

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL**RECORD OF DECISIONS**

(in terms of Access to Information Rule 18)

CABINET

Wednesday 21 February 2007

**Present: Councillor Howell (Chairman)
Councillors Cunningham, Horwood, Mrs Mayhew
and Mrs Thomas.**

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

CAB141/06 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bulman, Davies and Scholes.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

CAB142/06 No declarations of interest were received.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**DECISION NO.CAB143/06****NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****PROCUREMENT, PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Howell****TITLE OF REPORT:****The Strategic Plan (070221/CAB002)****PRIORITIES:****All****DISCUSSION:**

Members had considered this report in detail at the Cabinet meeting on 8 February and their comments had now been incorporated into the Strategic Plan. They were advised of the observations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 20 February 2007 and noted that the Working Party had met with the Director of Planning and Development to discuss the Plan and the necessary amendments had been made.

A revised Plan was circulated at the meeting, and Members went through the amendments that had been made. Discussion took place on the Prioritisation section of the document and Members felt that the subtitle 'Non-Priority Issues' was misleading to the public, although they were advised that an explanation of this category would be detailed in the Foreword. It was suggested that the sub-titles should be amended to read – 'Priority Services (increase resources)', 'Important Issues (maintain resources)' and 'Non-Priority Issues (release resources)'.

Members were advised that the Key Performance Indicators supporting the Corporate Objectives shown at Appendix 1 to the Plan had been removed from the Plan to allow more time to ensure that the indicators, and their supporting targets, were robust. The Director of Change and Business Support explained that these indicators would be developed over the course of February and March and reported to Cabinet in early April.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That, subject to the changes as identified above, the draft Strategic Plan be submitted to Council for approval; and
- (2) That the current Plan be the basis for developing a more comprehensive Strategic Plan covering the period 2008-13, to be the subject of widespread public consultation.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Plan sets out a number of strategic objectives and key performance indicators, which together underpin the design and delivery of Council services, the prioritisation and allocation of resources and the achievement of value for money.

Contact Officer: Nazeya Hussain, Head of Community and Corporate Planning
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: nazeya.hussain@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB144/06**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Horwood****TITLE OF REPORT:***** Medium Term Financial Strategy (070221/CAB003)****PRIORITIES:****All****DISCUSSION:**

Cabinet had previously considered this report in detail at its meeting on 8 February. Members were advised of the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 20 February 2007.

DECISION MADE:

That the Medium Term Financial Strategy be submitted to Full Council for adoption.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The strategic approach to financial management allows for the optimum use of resources in terms of value for money and will add strength to the Council's Strategic Plan.

Contact Officer: Sean Clark, Head of Financial and Property Services
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: sean.clark@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB145/06**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ADMINISTRATION****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Horwood**

TITLE OF REPORT:	* 2007/08 – 2009/2010 Budget (070221/CAB004)
PRIORITIES:	All
DISCUSSION:	<p>Cabinet had previously considered this report in detail at its meeting on 8 February. An updated and more detailed version of Table 3 had been circulated prior to this meeting and Members were provided with further information on precepts from other organisations (with the exception of Kent County Council who were meeting on 22 February).</p> <p>Officers advised the Cabinet of the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 20 February 2007. The Committee had recognised the enormous amount of work carried out to produce such a balanced budget and praised the way in which the detail had been presented. The Cabinet endorsed this. The Committee's recommendation had been 'To note the creative and well thought out way in which officers and Cabinet produced a balanced budget'.</p>
DECISION MADE:	That, following the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 20 February, the Council agree the recommendations approved by Cabinet on 8 February 2007.
REASON FOR DECISION:	For the Council to set the Council Tax for 2007/08 and approve the revenue and capital spending plans.

Contact Officer: Sean Clark, Head of Financial and Property Services
 Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: sean.clark@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

CABINET DECISIONS

DECISION NO. CAB146/06

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:	ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT, PRODUCTIVITY AND ICT
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Bulman
TITLE OF REPORT:	Overview and Scrutiny Partnership (070221/CAB001)
PRIORITIES:	All

DISCUSSION:

Members discussed the issue of support for the Overview and Scrutiny function. The Director of Change and Business Support advised that the current arrangement with the Overview and Scrutiny Manager at Maidstone Borough Council had worked successfully and the support had introduced new ways of working at TWBC, including select committee style interviews, public meetings and evidence based recommendations. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny's profile and credibility has been raised significantly.

The report suggested that a Strategic Service Partnership be created between Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone Borough Councils for the provision of the overview and scrutiny services, with the potential of both Councils' Scrutiny Committees working together on certain issues. It was proposed that such an agreement would be renewed for a period of three years, however it was noted that an exit strategy would be provided allowing either authority to terminate the agreement with three months' notice. Members suggested that a press release should be produced to raise awareness of the new arrangement.

Members noted that it was anticipated that the new Scrutiny structure and support would be in place before the new municipal year.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the principles and actions shown in the proposal "Achieving more together than we could alone" (attached as Appendix A to the report) be approved;
- (2) That the Director of Change and Business Support be given delegated authority to set up the partnership within the framework shown in the report (subject to Council agreeing the necessary budget); and
- (3) That, subject to Council agreeing the necessary budget, a partnership agreement is entered into for a period of three years for the provision of overview and scrutiny services (with the potential to terminate the agreement within that time with three months' notice).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To further develop a proposed structure for Overview and Scrutiny.

Contact Officer: William Benson, Director of Change and Business Support
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: William.benson@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

(NOTE: In accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 5.3, Councillor Neve attended the meeting and spoke on Decisions CAB144/06 and CAB145/06.)