

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL**RECORD OF DECISIONS**

(in terms of Access to Information Rule 18)

CABINET**Thursday 12 March 2009****Present: Councillor Roy Bullock (Chairman)****Councillors Paul Barrington-King, Len Horwood, Mrs Catherine Mayhew, James Scholes and Mrs Elizabeth Thomas**

Officers in Attendance: William Benson, Director of Change and Business Support; David Candlin, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration; Robert Cottrill, Director of Planning and Development; Sean Clark, Head of Finance and Governance; Laurence Doig, Overview and Scrutiny Officer; Anthony Garnett, Licensing Manager; Estelle Grant, Community Development and Partnerships Manager; Nick Green, Access Officer; Kat Hicks, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer; Samantha Timms, Senior Committee Administrator; Richard Powell, Director of Services to the Community; David Scully, Landscape Officer; Gary Stevenson, Head of Environment and Street Scene; Sheila Wheeler, Chief Executive; and Helen Wolstenholme, Healthier Communities Coordinator.

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors John Cunningham and David Elliott.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

CAB190/08 No apologies were reported.

DECLARATIONS OF PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

CAB191/08 In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Part 5, Councillor Horwood declared a prejudicial interest in decision CAB207/08, as he was the Chairman of one of the charities receiving a grant. He withdrew from the meeting during consideration and voting of this item. Councillor Bullock declared a personal interest in CAB203/08 as he was a Kent County Council representative. He took part in the discussion and voting on that item.

NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

CAB192/08 In accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 5.3 and after giving due notice to the Chairman, the following Councillors attended and spoke on the decisions as listed below:

Councillor Elliott – decision CAB196/08
Councillor Cunningham – decision CAB202/08

MINUTES OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD DATED 19 JANUARY 2009

CAB193/08 The Minutes of the Joint Transportation Board dated [19 January 2009](#) were submitted for Members' approval.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations of the Joint Transportation Board dated 19 January 2009 be agreed.

APPROVAL OF CABINET MINUTES DATED 5 AND 12 FEBRUARY 2009

CAB194/08 The Minutes of the Cabinet meetings dated 5 and 12 February 2009 were considered and were confirmed as correct records.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEES – INTERIM EDUCATION AND EMPLOYABILITY REVIEW REPORT

CAB195/08 The Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee had commenced a review of Education and Employability in 2007, following on from a piece of work carried out by Councillor Dr Hall.

A working group was formed with the overall aim of investigating if young people were leaving school with the necessary skills to gain employment and what actions were being undertaken to ensure children were progressing within the education system to obtain adequate literacy and numeracy skills to ensure later employment.

Cabinet noted that the group had recognised that there were issues surrounding pupil motivation within UK schools, particularly for those in High Schools who were more likely to come from a disadvantaged background. Members recognised that local employers were having meaningful and enthusiastic dialogue with High Schools and would like to see this enhanced into greater action.

The Select Committee had made the following recommendations to Cabinet:

“That Cabinet note that:

- (1) The Committee be involved in the updating of the Economic Strategy;
- (2) The Economy, Skills and Transport Committee receive the report and identify actions to address the findings;
- (3) The membership of the Economy, Skills and Transport Committee be broadened to include a family support representative;
- (4) The Lead Officer for the LSP Thematic Delivery Group on Children and Families and the Interim Head of Community and Corporate Planning be invited to discuss with Councillors how they can support the actions within the Sustainable Community Plan and investigate, including the PCT and family support into the Sustainable Community Strategy;
- (5) Mrs MacIldowie and her colleagues from the Local Education Authority be invited to speak at a Member briefing, to also include representatives from the Business Forum to plan how Members can support parents to encourage learning and vocational aspirations;
- (6) The Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee annually review the primary and secondary school results in the borough with the possibility of head teachers from challenged schools being invited to speak to Members to identify ways in which Councillors can further support schools and parents; and
- (7) Councillor Mrs Thomas, the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, and Councillor Scholes, the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities, be invited to endorse the review prior to its presentation at Cabinet.”

In response to recommendations 2, 3, and 4, Cabinet advised that targets were being reviewed within the Sustainable Community Plan and advised that the review could be incorporated into the consultation for this process. Cabinet also stated that they would welcome a Member Briefing from Mrs MacIldowie and her colleagues to outline progress that had been made by Kent County Council.

Councillor Mrs Thomas stated that she would be interested to know what steps had been taken by the County to ensure that children not meeting their required numeracy and literacy age level were identified. She cited that Oxfordshire had a programme of giving individual attention to children who were struggling and she would be interested to know how Kent County Council was tackling that issue.

Cabinet stressed that they supported the mechanism for working with schools but felt there was a need to be aware of sensitivity in this issue. They were keen to use their powers to assist schools in a non-challenging way by supporting them via initiatives such as mentoring, school governor participation, or through volunteering networks affiliated to schools. They felt it would be inappropriate for Councillors to visit schools without adequate preparation or consultation. The Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that no such visits were planned or had been undertaken as part of the review.

Cabinet requested that a copy of the minutes be made available to the Local Children's Partnership.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Select Committee be thanked for their report;
- (2) That the findings from the report be incorporated into the LSP with consultation by the Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee within the Sustainable Community Plan;
- (3) That there continues to be a constructive dialogue with all partners; and
- (4) That a copy of the minutes be made available to the Local Children's Partnership.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEES – RECYCLING COLLECTION CONTAINERS

CAB196/08 At its meeting on 10 February 2009, the Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee had discussed the issue of recycling collection containers for the collection of plastic bottles and cans ([090312/CAB002](#)). Councillor Elliott, as the Lead Member for Environment and Street Scene, introduced the report, he highlighted the Committee discussion and the reasons behind the recommendation to Cabinet:

“That Cabinet be recommended to agree that £150,000 be provided from the capital fund to supply a lidless box for the collection of plastic and tin recycling, the majority of which would be the same size as the current box provided, with a smaller size available on request.”

It was noted that there was no mention of a rigid container within the contract. . There were discussions relating to a clear plastic bag system and a new box system. The clear plastic bag may have been of benefit to flats in the town centre but houses were felt to have benefitted from a new box. The Chief Executive stressed that it was agreed previously that the timescale for completion would be early summer for rolling out the new recycling service;

Cabinet took this into consideration and Councillor Scholes confirmed that he would like to attend the Select Committee's meeting to discuss the matter further. More information would be required from Officers, including considering the views of residents who would be using the scheme.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Select Committee be thanked for their report but note that Cabinet feel that further work is required by the Select Committee; and
- (2) That Cabinet wish to attend one of the future Select Committee meetings in order to discuss the matter further.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEES – PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

CAB197/08 Further to Cabinet decision CAB168/08 relating to public conveniences, Cabinet's decisions had been discussed by the Corporate Services Select Committee at their meeting on 24 February 2009. The Committee discussed Cabinet's decision (5) and made the following recommendation to Cabinet:

"Cabinet are requested to specify a list of the public conveniences, including those in the town centre, which are to have their cleaning contracts continued for up to a further year."

Cabinet complimented parish councils for their participation. The Director of Services to the Community informed Cabinet of the list of public conveniences that would have their contract renewed, as listed in decision (2) below.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Select Committee be thanked for their report; and
- (2) That the list of public conveniences which are to have their cleaning contracts continued for up to a further year be as follows:
 - In the town centre:
 - Crescent Road and Union Square would be maintained with the attendant's hours being reduced.
 - In other areas:
 - Cranbrook, Goudhurst, Sissinghurst and Paddock Wood would be maintained and the parish councils would contribute financially.
 - Hawkhurst and Bidborough would be closed, which the parish council's had agreed.
 - Benenden, Lamberhurst, Brenchley, Matfield, Capel and Horsmonden - the parish councils concerned were currently being consulted.
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SOUTHBOROUGH CONVENIENCES DISCUSSIONS WERE ON-GOING CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEES – PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE

CAB198/08 At its meeting on 24 February 2009, the Corporate Services Select Committee had discussed the issue of Partnership Governance ([090312/CAB015](#)). Cabinet was informed that the Select Committee had held a discussion with the Internal Audit Manager and the Interim Head of Community and Corporate Planning. The Select Committee had made the following recommendations to Cabinet to help support the continuation of the review:

- “(1) That Heads of Service update the partnership database to include all current partnerships within the Council;
- (2) That Heads of Service provide coverage of each partnership within their service plans, to include the identification of outcomes for the partnership and an evaluation of their success; and
- (3) That a discussion at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Group be undertaken to agree any possible additions to the work programme on detailed scrutiny of partnership governance.”

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Select Committee be thanked for their report; and
- (2) That recommendations (1) to (3) be agreed.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEES – HEALTH IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

CAB199/08 At its meeting on 10 February 2009, the Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee had discussed the Health Improvement Action Plan ([090312/CAB004](#)). The Select Committee had made the following recommendation to Cabinet:

“Cabinet note that the following recommendations were agreed by the Healthier Communities Co-ordinator for inclusion in the Health Improvement Action Plan:

- (1) Emphasis on teenage health within the plan to encourage participation to improve the health and well-being of young people, such as through creating and promoting cycling routes around the borough;
- (2) To roll out activities to areas of deprivation in rural areas; and
- (3) Improve the clarity of actions within the Plan to align them to the performance indicators and strategies laid out in the report so that they are referenced numerically on the action plan grid.”

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Select Committee be thanked for their report; and
- (2) That recommendations (1) to (3) be agreed.

CABINET DECISIONS

DECISION NO. CAB200/08

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

THE LEADER

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Bullock

REPORT TITLE:

Sustainable Communities Act ([090312/CAB011](#))

PRIORITY:

All Corporate Priorities

DISCUSSION:

Cabinet was reminded that in October 2008, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government issued the first invitation to local authorities to submit proposals under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007.

The Act aimed to promote the sustainability of local communities through providing an opportunity for councils to develop ideas and proposals which would contribute to sustainability locally, but which would require national action to put into effect.

The Chief Executive went on to say that the Act sought to encourage the improvement of the economic, environmental and “social well-being” of the authority’s area, through increased participation in civic and political activity. It was noted that ideas would be fed through the Local Government Association (LGA), which would then shortlist suggestions for government to consider. The deadline for submissions in the first phase would be 31 July 2009. The LGA had been appointed as the national “selector” body to assess and short-list proposals made by other councils under the Act.

Cabinet was informed that the provisions of the Act would be known to the public via the Council’s website, the Local magazine and via a press release. The Leader of the Council had also raised the opportunity formally with the Local Strategic Partnership membership and at the Parish Council Chairmen’s meeting on 24 February 2009.

The Council would then need to screen proposals received from the public to test whether they were matters for government or which the Council and its partners locally could deal with. The Chief Executive stated that when considering whether to submit proposals formally to the LGA, the Council would need to consider certain criteria; the criteria was set out in the report.

The Director of Services to the Community stated that the timescale for the first draft report from Delta was the beginning of April 2009.

Cabinet was informed that further information had been received relating to Unlocking Democracy; this information would also be available on the Council’s website. Cabinet agreed that the Chief Executive would be the single point of contact.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That awareness be raised and the opportunities of the Sustainable Communities Act with the public and local partners be publicised again; and
- (2) That any proposals that come forward be truly innovative and not currently capable of being delivered by the Council or its partners under existing powers.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To update Cabinet on the Sustainable Communities Act.

Contact Officer: Sheila Wheeler, Chief Executive

Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: sheila.wheeler@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB201/08

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

CORPORATE SERVICES

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Horwood

REPORT TITLE:

Forward Plan ([090312/CAB005](#))

PRIORITY:

Delivering high quality services to our customers

DECISION MADE:

That the Forward Plan be approved, subject to the following addition:

Corporate Services Portfolio Holder
Acquisition of Assets – 16 April Cabinet

Cabinet noted that a report had been submitted to Management Team on 5 March 2009 that provided information about the Forward Plan and its correct usage. Cabinet Members were urged to discuss the Forward Plan with their Heads of Service in order to improve the effectiveness of the Plan.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To comply with Access to Information Procedure Rule 14.

Contact Officer: Samantha Timms, Senior Committee Administrator

Tel: 01892 554219 or e-mail: sam.timms@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB202/08**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ACCESS****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Mrs Mayhew****REPORT TITLE:****Health Improvement Action Plan (090312/CAB006)****PRIORITY:**

Developing Safer and Stronger Communities

DISCUSSION:

Cabinet's approval was sought for the Health Improvement Action Plan, which set out actions to improve the health of residents of the borough and to address health inequalities. Cabinet was informed that this was required due to the changed landscape of government and regional policy in relation to delivering healthier communities, and would reflect the Council's increased role in promoting health and addressing health inequalities.

Cabinet noted that the Health Improvement Action Plan had been developed, drawing together contributions from across the Council's services, to establish actions the Council could and could not undertake to deliver on healthier living issues and tackling health inequalities.

The Plan was divided into four life stages – Childhood, Teenage Years, Adulthood and Active Retirement and Older People. Cabinet noted that the Plan identified the top three health priorities for each of the groups, collected from analysis of public health information and through discussion with NHS West Kent. The Officer stated that each life stage had a series of actions to be undertaken to improve the health and reduce health inequalities for that population.

The Environment and Safer and Stronger Communities Select Committee also considered the Draft Action Plan and their comments had been included within the report before Cabinet.

Cabinet agreed that a Members' Briefing should be arranged to bring awareness and information to all other Members. Cabinet also agreed that the Director of Services to the Community, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Access, refine the report before submitting the final documentation.

DECISION MADE:

That the Health Improvement Action Plan be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To set future direction for further work to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and to reduce health inequalities.

Contact Officer: Helen Wolstenholme, Healthier Communities Co-ordinator
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: helen.wolstenholme@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB203/08

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Thomas

REPORT TITLE:

**Southborough Hub and Associated Development
 (090312/CAB007)**

PRIORITY:

Promoting and maintaining a thriving and diverse local economy

DISCUSSION:

The development of a community building 'Hub' had been proposed since 2001 and had recently been reviewed and agreed by the Southborough Hub Joint Steering Group; however, Cabinet was informed that it was felt necessary by the partners that agreement be sought from all local partners (Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent County Council and Southborough Town Council) before the documents become official.

The Joint Declaration set out a wish list for the provision of the type and scope of public services to be provided in the 'Hub' within the development of Southborough town centre as part of the overall regeneration.

The declaration commits the partners to working together to deliver a number of actions to work up a viable project over the next year with the Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company. The 'Hub' project was still in its formative stage. Tunbridge Wells Regeneration Company had now been established and would start to engage with the partners in progressing the development. More detailed agreements would be required, covering issues such as land, property and financial matters; work would be carried out to put these in place.

DECISION MADE:

That the Southborough Town Centre Joint Declaration relating to the Hub and associated development be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Officers and Members of the Joint Steering Group have been working together over the last 12 months to get the Joint Declaration to its current agreed position. It is now essential that the development partners can use this as a guide to priority community needs and requirements on this site.

Contact Officer: David Candlin, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: david.candlin@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB204/08

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Thomas

REPORT TITLE:

Unlocking Kent's Potential: Opportunities and Challenges (090312/CAB008)

PRIORITY:

Promoting and maintaining a thriving and diverse local economy. Care for our environment. Have housing suitable for local people. Develop safer and stronger communities

DISCUSSION:

Outlined to Cabinet were the key points to note in "Unlocking Kent's Potential: Opportunities and Challenges, Kent County Council's framework for regeneration 2009-2020".

The framework would form the baseline for a broad policy approach that would include a series of further strategies that would be developed by KCC.

The six key challenges were: 1) Building a New Relationship with Business; 2) Unlocking Talent to Support the Kent Economy; 3) Embracing a Growing and Ageing Population; 4) Building Homes and Communities, not Estates; 5) Delivering Growth without Transport Gridlock; and 6) Meeting the Climate Challenge.

There is much within the document that should be welcomed and is a positive approach to taking forward a joint strategy. While a KCC document there is clearly an important role for the District Council and the need for engagement and partnership working across the public sector as well as with the private sector.

The lack of reference to the current economic challenges were perhaps a surprise. There was no assessment of the impact of the recession on housing delivery, in gross terms and of affordable homes.

The focus of the document in terms of regeneration was clearly to the north and east of the county. The major economic opportunities 'transformational investments' were all identified in these locations with little reference to West Kent. Smaller investment opportunities and support that could provide continued growth rather than stagnation and possibly decline of West Kent were not addressed.

There was no reference to the Regional Hub as a focus for new development and investment nor as a transport hub.

West Kent while being in a better position than East Kent, was clearly not performing as well as other parts of the South East. The comparative gulf between Kent and other South East counties needs to be addressed which would mean recognising and supporting West Kent to grow.

There was a lack of referral to the rural economy and the need for regeneration in the rural area.

Officers advised the Cabinet of the comments made by the Local Economy and Housing Select Committee at its meeting on 26 February 2009 and these were identified for Members' information at Appendix A to the report.

Cabinet was informed that the comments made by the Select Committee would be incorporated into the final written submission to Kent County Council by 17 April 2009.

The Chief Executive stressed the need to strengthen the recommendation with an executive summary of key points; Cabinet agreed to this.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the report and the contents of "Unlocking Kent's Potential: Opportunities and Challenges, KCC's framework for regeneration 2009 –2020" be noted; and
- (2) That a written response based on the contents of the report be agreed and delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, to strengthen the recommendations and include an executive summary of key points.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Members had been asked to note the main aspects of the "Unlocking Kent's Potential: Opportunities and Challenges, KCC's framework for regeneration 2009 –2020" document and consider the response from the Council to the consultation. The Council needs to state its case clearly.

Contact Officer: David Candlin, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: david.candlin@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB205/08

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Thomas

REPORT TITLE:

High Weald AONB Management Plan 2004 2nd Edition 2009 (090312/CAB009)

PRIORITY:

Caring for our environment

DISCUSSION:

Cabinet was reminded that Council adopted the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan in January 2004; in line with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Plan was due for review every five years. High Weald Joint Advisory Committee undertook the review in 2008.

The review was a 'limited' maintenance revision rather than a major revision or change; it also provided an opportunity to reflect current circumstances, and the indicators and targets had also been revised. Two new objectives were set out in full within the report. The general structure and content of the document included the definition of Natural Beauty for the High Weald which had remained unchanged. It was noted that a Statement of Significance had been added to the introduction, which placed greater emphasis on the components of Natural Beauty and highlighted the national and international historical importance of the High Weald Landscape.

Public consultation had taken place, including parish/town councils, public bodies and land managers.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the review of the High Weald Management Plan 2004, referred to as the 2nd Edition 2009, required by Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, for that part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that falls within the Borough, be adopted; and
- (2) That the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee be informed that the Borough Council confirms that it wishes the Joint Advisory Committee to publish and submit the Plan to the Secretary of State on the Council's behalf.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To support the Council's priorities of caring for the environment and to discharge and support the Council's statutory requirements and duties with respect to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and biodiversity.

Contact Officer: David Scully, Landscape Officer

Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: david.scully@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB206/08**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****CORPORATE SERVICES****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Horwood****REPORT TITLE:****Basket of Economic Indicators for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council – January 2009 (090312/CAB010)****PRIORITY:**

The monitoring of these economic indicators will help the evaluation of strategic risk across all services and therefore supports all corporate priorities and commitments.

DISCUSSION:

Cabinet was provided with an update report on the economic performance of the borough, which also helped Members to evaluate and inform the mitigation of strategic risk. A selection of performance indicators, known to be sensitive to economic conditions, had been put together, including a number that were new.

This basket of economic indicators had been updated where necessary to include monthly performance data going back to the beginning of the municipal year with some comparisons from 2007/08 where data was available.

It was noted that the current economic conditions were now affecting a number of areas of performance. These were subject to close monitoring by officers and Members and would allow an early indication of local conditions and trends to be viewed.

DECISION MADE:

That the report shown in Appendix A be noted.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

In response to previous Cabinet recommendations.

Contact Officer: Raymond Warren, Performance and Improvement Manager and Interim Head of Community and Corporate Planning
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: raymond.warren@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB207/08**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Scholes****REPORT TITLE:****Community Grants Programme Applications 2009/2010 (090312/CAB012)**

PRIORITY:

The Community Grants programme contributes primarily to the Council's aim of developing safer and stronger communities (A4).

DISCUSSION:

Cabinet was informed that the Community Grants Programme's main aim was to assist organisations with projects that help to achieve the Borough Council's corporate priorities and contribute to the borough's Sustainable Community Plan. Cabinet noted that applications had been submitted for revenue grants in 2009/2010 from voluntary and community organisations working to help develop safer and stronger communities and provide leisure opportunities.

The organisations had been invited to make applications within a seven-week period, which ended on 23 January 2009. The Head of Service went on to say that the cross-party Community Grants Assessment Panel considered all the applications and a summary report and the amount of grants recommended by the Panel was attached as appendix A to the report for Members' approval.

Cabinet noted that the total budget allocated for revenue grants in 2009/10 was £313,090 and £4,769 from the 2008/09 budget remained unallocated. There was also a reallocation in respect of Leisure Services' revenue grants of £25,000; the total budget now available was £338,090. The total amount requested by applicants was £446,663; the total recommended by the Assessment Panel was £327,350.

DECISION MADE:

That the applications for grants be approved for the amounts indicated in Appendix A of the report.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To assist voluntary and community organisations with projects that help to achieve the Borough Council's corporate priorities and contribute to the borough Sustainable Community Plan.

Contact Officer: Nick Green, Community Development Officer
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: nick.green@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB208/08**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Scholes**

REPORT TITLE:

**Service Level Agreement with Tunbridge Wells and District Citizens' Advice Bureaux (TWCAB)
(090312/CAB013)**

PRIORITY:

TWCAB provides advice to enable residents to deal with a wide range of issues, meeting the Council's priorities. These include:

- Providing & maintaining a thriving and diverse local economy - employment, financial, consumer, tax, education and debt advice
- Having housing suitable for local people – housing, utilities, and health advice
- Developing safer and stronger communities – relationships advice, immigration advice and employing volunteers

DISCUSSION

Cabinet was asked to agree a three-year Service Level Agreement between Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells and District Citizens' Advice Bureaux (TWD CAB). The Borough Council's Service Level Agreement with TWD CAB was due to come to an end in March 2009 and TWD CAB had applied to the Borough Council under the Community Grants Scheme for a new three-year agreement. The total amount applied for was £227,993 (year one) plus £236,611 (year two) plus £245,531 (year three), totalling £710,135 over the three-year period.

Councillor Scholes informed Members that a rent review was due in relation to the premises rented by TWD CAB from the Borough Council. He added that the new SLA would improve communication and joint working between TWD CAB and the Council, through quarterly meetings.

The officer informed Members that the key aspects of the new SLA were the change in level of funding, an alteration in monitoring requirements so that trends and outcomes could be identified, aided by the review meetings, and the requirements for the TWD CAB to increase the proportion of their funding received from sources other than the Council.

The officer added that the usual payment terms for the Community Grants Scheme were quarterly in arrears, but TWD CAB had requested the amount be paid annually in advance. TWD CAB's full application, including supporting documents, were shown as Appendix B to the report.

The officer then highlighted the implications of funding TWD CAB through a Service Level Agreement; full details were given in the report.

The Community Grants Scheme Assessment Panel had met and had considered all the applications received. Their recommendation was circulated to Cabinet and had recommended for TWD CAB the following sums: £207,000 (year one), £199,000 (year two) and £193,000 (year three).

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That Tunbridge Wells Borough Council enters into a Service Level Agreement with Tunbridge Wells & District Citizens' Advice Bureaux for the three years April 2009 to March 2012;
- (2) That the level of funding recommended by the Community Grants Assessment Panel be agreed as follows:
 - £207,000 (year one)
 - £199,000 (year two)
 - £193,000 (year three); and
- (3) That the grant be paid quarterly in advance.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

In order to ensure the provision of free, independent advice to those in the Borough.

Contact Officer: Estelle Grant, Community Development & Partnerships Manager
Tel: 01892 554219 or e-mail: estelle.grant@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

EXEMPT ITEMS**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100A (4)**

RESOLVED – It was proposed and seconded that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the items of business referred to below on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Act namely: -

DECISION NOs CAB209/08 and CAB210/08

Paragraph (2) - Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Paragraph (3) - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

DECISION NO. CAB209/08**EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Scholes**

REPORT TITLE: **Service Level Agreement with Tunbridge Wells and District Citizens' Advice Bureaux - Appendices (090312/CAB013 appa exempt and 090312/cab013 appb exempt)**

PRIORITIES: TWCAB provides advice to enable residents to deal with a wide range of issues, meeting the Council's priorities. These include:

- Providing & maintaining a thriving and diverse local economy - employment, financial, consumer, tax, education and debt advice
- Having housing suitable for local people – housing, utilities, and health advice
- Developing safer and stronger communities – relationships advice, immigration advice and employing volunteers

DISCUSSION: Cabinet, after agreeing to enter into the exempt section of the meeting, noted and discussed Appendix A of the report, 'A response to an email dated 23 January 2009 that requested further information prior to the Grant Assessment Panel meeting on 20 February' and Appendix B, TWD CAB Community Grants Programme Application Form.

Cabinet agreed to quarterly payments in advance.

DECISION MADE: Please see decision CAB208/08 above.

REASONS FOR DECISION: In order to ensure the provision of free, independent advice to those in the Borough.

Contact Officer: Estelle Grant, Community Development & Partnerships Manager
Tel: 01892 526121 or e-mail: estelle.grant@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB210/08

EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO: **ENVIRONMENT AND STREET SCENE**

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: **Councillor Barrington-King**

REPORT TITLE: **Licensing – Proposed Partnership Expansion (090312/CAB014 exempt)**

PRIORITIES: Developing stronger and safer communities. Delivering high quality services to our customers. Improve customer service and satisfaction

DISCUSSION:

Put before Members were proposals for developing the existing licensing partnership with Sevenoaks District Council to include Maidstone Borough Council. Three general benefits of partnership working were highlighted to Cabinet.

The proposed licensing partnership would consolidate the existing beneficial joint work with Sevenoaks, whilst introducing additional efficiencies and economies of scale through the introduction of Maidstone as an additional partner.

The organisation proposed would deliver best practice in policy, process and operations. Cabinet was informed that the innovative approach would achieve benefits of sub-regional management, combining central administration and an integrated IT system, whilst maintaining the sovereignty and local service focus of each licensing authority, with the Council's Licensing Committee continuing to agree and implement the licensing policy and determining applications.

Customer care would be improved, particularly through the proposed adoption of account management for major licensee customers and much enhanced resilience through the capacity to deploy resources where needed across the whole partnership area for targeted enforcement. The benefits would be at no additional cost to the Council and would offer potential for reductions in resource requirements in future years, related to the possible admission of further authorities to the partnership.

DECISION MADE:

That the expansion of the licensing partnership of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council to incorporate Maidstone Borough Council, adopting the principles set out in the report, be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To ensure that the Council delivers a Licensing Service that achieves high quality service to customers, is well managed and provides value for money.

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(NOTE:

- (1) A number of reports had been taken out of sequence from the agenda; the order of reports taken was 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 12. Following Item 12, the meeting then followed the order of reports as set out on the agenda;
- (2) In accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 5.2 on public speaking at Cabinet meetings, Mrs Lynch, on behalf of Transition Tunbridge Wells, spoke on decision CAB200/08;
- (3) Councillor Elliott left the meeting after consideration of CAB199/08 (11.26am). Councillor Cunningham left the meeting after consideration of decision CAB203/08 (11.45am); and
- (4) The meeting closed at 12.37pm.)