

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL**RECORD OF DECISIONS**

(in terms of Access to Information Rule 18)

CABINET

Thursday 29 April 2010

**Present: Councillor Roy Bullock (Chairman)
Councillors Paul Barrington-King, Len Horwood, Mrs Catherine Mayhew,
Mrs Elizabeth Thomas and Frank Williams.**

Officers in Attendance: William Benson, Chief Executive; David Candlin, Head of Economic Development; Lee Colyer, Head of Finance and Governance (S151 Officer); Paul Cummins, Legal Services Manager/Monitoring Officer; Andrew Goy, Overview and Scrutiny Officer; Kat Hicks, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer; Sue Latham, Events and Projects Manager; Jonathan MacDonald, Director of Regeneration and Sustainability; Wendy Newton-May, Senior Committee Administrator; David Scully, Landscape and Biodiversity Officer; and Raymond Warren, Delivery Unit Manager.

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Weeden.

Also in attendance – Huw Yardley, Clerk at the House of Commons.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

CAB214/09 No apologies for absence were received.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

CAB215/09 No declarations of interest were made.

NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

CAB216/09 In accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rule 5.3 Councillor Weeden attended the meeting and spoke on decision number CAB232/09.

MINUTES OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEETING DATED 8 MARCH 2010

CAB217/09 The minutes of the Joint Transportation Board meeting dated 8 March 2010 were submitted for members' approval.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations of the Joint Transportation Board dated 8 March 2010 be agreed.

APPROVAL OF CABINET MINUTES DATED 25 MARCH 2010

CAB218/09 Cabinet was advised that Councillor Ransley had requested that the minutes of the Cabinet dated 25 March 2010, CAB211/09 refers, be amended to mention the fact that he had stated that the Air Quality Plan was not fit for purpose. However, members were informed that his address to Cabinet was appended in full to those minutes and this was sufficient, therefore no amendment was agreed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting dated 25 March 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

CAB219/09 There were no questions submitted from members of the Council.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

CAB220/09 There were no questions submitted from members of the public.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORT FROM THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND HOUSING SELECT COMMITTEE - TUNBRIDGE WELLS AND THE WEST KENT ECONOMY REVIEW REPORT

CAB221/09 The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented a report ([100429/CAB002](#)) notifying Cabinet that a Working Group of the Local Economy and Housing Select Committee had conducted a review into the Tunbridge Wells and West Kent economies, consisting of Councillors Chater, Stanyer and Woodward, with Daniel Bech of the Town Forum as a co-opted member.

It was noted that the Working Party was originally formed to investigate the opportunities for obtaining funding for initiatives from the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), however it became clear as the review progressed that SEEDA would not be in a position to provide future funding and so the review was refocused to examine the West Kent Partnership and the areas of potential growth for the Tunbridge Wells economy.

Members were advised that the Working Group had found that external witnesses were unanimous on two points. The first was that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council should seek to integrate itself further into the West Kent Partnership, as the vast majority of interaction between SEEDA, Kent County Council and districts took place through the Partnership at sub-regional level. The second was that there were three key sectors with the potential for growth in the borough: the health, creative and higher education sectors.

The review made sixteen recommendations and although many of these were made to partners, all sixteen involved Tunbridge Wells Borough Council:

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, in partnership with the South East England Development Agency, West Kent Partnership and Kent County Council, utilise existing statistical data to maintain a comprehensive picture of growth opportunities for small enterprises and start-ups.

Recommendation 2

The Council, in partnership with the West Kent Partnership and Business Link, investigate the most effective means of communicating market opportunities to prospective businesses and business start-ups.

Recommendation 3

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council seeks to strengthen its relationship with the West Kent Partnership by agreeing to a renewed West Kent focus and actively participating in the development and accomplishment of partnership action plans and strategies.

Recommendation 4

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council commits to driving forward and supporting a shared economic development resource to pursue economic development at a West Kent level.

Recommendation 5

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council examines the economic development function of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council to establish the effectiveness of targeting economic development at sub-regional rather than borough level.

Recommendation 6

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, in partnership with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council, pursues a West Kent wide function to consider all infrastructure issues, including housing and connectivity, and that future work in this area is pursued at this level.

Recommendation 7

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council representatives on the West Kent Partnership, including the Leader and Chief Executive, report to the relevant Select Committee on the status of the Partnership at regular intervals. Consideration should be given as to how the wider West Kent Partnership could best be scrutinised.

Recommendation 8

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, in partnership with the West Kent Partnership, meets with representatives of the South East Health Technologies Alliance and Kent-based universities to discuss the commissioning of a cluster analysis report to examine the potential of the health sector in Tunbridge Wells and West Kent.

Recommendation 9

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council examines the approach of local authorities in Canterbury, Folkestone, Maidstone and Thanet to supporting the growth of creative clusters, with a view to establishing best practice.

Recommendation 10

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, in consultation with the West Kent Partnership, Kent County Council and local businesses in the creative sector, consider the benefits of working with Meejahub and MediaTree and how each organisation can best support the creative sector in Tunbridge Wells.

Recommendation 11

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the West Kent Partnership meet with the South East England Development Agency's Sector Development Team to gain greater understanding of how the health and creative sectors can be encouraged in West Kent.

Recommendation 12

Any strategy developed for the growth of economic sectors considers the impact of developments on the existing sectors of retail, the rural economy, leisure and tourism.

Recommendation 13

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, in partnership with the West Kent Partnership, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council, develop and implement a strategy to revitalise the financial sector in West Kent.

Recommendation 14

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council recognises the benefits of simultaneous growth in the health, creative and higher education sectors and, in partnership with the West Kent Partnership, develops both short and long term strategies to achieve this.

Recommendation 15

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council continues to support the work of the Economic Development and Business Liaison Officer in facilitating the expansion of Higher Education provision in the borough.

Recommendation 16

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the West Kent Partnership recognise the benefits of Kent-based universities providing an Enterprise and Innovation Centre in West Kent and pursue this development with the universities. With this in mind, the themes in the West Kent Investment Strategy relating to the development of entrepreneurship, businesses, the labour force and the local skills base should be pursued, in part, through the provision of an Enterprise and Innovation Centre, or similar, supported by a Higher Education Provider.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised Cabinet that he had received a letter from Kent County Councillor Lynes who had commented on recommendations 1 and 10 above. In his response, County Councillor Lynes had advised that Kent County Council produced a wide range of statistical information which was freely available. In addition, he mentioned that Kent County Council was currently in the process of producing a Cultural Strategy for Kent, which would focus on the need to develop Kent's creative industries and workforce. It was noted that Kent County Council had been funding, with other partners, MediaTree as a vehicle for the development of the creative sector in Kent.

Concern was expressed from members of the Cabinet that the Select Committee had not recognised the amount of work that had been undertaken in other member and officer forums regarding these issues. Members stated that this Council did contribute significantly to the work of the West Kent Partnership and considered that several of the recommendations made by the Working Group required updating and amending.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reassured Cabinet that the Select Committee had not intended to criticise the Cabinet or the Council and was aware of the excellent work that officers and members were currently involved with. He explained that the Working Group were keen to examine the potential of the work and focus on ideas that had already commenced.

The Head of Economic Development suggested that the action taken to date should be highlighted to the Working Group, in order to clarify the current position of each recommendation.

The cost associated with the recommendations was queried, which had not been identified in the report. It was considered that if the cost were unknown then the savings could not be calculated.

It was agreed that the recommendations should be referred to the West Kent Partnership for its response. The Head of Economic Development was requested to provide a report back to a future Cabinet meeting updating members on the situation.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Select Committee and the Working Group be thanked for their report;
- (2) That the recommendations of the Working Group be sent to the West Kent Partnership asking for them to respond; and
- (3) That the Head of Economic Development present an update report to a future Cabinet meeting on the situation regarding the Working Group's recommendations.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORT FROM THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND HOUSING SELECT COMMITTEE – LONGFIELD ROAD TRAFFIC FLOW IMPROVEMENTS

CAB222/09 The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented a report ([100429/CAB003](#)) notifying Cabinet that the Local Economy and Housing Select Committee had been tasked to investigate the traffic congestion at Longfield Road and to make appropriate recommendations for its resolution. It was noted that Councillor Ransley, on behalf of the Select Committee, had visited the site and spent a significant amount of time observing the phasing of the traffic lights on both the Great Lodge and Kingstanding Way junctions and reported back to the Committee with recommendations to improve the situation.

The Select Committee considered that traffic congestion was a significant problem for Royal Tunbridge Wells and believed that improvements to the traffic flow on Longfield Road would be of significant benefit to the town. It was agreed that the best solution would be to install a roundabout at the Great Lodge junction, although it was recognised that this option would cause disruption and require funding. As a short term, low cost solution, the Committee recommended incremental changes to the phasing of the traffic lights and introduction of yellow box markings at the Great Lodge and Kingstanding Way junctions.

The Select Committee made the following recommendations for Cabinet to consider:

'That the following changes be recommended to Kent Highway Services:

- (1) Incremental change to the phasing of the traffic lights at Great Lodge junction be implemented to provide a longer phase for traffic travelling along Longfield Road;

- (2) Complimentary timing changes be introduced to the traffic lights at Kingstanding Way junction;
- (3) Yellow box markings be introduced at Great Lodge and Kingstanding Way junctions; and
- (4) Consideration be given to finding funding for a longer term solution, such as a roundabout, to the traffic flow problems at Great Lodge junction, to include Section 106 funding from developments in the area.'

The Leader questioned whether these recommendations should be put forward to Kent County Council, via the Joint Transportation Board (JTB). He advised that the JTB and the Transport Strategy Group were currently discussing these issues.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Select Committee be thanked for their report;
- (2) That the recommendations of the Select Committee be forwarded to the Joint Transportation Board and the Transport Strategy Group for their consideration; and
- (3) That the Leader write to the Kent County Council Portfolio Holder for Environment, Highways and Waste regarding the Select Committee's recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

DECISION NO. CAB223/09

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Horwood

REPORT TITLE:

**2010/11 Independent Members' Remuneration
(100429/CAB005)**

PRIORITIES:

The report supports the Council's commitment to ensure that we are well-managed, proactive and deliver value-for-money services.

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Finance and Governance presented a report reminding members that the Council had previously reviewed the scheme for members' remuneration, sought recommendations from an Independent Remuneration Panel and agreed a phased increased allowance to be adopted over three years (minute FC61/09 refers).

However, the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (JIRP) had been requested to examine the recommended allowances for appointed members, following the withdrawal of the IT allowances and the significant workload and duties undertaken.

It was explained that the interim recommendation of the JIRP was to increase the allowance from the current £528 p.a. to £800 p.a. with effect from 1 April 2010. This allowance would be applicable for independent members and parish/town council members of the Standards Committee and independent members of the Audit Committee.

The Cabinet noted that, at its meeting on 18 March 2010, the Standards Committee welcomed the JIRP's report and supported its recommendations.

DECISION MADE:

That the increase in the appointed members' allowance from the current £528 per annum to £800 per annum be recommended to Council at its next meeting on 19 May with effect from 1 April 2010, in accordance with the recommendation of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendation.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

There is an annual requirement for Council to set a scheme for members' remuneration.

Contact Officer: Lee Colyer, Head of Finance and Governance
Tel: 01892 554132 or email: lee.colyer@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

CABINET DECISIONS**DECISION NO. CAB224/09****NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****FINANCE & GOVERNANCE****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Horwood****REPORT TITLE:****Consideration of the Forward Plan (100429/CAB001)****PRIORITIES:**

Confident – Developing the Government's 'localism' agenda.

DECISION MADE:

That the Forward Plan be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To comply with Access to Information Procedure Rule 14.

Contact Officer: Wendy Newton-May, Senior Committee Administrator
Tel: 01892 554219 or e-mail: wendy.newton-may@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB225/09

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Bullock

REPORT TITLE:

Performance Indicator Rationalisation ([100429/CAB004](#))

PRIORITIES:

All

DISCUSSION:

The Delivery Unit Manager advised members of the work undertaken by a working party of the Corporate Services Select Committee to carry out the rationalisation of the Council's performance indicators (PIs) in an attempt to reduce the number being monitored.

It was noted that the working party considered that the only indicators that required monitoring at a strategic level were those indicators which delivered on the objectives in either the Strategic Plan or the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Delivery Unit Manager informed that previously 254 PIs had been reported to Cabinet and the link between the Council's objectives and indicators may have become unclear. However, now that the indicators had been mapped, a total of 93 indicators, that were clearly linked to the Council's objectives, could be reported under the Strategic Plan, as identified in Appendix A to the report.

In response to a query, the Delivery Unit Manager advised that a number of indicators that were left were being considered by service managers as part of the Service Planning process. A number of them may be continued at the operational level to ensure high quality service delivery, but those that were duplicating reporting elsewhere or, did not fit in to the Sustainable Community Plan or were not contributing to the Council's strategic objectives could be considered for deletion.

Members considered that it would have been useful to be advised of the PIs that had been deleted and the Delivery Unit Manager agreed to circulate these details. Cabinet requested that it be more involved in controlling PIs in the future.

The Chief Executive advised that performance management was embedded in the organisation and suggested that Portfolio Holders could use the Council's Covalent system to obtain information on any PIs.

DECISION MADE:

That the recommended list of indicators that have been identified for each objective under the Council's priorities and commitments for the Strategic Plan be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To ensure that the Council is performing as per its priorities and objectives.

Contact Officer: Jo Williams, Performance and Improvement Officer
Tel: 01892 554225 or email: jo.williams@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB226/09**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE****PORTFOLIO HOLDER:****Councillor Horwood****REPORT TITLE:****Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2008/09 – Including Use of Resources (100429/CAB006)****PRIORITIES:**

All

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Finance and Governance presented a report outlining the conclusions of the 2008/09 annual audit of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council by the Audit Commission. The report also included the detailed Use of Resources and the audit of accounts, summarised in the Council's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter from the Audit Commission, found in Appendix A to the report.

Members were pleased to note that the external auditor's report concluded that the processes for preparing the Council's accounts continued to improve, with stronger working paper trails and appropriate action on key technical issues. It also concluded that the Council had adequate arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

The Chief Executive paid tribute to the Head of Finance and Governance and the Financial Services team on their excellent achievement.

The Head of Finance and Governance explained that the auditor had identified areas for further action and within these areas officers were able to evidence initiatives that were already in place and outcomes that have already been achieved, found in Appendix B to the report.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter and Use of Resources report be noted; and
- (2) That any recommendations of improvement from the Annual Audit Letter and Use of Resources report be incorporated into the Corporate Improvement Plan for the Audit Committee to consider at each of its meetings, unless the actions/initiatives that are already in place are agreed to be sufficient.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To consider the external auditor's annual letter and relevant reports.

Contact Officer: Lee Colyer, Head of Finance and Governance
 Tel: 01892 554132 or e-mail: lee.colyer@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB227/09

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Horwood

REPORT TITLE:

Basket of Economic Indicators for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council – February 2010 (100429/CAB007)

PRIORITIES:

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:

The Corporate Policy and Improvement Officer submitted a report providing members with a monthly update on the economic performance of the borough using the latest data available to assist members evaluate and mitigate strategic risks.

It was noted that a selection of performance indicators, known to be sensitive to economic conditions, had been put together, including a number that were new.

Cabinet was advised that, as the end of the municipal year approached, improvement had been seen in economic conditions across the majority of the areas that had been monitored. Members were informed that although unemployment did increase in Tunbridge Wells in February, the increase was lower than that seen between December and January and Tunbridge Wells continued to have the lowest number of unemployed across the Kent districts.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the report and appendices be noted; and

(2) That Cabinet revert to the normal quarterly performance reporting cycle following the final reporting of economic indicators at the June 2010 meeting.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

In response to previous Cabinet recommendations.

Contact Officer: Jo Davies, Corporate Policy and Improvement Officer
Tel: 01892 554203 or e-mail: jo.davies@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB228/09**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:**

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Thomas

REPORT TITLE:

Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy
(100429/CAB008)

PRIORITIES:

Prosperous, Green and Confident.

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Economic Development provided Cabinet with an update on the work of the Transport Strategy Group, which had overseen the development of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy (2010).

It was explained that the strategy had been developed in accordance with the Local Development Framework and Kent County Council's emerging Integrated Transport Strategy (KITS) and future Local Transport Plans that build upon the success of the existing transport strategy. The strategy set a vision for transport and a set of strategic objectives, identifying the key challenges facing the network, and included the development of a strategic multi-modal transport model (VISUM model) against which different scheme options and development scenarios could be tested.

It was noted that the Council was seeking to consult on the broad strategy to compliment the LDF Town Centres Action Area Plan (TCAAP) and Allocations Development Plan Documents (DPD) consultation prior to completing the detailed delivery plan for the strategy.

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder updated members on the revised timetable for consultation. The consultation would now commence on 1 June, with exhibitions and meetings being held from 12 June onwards. The consultation period would then finish on 23 July 2010.

Concern was expressed at the park and ride sites that had been identified as Pembury and Knights Park. The Head of Economic Development advised members that these sites had been identified in the current Local Plan. He reassured members that the Bus Rapid Transit link would encourage better integration of transport links and walking and cycling etc, in an attempt to reduce congestion.

Members were advised that this report was seeking approval to the broad strategy and that the detail would need to be tested thoroughly to ensure that congestion was reduced. A detailed business case and costings would be presented in due course.

Members requested that recommendation (1) be amended to replace the word 'proposed' with 'possible'.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the emerging transport strategy be endorsed, in particular the key challenges and possible interventions set out in the report;
- (2) That minor amendments to the document being undertaken in consultation with the Portfolio Holder prior to the formal consultation phase with stakeholders be agreed; and
- (3) That wider consultation with key stakeholders and the community on the document be agreed to be undertaken subject to the detail of consultation to be agreed with the Portfolio Holder.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To confirm the Council position on the key challenges and proposed interventions and enable broader consultation to be undertaken with stakeholders, business and the community.

Contact Officer: David Candlin, Head of Economic Development
Tel: 01892 526121 ext 2017 or e-mail: david.candlin@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB229/09

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Thomas

REPORT TITLE:

A Review of Kent Compendium's List of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
(100429/CAB009)

PRIORITIES:

Primarily concerned with preservation of the natural and built environment, the project is, in the main, supportive of the Council's Green Priorities but is crosscutting, supporting Corporate priorities that include:

Prosperous

The borough more generally will have enhanced its natural and built assets while planning for and accommodating future growth.

Green

Tunbridge Wells will remain a beautiful place to live, work and relax.

The historic built environment that provides a powerful sense of identity will be maintained in good order and enhanced.

Healthy

The community will be active with very high levels of participation in physical and cultural activities.

Confident

A thriving community pride culture will have developed with high levels of volunteering and public involvement.

DISCUSSION:

The Landscape and Biodiversity Officer presented a report advising members that Policy EN11 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan March 2006 referred to the protection of historic parks and gardens and covered, not only those on the national English Heritage Register, but also those on the Kent List of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Members were informed that the Kent List was last updated in 1995/96 and since that time sites had been added to the Local Plan schedule and/or Proposals Map without the benefit of formal surveys or being formally included in the Kent List, making them vulnerable to challenge. While Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent County Council and the Kent Gardens Trust were keen to update the Kent list, it only became possible with grant funding and support from the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee and English Heritage.

It was explained that this new broader partnership embarked on an ambitious pilot project, recruiting and training volunteers to not only update those sites within Tunbridge Wells Borough but to establish a self-sustaining group to carry on the work of updating the Kent List across the County.

Members were pleased to note that the project had achieved all its objectives and, subject to consultation, offered the Council a robust list of Historic Parks and Gardens within the Borough for planning purposes as part of the LDF.

It also provided an accessible list of an important cultural and amenity asset for the borough that is of value and interest to residents.

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That the project report and individual garden descriptions as set out in the report be published for public consultation for a period of six weeks from May 2010;
- (2) That, subject to formal public consultation, the revised list of Historic Parks and Gardens for the Kent Compendium contained with the project report be adopted by the Council for the purpose of applying Policy EN11 of the Local Plan and any replacement policy under the Local Development Framework; and
- (3) That amendments to the report as a result of the consultation are agreed with the portfolio holder and Head of Service and that the final report be published as part of the adopted evidence base for the Local Development Framework and the boundaries of the parks and gardens listed are placed on the Proposals Map.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To enable the Council to improve the evidence base for the Local Development Framework and provide a robust list of historic parks and gardens for the Local Plan and to support the work of our partners, the Kent Gardens Trust, Kent County Council, the High Weald AONB Unit and English Heritage. In adopting the report, the Council will be recognising the hard work and dedication of the volunteers of the Kent Gardens Trust.

Contact Officer: David Scully, Landscape and Biodiversity Officer
Tel: 01892 554072 or e-mail: david.scully@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB230/09

NON-EXEMPT

PORTFOLIO:

PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Thomas

REPORT TITLE:

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Local Development Framework: Town Centres Area Action Plan DPD and Allocations DPD Early Engagement, Stage 2
(100429/CAB010)

PRIORITIES:

The TCAAP and Allocations DPD will form part of the Borough Council's Local Development Framework which is one of the key mechanisms for delivering the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Together, the documents will allocate sites for a variety of uses, including housing, employment generating uses, infrastructure (including green infrastructure) and community uses.

DISCUSSION:

The Planning Policy Team Leader submitted a report explaining to members that the Town Centres Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (TCAAP) and Allocations Development Plan Document (Allocations DPD) would be key documents in the Borough Council's Local Development Framework. Both would allocate specific sites for various types of development (housing, employment, retail, recreation, etc.), with the TCAAP focussing on the Borough's four main town centres: Royal Tunbridge Wells; Southborough; Paddock Wood; and Cranbrook.

Members were advised that the preparation of Development Plan Documents was governed by a statutory process as set out in the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations, 2008. The Council was currently in the public participation stage (Regulation 25), which began in April 2009 with consultation using broad questionnaires.

Cabinet was asked for approval to commence a second, more detailed stage of public participation, building on the work carried out last year to inform the preparation of the TCAAP and Allocations DPD. The Director of Regeneration and Sustainability advised members that this should be considered alongside the Transport Strategy report (100429/CAB008 refers).

DECISION MADE:

- (1) That a second stage of public participation on the TCAAP and Allocations DPD, as described in the report, commences on 17 May 2010 for eight weeks to 9 July 2010; and
- (2) That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development approves the final consultation materials under delegated powers following consultation with the members of the Local Development Framework Working Party.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To make progress in preparing the TCAAP and Allocations DPD in accordance with the procedures set out in the Regulations and for the reasons set out in paragraph 12 of the main report.

Contact Officer: Louise Phillips, Planning Policy Team Leader
Tel: 01892 554212 or e-mail: louise.phillips@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

DECISION NO. CAB231/09**NON-EXEMPT****PORTFOLIO:****PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

PORTFOLIO HOLDER:

Councillor Mrs Thomas

REPORT TITLE:

Planning Partnership Arrangement with Sevenoaks District Council (100429/CAB011)

PRIORITIES:

This proposal supports the delivery of high quality services to our customers and the delivery of proactive, value for money, services. It does this by setting up a pilot partnership arrangement to share experience and practice and create opportunities for improved value for money.
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DISCUSSION:

The Director of Regeneration and Sustainability outlined a proposal for members' consideration to indefinitely extend the planning partnership arrangement between Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) to share the provision of a joint Head of Planning Services post, subject to termination on three months' notice by either Council.
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Members noted that in practical terms this would mean SDC purchasing the services of the existing TWBC post holder for 18.75 hours per week to carry out the Head of Planning Services' role at SDC.
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Members were advised that, although less time would be available for senior management at head of planning service level, the Council had reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Managers/Team Leaders and performance would continue to be managed, and any variance in top quartile performance levels identified early and addressed effectively.

DECISION MADE:

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| (1) | That the Director of Regeneration and Sustainability, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economy and the Legal Services Manager/Monitoring Officer, be authorised to enter into an agreement for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to provide 18.75 hours per week of the existing Head of Planning's time to manage Sevenoaks District Council's planning teams indefinitely, subject to three months' notice of termination by either Council; and |
| (2) | That the Director of Regeneration and Sustainability reports progress to the Cabinet on an annual basis. |

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To support the delivery of high quality services to our customers and the delivery of proactive, value for money, services.
