



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone
Date	Tuesday, 13 December 2016
Present	Councillors Mrs Ann Berry, Peter Gane, Clive Goddard, Mrs Claire Jeffrey, Mrs Mary Lawes (In place of Frank McKenna), Len Laws (In place of Ian Meyers), Dick Pascoe (In place of Michael Lyons) and Mrs Rodica Wheeler
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Michael Lyons, Councillor Frank McKenna, Councillor Ian Meyers, Councillor David Owen and Councillor Peter Simmons
Officers Present:	Andy Blaszkowicz (Head of Commercial and Technical Services), Ben Geering (Head of Planning), Katharine Harvey (Head of Economic Development), Amandeep Khroud (Head of Democratic Services and Law), Chris Lewis (Planning Advisor), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Susan Priest (Corporate Director - Strategic Development), Sarah Robson (Head of Communities), Andrina Smith (Head of Human Resources) and Julia Wallace (Masterplanning Project Manager)
Others Present:	Councillor Ms Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor John Collier, Cabinet Member for District Economy and Councillor Stuart Peall, Cabinet Member for Environment

38. **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Dick Pascoe declared a voluntary announcement in respect of minute 44 – Oportunitas Quarterly report. His interest arose as he is Chairman of the Board. He remained in the meeting during discussion and voting on this item.

Councillor Mrs Ann Berry declared a voluntary announcement in respect of minute 44 – Oportunitas Quarterly report. Her interest arose as she is a Board

member. She remained in the meeting during discussion and voting on this item.

39. **Minutes**

Proposed by Councillor Clive Goddard
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Ann Berry

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2016 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

(Voting: For 4; Against 0; Abstentions 4)

40. **Otterpool Park: A Garden Town of the Future**

The Cabinet at its meeting on 8th June 2016 agreed that:-

1. 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 the Cabinet 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.

This further report informs the Cabinet of an announcement on the 11th November 2016 by the Department of Communities and Local Government and Gavin Barwell M.P, Minister for Housing and Planning, that Shepway's expression of interest has been successful and that £750,000 of additional Government capacity funding has been made available that will help kick-start work and enable the Council to take forward their proposal.

The report sets out the planning, master planning and financial implications of the announcement and updates members of the work that is being carried out to progress the project.

Susan Priest, Corporate Director – Strategic Operations informed members that the Council is progressing two distinct work streams with regard to its role as landowner/promoter of the development and its role as local planning authority with responsibility for planning future strategic level growth in Shepway. Both work streams are progressing.

- **Westenhanger racecourse:**
It was noted that whilst this had been included in the draft Core Strategy 2013 for re-development, that was in a different context and following advice from the planning inspector had been withdrawn from that plan. There is now a much greater need for new housing both nationally and locally.
- **Housing:**
There is a statutory responsibility for councils to plan for future housing needs. The new work now being carried out on the review of the Core Strategy 2013 will need to respond to a significant increase in housing need at a strategic level.
Work on the Core Strategy review is distinct from the Places and Policies Local Plan, recently the subject of public consultation, which is proposing to provide approximately 2,500 homes on smaller and medium sized sites to complete the requirements of the existing Core Strategy.
Otterpool Park offers the opportunity for a wide range of housing needs to be met throughout the development, allowing for affordable housing; private and public sector renting opportunities; self-build; custom build and shared ownership, all of which will be available to local residents.
- **Delivery:**
In terms of delivery the Council has a direct landowner stake which allows for a greater level of control over the mix of proposed uses.
- **Transport:**
The Council will hold discussions with Network Rail in the coming months to talk about capacity and infrastructure improvements to the local rail service.
Studies being carried out will identify the capacity of the existing road network and provide the basis for new infrastructure investment able to support growth.

Councillor Ms Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Finance agreed that there is a need for housing in the district and confirmed that this development would help to provide the numbers required and agreed with the Corporate Director the necessity to have a wide range of housing which will benefit the whole district.

Proposed by Councillor Clive Goddard
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Rodica Wheeler and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/16/82.**
- 2. That a report be brought back to a future meeting in respect of the public consultations.**

(Voting: For 7; Against 1; Abstentions 0)

41. Fly-posting protocol

Report C/16/84 is to provide details of progress and measures taken to reduce the impact of fly-posting in the district and to seek approval for the

implementation of a fly-posting protocol to aid enforcement in this area.

Members agreed that this was a positive way forward for the district. Sarah Robson, Head of Communities clarified that if fly-posting is not on council owned land then pressure would be put on the owners to take action.

Proposed by Councillor Clive Goddard
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Claire Jeffrey and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/16/84.**
- 2. To support the adoption of the Fly-posting Protocol.**

(Voting: For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

42. Draft General Fund Budget

Report C/16/86 sets out the Council's Draft General Fund budget for 2017/18.

Pat Main, Interim Head of Finance, informed members that the Council had previously approved the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 to 2020/21 in September and Cabinet had agreed the Budget strategy in November.

This report details the draft General Fund Budget prior to Full Council's approval in February of the final budget proposals and council tax for 2017/18. Current estimates are based on a 2% Council Tax increase.

A schedule of the most significant service income and expenditure budget changes comparing 2017/18 with 2016/17 was tabled. Members were invited to raise any questions on the draft budget estimates.

Further work will now focus on finalising the following:

- The forecast for council tax and net business rates income
- This council's share of collection fund balances
- The Local Government Finance settlement and
- The budget implications of the revised Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

All of which will be confirmed in the final budget report.

Members were also informed that the budget consultation that took place during November resulted in responses from the public and business community. While a relatively small number of responses were received from the general public they did provide some useful feedback for consideration by Cabinet.

Members paid particular attention to the following:

- Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) – the Council is part of South East LEP; there is no direct financial contribution from the Council to the LEP but can be a beneficiary if project bids are successful.

- Business Rates – as it stands the Council keeps 50% of this income. Government proposals to allow councils to retain 100% from 2019/20 onwards are likely to come with additional service responsibilities. The detail of which has to be finalised but it is thought there will be a phased programme of change.

Proposed by Councillor Dick Pascoe
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Ann Berry and

Resolved:

1. **To receive and note Report C/16/86.**

(Voting: For 7; Against 0; Abstentions 1)

43. **Exclusion of the public**

Proposed by Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Ann Berry 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 6; Against 1; Abstentions 1)

44. **Oportunitas Quarterly progress report**

This item has been recorded as an exempt minute.