



Minutes

Cabinet

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Wednesday, 8 June 2016
Present	Councillors Miss Susan Carey, John Collier, Malcolm Dearden, Alan Ewart-James, David Godfrey, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, Rory Love, Philip Martin, David Monk and Stuart Peall
Apologies for Absence	None
Officers Present:	Jeremy Chambers (Corporate Director - Strategic Operations), Nicola Everden (Solicitor), Ben Geering (Head of Planning) - (minute 7), Chris Lewis (Planning Advisor), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Tim Madden (Corporate Director - Organisational Change), Susan Priest (Corporate Director - Strategic Development) and Alistair Stewart (Chief Executive)
Others Present:	

NOTE: All decisions are subject to call-in arrangements. The deadline for call-in is Thursday 16 June 2016 at 5pm. Decisions not called in may be implemented on Friday 17 June 2016.

6. **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee declared an other significant interest in Report C/16/08 – Otterpool Park: A Garden Town of the future and Report C/16/09 – Otterpool Park as she has two properties that are within the curtilage of the proposed site. She therefore removed herself to the public gallery before the debate and vote on the items.

Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee informed Cabinet that she had advised another councillor of the comments she had received both for and against the reports from members of her local community.

7. **Otterpool Park: A Garden Town of the Future - Proposal**

Report C/16/08 sets out the case for a potential new garden settlement in the district and seeks Cabinet approval to submit an expression of interest for Otterpool Park, in response to the Government's prospectus for "Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities" (see appendix A).

These ambitious proposals directly respond to the priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan which includes a commitment to Shepway residents enjoying a healthy, prosperous lifestyle and benefiting from high quality and affordable housing by making sure new homes are built in the district and by developing a sustainable and vibrant local economy.

The unique location of the potential area, south of the M20, near junction 11, presents an opportunity for a new sustainable, garden settlement that is well connected and which positively embraces local landscape features, infrastructure assets and community aspirations. It has the potential to deliver transformational long-term housing growth in the district responding to housing needs in Kent and the South East more broadly.

The existing community will benefit from improved access to local services, environmental improvements to existing villages and investment in infrastructure such as local roads and sewerage, and access to more local job opportunities.

The expression of interest sets out a potential vision supported by key guiding principles as a foundation for working with land owners and the wider community to plan and deliver a new garden settlement of up to 12,000 new homes.

The new community would place particular emphasis on the principles of the garden city movement, including sustainability, quality design, cutting edge technology, accessible green space and a high quality public realm.

The expression of interest is without prejudice to any future decisions the Council might take in its capacity as local planning authority.

Members received feedback from the Leader's meeting with Parish Council's and this is attached for information.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk
Seconded by Councillor Stuart Peall and

Resolved:

- 1. That the Cabinet agrees that a proposed new garden town at Otterpool Park has the potential to be a unique opportunity to deliver the strategic objectives of the Corporate Plan relating to boosting the local economy, increasing job opportunities and providing more homes.**
- 2. That the detailed expression of interest, attached to this report, be agreed as the Council's formal submission to the Department of**

Communities and Local Government's prospectus for "Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities", subject to any changes considered necessary by the Director of Strategic Development in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

- 3. That a further report be considered by Cabinet to consider the outcome of the expression of interest to Government.**

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

8. Exclusion of the public

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor Stuart Peall and

Resolved:

To exclude the public from the following items of business, on the grounds that it is likely to disclose exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972: 'Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).' 'Financial or business affairs includes contemplated as well as current activities.

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

9. Otterpool Park

Report C/16/09 updates Cabinet on discussions relating to the above project which are of a commercial nature.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor John Collier and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/16/09.**
- 2. To authorise the Corporate Director – Strategic Operations, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise the terms of and enter into a planning collaboration agreement with the owners of Folkestone Racecourse to regulate the working arrangements between the parties as land owners and promoters with an objective of securing a suitable outline planning permission for a new garden town.**
- 3. To authorise the Corporate Director – Strategic Operations, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to finalise the terms of and enter into any option agreements with other land owners within the area of search that are considered necessary to deliver the Councils ambition for a new garden town.**
- 4. To note that a further, more detailed, development agreement is proposed between the Council and the owners of Folkestone Racecourse and to authorise the Corporate Director – Strategic**

Operations to negotiate that agreement in the best interests of the Council with further report being presented to Cabinet prior to the agreement being entered into.

- 5. To agree an initial landowner promoter budget in order to fund relevant activities of up to £1m in the first instance to be funded from the appropriate reserves with delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance to approve the funding source.**

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Minute Item 7

Feedback from the Leader's meeting with Parish Councils: 7th June 2016 (Sellindge, Stanford, Saltwood, Postling, Lympe)

The meeting with Parish Councils was well attended with some 30 or so local Councillors in attendance.

The Chief Executive and Corporate Director, Strategic Development, gave a presentation on the proposed Expression of Interest for a Garden Town at Otterpool Park which is being considered by SDC's Cabinet on 8th June 2016.

It was agreed that a summary note of the issues raised would be captured and made available for Cabinet Members to assist in their consideration of report C/16/08. The following key issues were raised:

- Many were unhappy about SDC's lack of transparency and poor communication with Parishes about the project, which has resulted in a loss of trust in the Council. They would prefer SDC to delay the process of submitting a bid to Government Garden Towns programme to allow time for PCs to consult with their communities. They are also seeking better communication in future about both the project and the planning process, including evidence and information.
- Concerns were raised about design quality, given low standards of housing design in some recent developments. Questions were asked about how SDC can prevent other landowners and developers from building poorly designed housing.
- Questions were asked about affordable housing and how that will be met.
- There was some opposition to the scale of development (with some recognising the need for some new housing).
- Concern was expressed about the potential impact on the existing villages, and whether they will be subsumed into the garden town resulting in a loss of local identity.
- Questions were asked about the potential occupiers of the new housing – there were questions raised about meeting the needs of London overspill as opposed to just local need.
- The process of the Council granting planning permission on its own land was raised, along with questions about why Otterpool Park would be different as a result of the Council's role as landowner.
- All Parish Councils asked for greater more deeper engagement as the project progresses.

Clarification was sought about next steps if the Expression of Interest is unsuccessful with the response being that a further report would be presented to Cabinet.

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