

Cabinet

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Wednesday, 21 July 2021
Present	Councillors John Collier, Ray Field, David Godfrey, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee (Vice-Chair), David Monk (Chairman), Stuart Peall, Tim Prater, Lesley Whybrow and David Wimble
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Wimble gave apologies for lateness.
Officers Present:	Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations), Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), Gavin Edwards (Performance and Improvement Specialist), Adrian Hammond (Housing Lead Specialist), Katharine Harvey (Chief Economic Development Officer), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Susan Priest (Chief Executive), Adrian Tofts (Strategy, Policy & Performance Lead Specialist) and Jemma West (Committee Service Specialist).

NOTE: All decisions are subject to call-in arrangements. The deadline for call-in is Friday 30 July 2021 at 5pm. Decisions not called in may be implemented on Monday 2 August 2021.

18. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

19. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

20. **District, Parish and Town Council Elections - Kent scale of election fees**

The report set out the annual changes to the Kent scale of election fees of Folkestone & Hythe's Returning Officer to undertake the arrangements for managing and conducting district, parish and town council elections from 1 April 2021.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,

Seconded by Councillor Collier; and

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/21/18 be received and noted.**

(Voting figures: 7 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The scale of fees enables a fair and reasonable recharge to be made by Folkestone & Hythe District Council to town and parish councils for their elections.

21. **Performance Management Framework**

The Council's Performance Management Framework was originally created and approved in 2014, with minor amendments being approved by Cabinet in 2017. The Performance Management Framework has been reviewed and simplified to make it more meaningful and useful for officers, elected members and all those who are engaged in the Council's performance management.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/21/25 be received and noted.**
2. **That the revised Performance Management Framework (Appendix 1 to this report) be approved.**

(Voting figures: 8 for, 0 against, 1 abstentions).

(Councillors Wimble and Peall arrived prior to the debate on this item).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- a) Effective performance management is critical to the success of the Council.
- b) The Council is committed to managing its performance against corporate plan priorities to ensure progress and improvement is maintained.

22. **Right to Build/Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register**

The report summarised what is expected of the Local Authority under the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015; the current number of people on the Council's Self-Build Register and how the need is identified in the base periods; the actions being taken to help to provide a supply of serviced sites to meet the

district's need; the proposed changes to the Council's register; and information on the offer of a workshop from the Government's Right to Build Task Force.

Proposed by Councillor Wimble,
Seconded by Councillor Godfrey; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report C/21/24 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the principle of introducing a local connection test (Part 1 and Part 2) for the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register be approved.**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations because:

- a) Guidance from the Right to Build Task Force could help to bring forward custom and self-build housing in the district.
- b) Introducing a local connection test to individuals registering on the Council's Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding list will enable local people to be prioritised.

23. Romney Marsh Business Hub grant scheme

The report sought agreement for Folkestone & Hythe District Council to make use of unallocated reserves from the Marsh Million Fund towards the development of a business grant scheme. This proposal will support the take-up of space within the Romney Marsh Business Hub and is to be launched in September 2021.

Proposed by Councillor Wimble,
Seconded by Councillor Collier; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report C/21/23 be received and noted.**
- 2. That unallocated reserves from the Marsh Million Fund be used to implement a business grant scheme to encourage take-up of space within the RMBH and also potentially for the take-up of the stage 2 development.**
- 3. That decisions on applications for the RMBH grant scheme be delegated to a subgroup of the Romney Marsh Partnership Board which will be chaired by the Folkestone & Hythe District Council's Lead Cabinet Member for the Local Economy.**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The completion of Romney Marsh Business Hub (RMBH) at Mountfield Road is due for completion in December 2021 and progress is going well. This will meet the needs of local businesses to help diversify the local economy and create new employment in New Romney. It is proposed that a business grant scheme

is implemented to attract businesses to take-up space within the hub and also, potentially later with the stage 2 development of the site in due course.

24. Housing Compensation Policy

The report sought approval for a new policy for the payment of compensation to Council tenants and leaseholders.

Proposed by Councillor Godfrey,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

1. That report C/21/22 be received and noted.
2. That the Housing Compensation Policy be approved.
3. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Housing and Operations, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Transport and Special Projects, to approve minor amendments to Housing Compensation Policy in the future.

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Housing Ombudsman requires social housing landlords to have and to publicise a compensation policy for their tenants and leaseholders. Folkestone and Hythe District Council (the Council) does not currently have a compensation policy specifically for the Housing service.

25. Community-Led Housing (CLH) Seed Funding Scheme

The report requested approval for a Council administered Community-Led Housing (CLH) Seed Funding Scheme of £100k. The funds for this would come from the £437,361 awarded to the Council by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) to promote and support CLH in the district.

Community-led housing can help to achieve several of FHDC's strategic priorities and constituents' aims and aspirations. The Seed Funding Scheme is intended to support CLH projects that will increase housing supply by potentially delivering additional, new affordable housing and turn empty properties into housing. It is designed to help community groups deliver housing schemes on land identified by the community, or made available by the local authority/local landowners through sale or long leases. The funding would be used by CLH groups to pursue any model of community-led development for the provision of affordable housing, including Community Land Trusts and Cohousing Projects.

Proposed by Councillor Godfrey,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

- a) That report C/21 be received and noted.
- b) That the proposed CLH Seed Funding Scheme as detailed in this report and the required funding be approved.

- c) **That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Housing Lead and the Cabinet Member for Housing to award funding to groups following a successful application.**
- d) **That the Cabinet Member for Housing be given delegated authority (in consultation with Head of Service) to make minor changes to the scheme as necessary and subject to any feedback from community groups applying to the scheme.**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The funding of £437,361 was awarded by central government, with the intention that a seed funding programme would be put in place, alongside other support provision, to enable community organisations to have access to an initial income stream, which will allow them to explore local housing needs, and later possibly pursue housing options/solutions for their community. The proposed Seed Funding Scheme is intended to support new CLH projects in the district.