amendments to the establishment be made:

New Post - Management Accountant

Delete Post - No. 600HB - Quality Control Team Leader

Reduced Hours Post - No. 204HB - Training and Policy Officer (22.5 hours).

PART B MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

888 SWALE RURAL FORUM MINUTES

Executive Member for Rural Affairs

The Executive considered the Minutes of the Swale Rural Forum and the Chairman asked that the recommendations as made in Minute No. 875/4/06 be incorporated into the upcoming Housing Needs report from the Head of Housing Services and Executive Member for Housing.

Resolved:

(1) That the Minutes of the Swale Rural Forum Meeting held on 18th April 2006 (Minute Nos. 873 - 878) be accepted and that the recommendations made under Minute No. 875/4/06 be incorporated into the upcoming Housing Needs report from the Head of Housing Services and Executive Member for Housing.

889 MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Executive considered the Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee Meeting, which had been held on 7th April 2006.

Resolved:

(1) That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th April 2006 (Minute Nos. 1 - 9) be accepted.

890 SHEPPEY WHEELS**Executive Member for Rural Affairs**

Members considered the joint report of the Executive Member for Rural Affairs and the Head of Community Regeneration which presented a request from Sheppey Matters to support the Sheppey Wheels Project in the form of two interest free loans. The Project would provide a much needed minibus service to those residents living on the outer edges of the Isle of Sheppey.

The Executive Member for Rural Affairs congratulated Sheppey Matters on securing £146,594 funding from the Leader+ and Kent Rural Towns Programmes and explained to Members that it would be paid quarterly, which meant that the loans were required to support the project immediately.

The Head of Finance confirmed that £2000 interest would be forfeited by the Council in granting the loans.

Resolved:

(1) That an interest free loan to Sheppey Matters of £12,000 from 1st April 2006, or as soon as is possible, to 31st December 2008, to be repaid in full on 1st January 2009, be approved.

(2) That an interest free loan to Sheppey Matters of £35,000 from 1st August 2006 to 30th November 2006, to be repaid in full on 1st December 2006, be approved.

891 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned at 7.22 pm and reconvened at 7.24 pm.

892 STATEMENT OF EFFICIENCY GAINS - FORWARD LOOK 2006/2007

The Head of Finance introduced the report of the Head of Internal Audit and Performance. The report sought Members approval of the Forward Look Statement of Efficiency Gains for 2006/2007 which had to be submitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and endorsed by the Leader, Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer. He drew Members' attention to the tabled item which stated the indicative costs associated with the expected efficiency gain activities.

In response to a Members question, the Head of Environmental Services confirmed that the Environmental Services gains were the net overall difference following the effect of changes made under contract arrangements.

A Member requested clarification in relation to the Homelessness efficiency gains and the Director of Development, Environment and Technical Services explained that the figures stated were realistic targets to address Gershon requirements, but that it was expected that further efficiencies would be gained as a consequence of the new ways of working. The Head of Finance confirmed that money gained from further efficiency savings, for example the reduced use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for homeless applicants; could be used to re-invest elsewhere within Council services.

A Member asked why, when looking at the annual gains and targets, the cashable figures were higher than the target of 2.5%, as stated in Paragraph 1 of the report. The Head of Finance responded that cashable figures were easier to identify and to prove to the auditors that they had been achieved.

In response to a query from the Executive Member for Community Safety regarding the culture and sport figures, the Director for Development, Environment and Technical Services undertook to arrange a response.

• DDETS
• HTS

Resolved:

(1) That the Forward Look Statement of Efficiency Gains for 2006/2007 be approved.

893 PERFORMANCE BOARD MINUTES

The Executive considered the Minutes of the Performance Board meeting held on 10th April 2006.

Resolved:

(1) That the Minutes of the Performance Board Meeting held on 10th April 2006 (Minute Nos. 1 - 11) be noted.

894 BUDGET MONITORING

The Head of Finance introduced his report, which had been requested by the Performance Board and which set out the proposed mechanism for Budget Monitoring for 2006/2007 with particular reference to the £1.3 million budget savings. He explained that reports would be produced quarterly, in line with Executive meeting dates and that the first report would be presented to the Executive at their meeting scheduled for 19th July 2006.

Resolved:

(1) That the proposed way forward for Budget Monitoring for the financial year 2006/2007 be approved.

895 LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Resolved:

(1) That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

PART B MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

896 **TENDER SELECT LIST FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT AND PUBLIC CONVENIENCE CONTRACT**

Executive Member for Environment

Members considered the joint report of the Executive Member for Environment and the Head of Environmental Services, which sought approval to invite the companies as listed in the report, to tender. The companies had all completed Pre-Qualification questionnaires.

The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that the advertisements had stated that companies must be willing to operate the contract for either a 7 or 14 year period.

Resolved:

(1) That the expressions of interest be noted.

(2) That the companies listed as Nos. 1 - 10 in Annex B of the report, be invited to tender for the Maintenance and Cleansing of Public Conveniences Contract.

(3) That the companies listed as Nos. 1 - 10 in Annex B of the report, be invited to tender for the Household Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract.

Chairman