

Cabinet

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Tuesday, 26 April 2022
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	None.
Officers Present:	Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations), Gill Butler (Chief Officer - Housing), Alastair Clifford (Chief Officer - Operations), Cheryl Ireland (Chief Financial Services Officer), Ellen Joyce (Democratic Services Trainee), Susan Priest (Chief Executive), Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services), Lee Walker (Capital and Treasury Senior Specialist) and Jemma West (Committee Service Specialist)

NOTE: All decisions are subject to call-in arrangements. The deadline for call-in is Friday 6 May at 5pm. Decisions not called in may be implemented on Monday 9 May 2022.

98. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

99. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2022 were submitted, approved, and signed by the Leader.

100. **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 2022.

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

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/21/103 be received and noted.**

(Voting figures: 9 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 district, town and parish councils for their elections.

101. General Fund Capital Programme Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring

The monitoring report provided the latest projection of the current financial position for the General Fund capital programme in 2021/22, based on expenditure to 31 January 2022, and identified variances compared to the latest approved budget.

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

RESOLVED:

- That report C/21/98 be received and noted.

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

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations because it needs to be kept informed of the General Fund capital programme position and take appropriate action to deal with any variance from the approved budget.

102. General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring Q4 21/22

The monitoring report provided a projection of the end of year financial position of the General Fund revenue budget, based on expenditure to February 2022.

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

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/21/101 be received and noted.**
2. **That the previously allocated £300k for the interim delivery of corporate priorities (C/20/86) be made available for use in the next two financial periods (referenced in paragraph 1.3).**

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

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations because it needs to be informed of the council's General Fund revenue budget position and take appropriate action to deal with any variance from the approved budget.

103. **HRA Budget Monitoring Quarter 4**

The monitoring report provided a projection of the end of year financial position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue expenditure and HRA capital programme based on net expenditure to 28 February 2022.

Proposed by Councillor Godfrey,
Seconded by Councillor Wimble; and

RESOLVED:

That report C/21/99 be received and noted.

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

REASON FOR DECISION:

Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations because Cabinet needs to be kept informed of the Housing Revenue Account position and take appropriate action to deal with any variance from the approved budget and be informed of the final 2021/22 position.

104. **Use of pesticides**

The report gave an update on the work undertaken to reduce the council's use of pesticide and proposes to use budgeted funds to reduce the carbon footprint of the Grounds Maintenance (GM) operational activities.

A discussion took place around the use of pesticides in play areas, and a Cabinet Member asked for it to be noted that pesticides were not used on play areas or football pitches.

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

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/21/106 be received and noted.**
2. **That the £35k budgeted funds be used for pesticide trials to invest in machinery that reduces the carbon footprint from GM activities.**
3. **That a letter be sent to the Secretary of State outlining the council's opposition to the use of glyphosate based pesticides, drawing on the experience of council trials of potential alternatives.**

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

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The reduction in pesticide use since 2019 has been significant, and there is a plan to reduce this further in future years. The report recommended that the available budget to complete the trials should be spent on electric machinery

used by the Grounds Maintenance (GM) team, and for the officers to continue to keep up to date on latest technology developments.

105. Car Parking Payment Options

The report sought to inform members of the payment options currently available to customers using the council's on & off street parking facilities, and considered further alternatives.

Proposed by Councillor Field,
Seconded by Councillor Wimble; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report C/21/105 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the car parking payment options be considered, and the existing facilities continued.**
- 3. That the upgrade of 35 existing pay & display machines to accept contactless card payments, at an estimated cost of £27k be approved.**
- 4. That the installation of an ANPR system in Sandgate Road Car Park, Folkestone, which will cost around £41k be approved, with Officers reporting back after a 12 month period.**
- 5. That the upgrade of 5 machines to units accepting contactless card payments costing a total of £20k be approved.**
- 6. That the overspend of £13k to accommodate the card payment option be met from net revenue saving within Parking Services.**
- 7. That officers review the cash payment facility in all sites 12 months after the introduction of the contactless card payments, and make recommendations on whether or not to continue this payment option.**
- 8. That increased revenue costs for credit and debit card transactions (estimated around £13.5k pa) be funded from cash collection fees and increased revenue.**
- 9. That the minimum value for card payment be set at £1.40 to reduce the operational card payment fees for the council.**

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

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Alternative payment options such as contactless card payment machines and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) will improve the operational efficiency of parking facilities, and will be well received by customers. Adding these additional payment facilities is likely to improve usage. Evidence also suggests that significant operational savings can be made by providing these options.

106. Social housing decarbonisation fund – Award update and next steps

The report provided an update to Cabinet on the successful award of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 (SHDF) application and outlined the next steps to deliver the project. The project is designed to improve the energy efficiency and thermal performance of 109 of the Council's worst performing

housing properties using a 'fabric first' approach. The project also includes a complete retrofit of Ross House to deliver a 'zero carbon in use' flag ship building.

Proposed by Councillor Godfrey,
Seconded by Councillor Peall; and

RESOLVED:

1. **That the report be received and noted.**
2. **That the award of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 1 totaling £1,989,090 be accepted.**
3. **That the proposed programme of works to deliver the project be noted.**
4. **That officers issue a tender for the required works and enter into a contract with the successful bidder.**
5. **That delegated authority be given to the Director – Housing & Operations to undertake any tasks to conclude the project within the agreed budget framework.**
6. **That it be noted that officers intend to submit a further bid for Wave 2 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), the detail of which will be reported separately to Cabinet.**

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

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet were asked to note the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund award and the outline programme and approach to deliver the project. Cabinet are asked to approve the issue of a tender for the works and acceptance of the subsequent winning bid. Further to this Cabinet are asked to provide approval for Officers to submit a bid later this year for Wave 2 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund which will allow further works to the Council's housing stock.