

CABINET

27 February 2023

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held at the Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Monday 27 February 2023 at 6:31pm.

Cabinet Members present: Councillors D.B. Oliver (Leader), S.M. Prochak (MBE) (Deputy Leader), C.A. Bayliss, T.J.C. Byrne, K.P. Dixon, A.K. Jeeawon, H.L. Timpe and J. Vine-Hall.

Other Members present: Councillors J. Barnes (remote), Mrs. V. Cook (remote) (in part), P.C. Courtel, B.J. Drayson, P.J. Gray (in part), K.M. Harmer, C.A. Madeley, C.R. Maynard (remote), A.S. Mier, P.N. Osborne and G.F. Stevens (remote).

Advisory Officers present: Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Interim Chief Finance Officer, Director – Place and Climate Change, Head of Housing and Community (in part), Head of Neighbourhood Services (in part), Planning Policy Manager, Corporate Programme and Projects Officer, Housing Enabling and Development Officer (in part) and Democratic Services Officer.

Also present: 16 members of the public via the live webcast.

Publication Date: 2 March 2023

The decisions made under PART II will come into force on 10 March 2023 unless they have been subject to the call-in procedure.

CB22/74. MINUTES

(1)

The Chair was authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2023 as a correct record of the proceedings.

CB22/75. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K.M. Field.

CB22/76. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

(5)

Declarations of interest were made by Councillors in the Minutes as indicated below:

Dixon Agenda Item 12 – Personal and Prejudicial Interest as a member of Battle Local Action Plan.

Harmer Agenda Item 8 – Personal Interest as a volunteer for Warming up the Homeless.

Jeeawon Agenda Item 8 – Personal Interest as a Trustee for Warming up the Homeless.

Maynard Agenda Item 8 - Personal Interest as an Executive Member of East Sussex County Council.

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL – not subject to call-in procedure under Rule 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

CB22/77. **CAPITAL, INVESTMENT AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023-24**

(11)

The CIPFA 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes required local authorities to prepare a Capital Strategy (CS) report, which was contained at Appendix A to the report. The Strategy aimed to give Members an overview of the Council's approach to capital. The objectives of the Code were to ensure, within this clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The CS report gave a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activities contributed to the provision of local public services, along with an overview of how associated risk was managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. The CS was intended to be a longer-term view of investment and go beyond the detailed five-year Capital Programme (CP) and was updated annually in line with the requirements of CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code.

A significant part of the CP related to the Council's approved Property Investment Strategy (PIS). The Council had established an initial capital budget of £35m to support the programme and to date, approximately £30.0m had been expended or committed on 15 PIS properties/sites. Income of approximately £1.6m was included within 2023/24 Revenue Budget for PIS assets that had been acquired.

Rother DC Housing Company (RDHC) Ltd had been established to undertake development of the Council's land to improve housing outcomes and for each project, subject to agreement, the Council provided a shareholder loan which would earn interest at market rates, supporting the Council's Revenue Budget. Council approved a loan facility of £80m for the housing company, which was included within the current CP, but release of funding was based upon individual assessment of relevant sites and successful business cases.

In 2023/24, the Council was planning capital expenditure of £114m (based on the current estimates for slippage) and tables 1 and 2 within Appendix B to the report provided a high-level summary of the forecast expenditure and financing. The main capital projects in 2023/24 included the housing development schemes to be delivered by RDHC, PIS investments and Temporary Accommodation acquisitions.

All capital expenditure had to be financed either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing or leasing for example). The Council was currently reviewing its financing of those schemes where funding was yet to be identified. The Council's Capital Financing Requirement was shown in table 3 within Appendix B to the report and projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt within table 4.

The Council was required to receive and approve at least three main reports each year to include:

- 1) Prudential and Treasury Indicators and the Treasury Strategy;
- 2) a Mid-Year Treasury Management Report; and
- 3) an Annual Treasury Report.

These reports incorporated a number of policies, estimates and actuals which were scrutinised by the Audit and Standards Committee (ASC) prior to making recommendations to Cabinet and full Council.

In addition to the three main reports, from 2023/24 quarterly reporting (end of June/end of December) was also required. However, these additional reports did not have to be reported to full Council but did require to be adequately scrutinised. This role was also undertaken by the ASC.

The Treasury Management Strategy (at Appendix B to the report) detailed how investments and borrowings were to be organised, including treasury indicators and the Annual Investment Strategy (Appendix C to the report) detailed how investments would be managed.

The 2023/24 draft Revenue Budget reported to Cabinet on 6 February 2023 presumed an income of £586k from treasury activities, which assumed an average rate of return across the portfolio of 1.98% (1.64% 2022/23). The forecast for the next five years saw returns increasing until 2024/25 with a peak at around £700k due to increasing rates of return, then levelling off at around £500k by 2027/28 based on the forecast use of cash balances.

The expectation was that 2023/24 would see a return to some sort of stability in the investment environment following the turbulences resulting from the post-pandemic economic climate, the ongoing war in Ukraine and the effects of the mini-budget. The strategies proposed in the report, together with the interest rates forecast, were in line with the assumptions made when preparing the 2023/24 Revenue and Capital Budgets. The costs of treasury operations were contained within the 2023/24 Revenue Budget.

RECOMMENDED: That the:

- 1) Capital Strategy as set out at Appendix A to the report be approved and adopted;

- 2) Treasury Management Strategy as set out at Appendix B to the report be approved and adopted;
- 3) Annual Investment Strategy as set out at Appendix C to the report be approved and adopted;
- 4) Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2023-24 be approved;
- 5) Prudential and Treasury Indicators as set out within the report be approved; and
- 6) authorised limits in this report be approved.

PART II – EXECUTIVE DECISIONS – subject to the call-in procedure under Rule 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules by no later than 4:00pm on 9 March 2023.

CB22/78. **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND TARGETS FOR 2023-24**
(6)

Cabinet received and considered Minute OSC22/49 arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) held on 23 January 2023 that had considered the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2023/24. Managing performance to deliver the best possible outcomes within the resources available was a core function for the Council. Therefore, annually the Council selected a small set of KPIs and agreed their target levels of performance for the next financial year. In turn, they would be quarterly reported to, monitored and scrutinised by the OSC with any recommendations being forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

The KPIs focused on key outcomes within the Corporate Plan and the impact of both the local economy and efficient delivery of key services to Rother's residents, within the Council's resources. The KPIs would enable the Council to make comparisons with other councils and monitor performance over time. 25 KPIs were proposed for 2023/24 and would be reported within eight themed areas, namely:

- Environmental Health (two indicators)
- Housing (three indicators)
- Customer Services (five indicators)
- Neighbourhood Services (five indicators)
- Estates (one indicator)
- Corporate Core (one indicator)
- Planning Development Management (four indicators)
- Revenues and Benefits (four indicators)

Other KPIs that were exceeding or significantly missing their target would be reported to the OSC by exception. A State of the District would be reported annually to the OSC, which would be wide ranging and seek to ensure that Members were kept informed of changes to the profile, demographic and housing and economic landscape of the district.

The Environment Strategy 2020-2030 set out the activities and actions that were to be undertaken in response to the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration in 2019. It had been agreed that an updated Environment Strategy be developed and overseen by the Climate Change Steering Group and reported to OSC every six months. Carbon baseline information would be reported annually as part of the State of the District report.

Cabinet approved the KPIs and targets but amended two and added two to Planning Development Management, as follows:

- % Major Planning Applications with statutory timescale or agreed extension: Target 95%
- % Non-Major Planning Applications within statutory timescale or agree extension: Target 95%
- Trending performance of applications and enforcements – enforcement target to be confirmed
- PS1 and PS2 applications to be held at a maximum of 350, with a decision to review resources at 10% above that level

Cabinet were satisfied that these provided an adequate review of the Council's key performance areas.

RESOLVED: That the following Key Performance Indicators for 2023/24 and their performance targets be approved and reviewed quarterly by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1) Environmental Health
 - % of planning food inspections carried out: Target 90%
 - % of service requests resolved on time: Target 90%
- 2) Housing
 - No. Homelessness Prevention/Relief: Target 120 per annum
 - Average cost per TA Placement: £1,200 per month
 - Average Number of weeks spent in Temporary Accommodation
- 3) Customer Services
 - Calls received per month: Target Reduced on current
 - First Contact Resolution – number of enquiries that are resolved at first point of contact: Target 85%
 - Average call wait time: Target Reduced on current
 - Customer Satisfaction – how satisfied customers are with our services: Target 85%
 - Total Contact – total customer contact including digital: Target Monitor
- 4) Neighbourhood Services
 - Waste collections missed bins/100,000: Target 62/ 100,000
 - % of public land found with unacceptable levels of litter: Target 2.50%
 - % of public land found with unacceptable levels of detritus: Target 7%
 - Fly tips recorded on public land/month: Target Average below 70

- NES – fly tip fines: Target Monitor
- 5) Estates
- Total income from investment properties: Target £2,429,510
- 6) Corporate Core
- FOI – % answered in 20 days: Target 95%
- 7) Planning Development Management
- % Major Planning Applications with statutory timescale or agreed extension: Target 95%
 - % Non-Major Planning Applications within statutory timescale or agree extension: Target 95%
 - % Major Planning Appeals Allowed: Target 10%
 - % Non-Major Planning Appeals Allowed: Target 30%
 - Trending performance of applications and enforcements – enforcement target to be confirmed
 - PS1 and PS2 applications to be held at a maximum of 350, with a decision to review resources at 10% above that level
- 8) Revenues and Benefits
- Council Tax Collection Rate: Target 98.30%
 - NDR (Business Rates) Collection Rate: Target 98.30%
 - Average Days to Process New Housing Benefit Claims: Target 20 days
 - Average Days to Process Existing Housing Benefit Claims: Target 14 days

CB22/79. **REVIEW OF THE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2024 (PART A)**

(7)

Cabinet received and considered Minute OSC22/47 arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) held on 23 January 2023 that had considered progress of the Improvement Delivery Plan of Priority 1 and Priority 3 of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 (Part A). An updated Improvement Delivery Plan and a summary of all the actions achieved since the Strategy's inception was attached to the report at Appendices A and B respectively and Members' attention was drawn to some of the key highlights as follows:

PRIORITY 1: Increasing the Supply of Housing

The Council was actively seeking to broaden the range of Registered Providers (RP) of affordable housing operating in Rother and had benefitted from the delivery of wholly affordable housing sites across the district in 2021/22 and 2022/23. The Council's primary RP was Southern Housing Association (formerly Optivo) and it was essential that sites were progressed for RPs to deliver affordable housing provision. At present there was a slow-down in new sites and the Housing Team was actively working with RPs to address this.

The Rother DC Housing Company Ltd Business Plan (2022 to 2025) sought to deliver 1,000 new build homes over 15 years. Priorities for 2023/24 were to continue to deliver the 200 dwelling Blackfriars

scheme, as well as the wider aims and objectives identified within the plan.

Progress on the new local plan was ongoing and in relation to planning for new housing supply, the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment was being completed in-house with assistance from relevant consultants. In addition, a Technical Advice Note for 100% Affordable Housing had been formally approved by full Council.

It was anticipated that 119 affordable homes would be delivered by the end of 2022/23, compared to 112 in 2021/22 and 43 in 2020/21 (during the COVID-19 pandemic). Viability remained an issue in some circumstances.

PRIORITY 3: Improving the quality and suitability of existing housing and new build housing

During 2021/22 and up to December 2022, a total of 107 inspections were completed (including 35 temporary accommodation dwellings). The Warm Home Check service, run by East Sussex County Council, was promoted and discussed during the inspections, and provided energy efficiency advice and financial advice around heating. Work to identify residential schemes using Modern Methods of Construction was ongoing and would continue throughout 2023/24.

Cabinet agreed with the OSC's recommendations and that their suggestions and ideas should be brought to the attention of the Council's Housing Company via the Head of Housing and Community.

RESOLVED: That the:

- 1) 'targets achieved' as listed in Appendix B to the report be removed from the Improvement Delivery Plan and replaced with the amended targets proposed at Appendix A to the report, with the following amendment:

Priority Objective 3.2 – 10 homes a year be improved due to licensing or statutory notices being served; and

- 2) progress made against the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy included in the Improvement Delivery Plan (Appendix A to the report) be noted.

(Councillor Harmer declared a Personal Interest in this matter as a volunteer for Warming up the Homeless and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the meeting during the consideration thereof).

(Councillor Jeeawon declared a Personal Interest in this matter as a Trustee for Warming up the Homeless and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the meeting during the consideration thereof).

CB22/80. **REVIEW OF THE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2024 (PART B)**

(8)

Cabinet received and considered Minute OSC22/48 arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) held on 23 January 2023 that had considered progress of the Improvement Delivery Plan of Priority 2 of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 (Part B). An updated Improvement Delivery Plan and a summary of all the actions achieved since the Strategy's inception was attached to the report at Appendices A and B respectively. Members' attention was drawn to some of the key highlights, as follows:

PRIORITY 2: Rough Sleeping, Homelessness and Meeting Housing Aspirations

In June 2022, a review of the Council's housing service was carried out by the Homeless Advice and Support Team (HAST – department of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities). They were impressed with several initiatives and particularly praised the Council's Rother Tenant Finder Scheme, as well as the amount of temporary accommodation (TA) properties purchased. Some areas for improvement were identified, namely to review the Council's Allocations Policy, as well as oversee the increased demand for the service since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council purchased four units of accommodation in 2022 for use within the East Sussex-wide Housing First scheme and a further four units were scheduled to be purchased, which would total 12 units for 2023 following further funding being secured.

Through the Rother Sleeper Initiative (RSI), a gap in provision for vulnerable females had been identified and a proposal made by East Sussex Housing Partnership (ESHP) would deliver 12 respite rooms across East Sussex; funding had been extended to March 2023.

The Council had secured 22 TA units, with 16 occupied and seven under refurbishment, within one block of flats. A further nine units were under offer at various stages of purchase. Inclusive of the 22 units, eight were used to support former rough sleepers.

Up to 2025, Government funding had been secured to deliver the countywide initiative "The RSI & Complex Needs Homeless Service"; a seamless support service across the breadth of the rough sleeper accommodation pathways. A crowdfunding platform, launched in August 2022 and commissioned until summer 2023, supported the homeless. Within the first three months, 32 customers were referred to the service and the Council had commissioned BHT Sussex to provide specialist housing advice to residents across the district who were not eligible to receive legal aid.

The ESHP had been restructured to develop specialist sub-groups that would facilitate greater partnership working across housing development and homelessness support services. To complement the

restructure, a new Housing Partnership Lead had been recruited, funded by the Local Housing Authorities and East Sussex Public Health; the post would be jointly line-managed by the Head of Housing and Community and Public Health.

In March 2022, the Homes for Ukraine scheme was established which matched Ukrainian guests with accommodation hosts. The Council had worked in partnership with several organisations to ensure there was support available. Additional staff resources had been employed to support this work. Members were pleased to note the work that the community hubs had carried out across the district in this regard.

Cabinet was pleased to agree with the OSC's recommendations and added a further recommendation that the work carried out by the community hubs throughout the district was noted and appreciated.

RESOLVED: That the:

- 1) 'targets achieved' as listed in Appendix B to the report be removed from the Improvement Delivery Plan and replaced with the amended targets proposed at Appendix A to the report;
- 2) progress made against the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy included in the Improvement Delivery Plan (Appendix A to the report) be noted; and
- 3) work carried out by the community hubs throughout the district was noted and appreciated.

(Councillor Harmer declared a Personal Interest in this matter as a volunteer for Warming up the Homeless and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the meeting during the consideration thereof).

(Councillor Jeeawon declared a Personal Interest in this matter as a Trustee for Warming up the Homeless and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the meeting during the consideration thereof).

(When it first became apparent, Councillor Maynard declared a Personal Interest in this matter as an Executive Member of East Sussex County Council and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct remained in the meeting during the consideration thereof).

CB22/81.
(9)

CITIZEN'S ADVICE CONTRACT

In March 2022, Cabinet approved the extension of the contract the Council held at that time with Rother District Citizen's Advice (RDCA). The reason for the extension was that RDCA had been through a very challenging few years as it tried to operate a service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Citizen's Advice 1066 (CA1066) had recently amalgamated with the former RDCA and was under contract with both Rother District and

Hastings Borough Councils. Over the last year, the Council had been supporting the CEO of CA1066 as she got to grips with delivering money, welfare benefits, debt and related advice and support to residents. The Council received quarterly performance reports from CA1066 and it was positive to see the improved performance and outcomes they were achieving. A performance summary for Quarter 3 2022/23 was attached to the report at Appendix A, alongside a service demand summary.

The Council had also been an active member of the East Sussex Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice Independent Review Steering Group, led by the East Sussex Integrated Care Board (formerly the Clinical Commissioning Group, CCG). As a member of the group, the Council had contributed to the commission of an independent review of welfare, money and debt advice services across East Sussex, with a view to identifying opportunities for shared investment and the co-commissioning of services.

CA1066 had secured a range of additional grant awards, independently of its two Council contracts, since April 2022, which had funded an additional four FTE staff members in total. Outreach at Battle and Rye had been re-established and locating advisors at Rural Partnership events.

Cabinet noted that the East Sussex Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice Independent Review Steering Group (ESBDAIRSG) had timetabled to have in place a revised countywide commission by March 2024 and agreed that the existing contract be extended by a further 12-months in order for the Council's future commissioning timetable to align with the wider partnership. Revised proposals would be brought forward later in 2023 that would detail the commissioning approach the Council might wish to adopt, including a value for money appraisal as well as revised service specification, following the findings of the (ESBDAIRSG).

Members noted that there were other organisations in the district that might also benefit from Council funding and agreed to carry out a full review of funding for third sector organisations across the district in the next municipal year.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the Citizen's Advice 1066 contract continue and an extension of funding of £85,000 for a further one-year period be approved; and
- 2) a full review of funding for third sector organisations across the district be carried in the next municipal year.

CB22/82.

WASTE AND RECYCLING VEHICLES - USE OF HYDROTREATED VEGETABLE OIL INSTEAD OF DIESEL

(10)

In 2019, Rother District Council (RDC) declared a climate emergency and pledged to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO), often referred to as renewable diesel, was a fossil-free alternative to mineral diesel and a paraffinic bio-based liquid

fuel originating from many kinds of vegetable oils, as well as animal fats.

HVO offered an immediate opportunity to realise significant carbon emission reductions across the waste and street cleansing fleet as a 'drop in' fuel to replace white diesel, by as much as 90%. The vehicles required no adjustments and warranties remain unaffected. The switch to HVO was quick, straight forward and relatively modest in cost when compared to other carbon reducing technologies.

The Joint Waste and Recycling Committee (JWRC) had recommended that each partner council consider the implications of funding HVO in 2023/24 and onwards. The use of HVO could act as an interim measure whilst zero emission technology for large goods vehicles in the form of electric battery and hydrogen fuel cell powered vehicles further developed to where they become affordable and suited to the workload.

This recommendation followed a lengthy period of work by the Joint Waste Climate Change Working Group (a sub-group of the JWRC) to consider short and longer-term options to minimise carbon emissions, and a successful trial using HVO for waste and street cleansing vehicles in Wealden. The principles for an agreement aligned with the Joint Waste Contract to enable use of HVO had been agreed with Biffa and the councils were liable to fund the cost differential between diesel and HVO fuel.

In the Rother District area, circa 336,000 litres of fuel was required per annum to operate the existing fleet. Based on a 64.8 (as at December 2022) pence per litre differential between HVO and diesel, an estimated additional annual budget of £218,000 per annum would therefore enable use of HVO and secure an immediate reduction in carbon emission of up to 90%.

It was noted that a single fuel tank, located at the St Leonards depot, supplied the vehicles used to operate in both the Hastings and Rother areas. To enable the change to HVO would therefore require both Hastings Borough Council (HBC) and RDC to accept the terms of the agreement in due course.

Final terms of an Agreement to secure use of HVO fuel as the alternative to diesel would need to be approved by the JWRC followed by legal drafting and execution of the Agreement and operational implementation through to 2026, when the current waste contract was due to end. It was intended that the use of HVO and associated costs would be included as part of the specification for any contract extension or re-procurement process.

Members noted that fuel pricing was affected by several factors and was therefore highly volatile. The price differential between the two would therefore change until the cost could be fixed at the point of purchase of the fuel. This could mean an increase to the cost differential to approximately £300K + per annum.

Cabinet noted that the increase in cost to the Council's 2023/2024 Revenue Budget of between £218K and £300K had not been factored in as it was deemed unaffordable without identifying service related savings equal to this amount. It was proposed and agreed that the waste, recycling and street cleansing vehicles continue to operate on diesel for the forthcoming financial year. In the meantime, officers would continue to work towards identifying potential service related savings that could offset the increase in HVO cost, either partially or in full, for future financial years. A paper would be brought forward to a future meeting of Cabinet to outline and approve proposed savings.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) due to the significant carbon emissions reductions of up to 90% the introduction of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil as a direct replacement for diesel in delivering waste and street cleansing services through the Joint Waste and Recycling Contract be approved in principle;
- 2) the current cost predictions have not been factored into the Council's budget for the 2023/24 financial year and are therefore deemed to be unaffordable;
- 3) the Director – Place and Climate Change be authorised to identify possible service-related savings that can partially or fully offset the cost increase related to the introduction of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil for 2024/2025; and
- 4) a paper be brought forward to a future meeting of Cabinet to outline and approve proposed service-related savings.

CB22/83.

COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME - ROUND 2 AND COMMUNITY LOTTERY UPDATE

(12)

The Council's Community Grant Scheme (CGS) made provision for up to £130,000 per annum to be made available to community groups or organisations that met the specific grant criteria of the Scheme. The CGS Panel had delegated authority to grant awards up to £1,000 and it was noted that two applications had been received in Round 2; Hurst Green Parish Council for £1,000 and Strandliners Community Interest Company for £400.50.

Round 2 for 2022/23 closed on 15 December 2022. A total of four applications were received. The Panel met on 26 January 2023 and recommended awards for four applications from Battle Local Action Plan, Burwash Playing Field Association, Icklesham Parish Council and Staplecross Club, as set out in Appendix A to the report. Members were pleased to note that the first three applications listed were in line with the Council's recently adopted Rother Health and Well-Being: Leisure Facilities Strategy.

Members were supportive of a £10,000 Council fund being allocated for supporting community events to celebrate The King's Coronation (6 May 2023 to 8 May 2023). The Council would match-fund pound for pound to a maximum of £500 per grant. It was agreed that delegated

authority be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Community Grants Panel to approve grants up to the value of £500. A scheme guide, on-line application process and questions were attached at Appendix B to the report.

Cabinet was reminded that conditions were applied when awarding grants; specifically, that full funding was required to be obtained in advance of any Rother payments being made and that Rother District Council was acknowledged in any publicity and promotional material associated with any project.

Since the Rother Community Lottery's (RCL) launch in April 2022, approximately £27,000 had been facilitated by RCL, with £15,900 distributed to various good causes (74 causes were signed up). £500 of prize money had been donated back to the cause supported. To date £4,600 had been awarded in prizes. Should sales remain at the current rate, potential annual income could be £33,500, with a further £15,700 of income to the Council.

After discussion, Cabinet approved all four grants including £10,000 to support community events for the King's Coronation in May 2023. Members were encouraged to promote the King's Coronation, Rother Community Lottery and Small Grants schemes within their Wards.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) the Community Grants listed below, as recommended by the Grants Panel, be approved subject to specific conditions relating to each application, as follows:

Battle Local Action Plan – £1,723
Burwash Playing Field Association – £30,000
Icklesham Parish Council – £5,588
Staplecross Club – £3,000

- 2) a fund of £10,000 from the Community Grants Scheme be approved for supporting community events to celebrate the forthcoming King's Coronation (6 May – 8 May 2023);
- 3) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Community Grants Panel to award or refuse the King's Coronation 2023 grant scheme within the criteria set out within Appendix B to the report; and
- 4) all Members to promote the various Community Grants Schemes and the Rother Community Lottery within their wards.

(Councillor Dixon declared a Personal and Prejudicial Interest in this matter in so far as it related to the application from Battle Local Action Plan as he was a member of Battle Local Action Plan and in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct left the room during the consideration thereof).

CB22/84. **PEASMARSH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION**

(13)

The Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) had been prepared by Peasmarsh Parish Council following designation of the parish as a Neighbourhood Area in March 2021. It was currently the subject of a statutory public consultation ending on 31 March 2023, during which period representations could be made. Duly-made representations would be considered through an examination process by an independent Examiner to determine whether the Plan met the 'basic conditions' required in order for the Plan to proceed to referendum.

It was normal practice to report draft representations to Cabinet for approval as part of this process. However, in order to make comments prior to the pre-election period (formerly known as Purdah), which was due to start on 24 March 2023, Cabinet was requested to agree that the preparation and submission of representations was delegated to the Director - Place and Climate Change, subject to approval of the representations by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and the Ward Councillors for Eastern Rother.

The Neighbourhood Plan related to the period 2019-2039 to align with the emerging Rother District Council (RDC) Local Plan, however it was noted that the PNP was required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan (Rother Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and Development and Site Allocations Local Plan 2019). It was, therefore, a critical function of the Council to consider and advise on whether each Neighbourhood Plan policy – and the Plan overall – was in 'general conformity' with the policies of the adopted Rother Local Plan Core Strategy. A pre-submission version of the PNP was consulted on for the Regulation 14 Consultation, managed by the Parish Council, from 31 October – 12 December 2022. RDC had submitted representations which were included in the Consultation Statement, submitted as part of the current consultation.

RESOLVED: That the Director - Place and Climate Change be granted delegated authority to submit this Council's representations on the Peasmarsh Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the approval of the representations by the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning and Ward Councillors for Eastern Rother.

(The Leader had accepted this item onto the Agenda as an Additional Agenda Item to enable Cabinet to consider this matter which could not wait until the next scheduled meeting of Cabinet on 27 March 2023, due to the pre-election period.)

CHAIR

The meeting closed at 8:39pm