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SHEPWAY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes for the meeting of the Council held at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone on Wednesday, 22 February 2017

Present: Councillors Mrs Ann Berry, Miss Susan Carey, John Collier, Malcolm Dearden, Alan Ewart-James, Peter Gane, Clive Goddard, David Godfrey, Miss Susie Govett, Ms Janet Holben (Chairman), Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, Mrs Claire Jeffrey, Mrs Mary Lawes, Len Laws, Rory Love, Philip Martin, Ian Meyers, David Monk, David Owen, Dick Pascoe, Paul Peacock, Stuart Peall, Mrs Rodica Wheeler and Roger Wilkins

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Michael Lyons, Frank McKenna, Damon Robinson, Carol Sacre, Peter Simmons and Mrs Susan Wallace

173. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

174. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2017 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

175. Chairman's Communications

The Chairman stated that in terms of civic events, the last month had been fairly quiet. She had however attended the 'Armed Forces in the community' event the previous Friday which she stated was an absolute delight. The free fun and information day had been open to all of the Armed Forces Community including Serving Personnel, Reservists, Veterans and families. Various organisations attended to provide help, advice and free health checks, and there had been a backdrop of entertainment too.

The Chairman expressed her thanks to those involved in organising the event, and to the organisations which took part.

176. Petitions

There were no petitions.

177. Questions from the Public

The questions asked, including supplementary questions (if any) and the answers given are set out in Schedule 1, appended to these minutes.

178. Questions from Councillors

The questions asked and the answers given are set out in Schedule 2 appended to these minutes.

179. Announcements of the Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Monk, gave an update on the following:

- The judicial review of the lorry park was due to be conducted in June, although he believed there were ongoing negotiations between Highways England and the owner of Westenhanger Castle, so it was possible that a resolution could be found prior to this.
- The Otterpool Park collaboration board, and Shepway District Council continued to work on the design guide and identification of restraints. Further public consultations would be taking place the following month. In the mean time, a 'frequently asked questions' leaflet had been produced and would be distributed to the majority of homes in Shepway, answering most of the questions that were being asked.
- Cabinet had approved the submission of the Princes Parade scheme for planning permission, and all being well, a decision would be made on whether to proceed later in the year.
- By the end of the week, the Economic Development team would have submitted the second round bid for the £5million European Community Led Local Development scheme which was designed to provide jobs and businesses in Central and East Folkestone. Shepway District Council were one of only three councils in the South East of the country to be asked to bid for this. The Leader paid tribute to the Head of Economic Development and her team for the effort put into the submission which had the potential over the next five years to make a significant improvement to the social and economic wellbeing of the area.

Councillor Laws, Leader of the UKIP Group thanked the Leader for his updates, and made the following points:

- He was pleased that the lorry park was going to judicial review, and he stated that he would like the lorry parks to be spread evenly across the county, rather than having one big one.
- In terms of Otterpool, opinions were still being sought, and much of the issues had not even been drawn up.
- Were there doubts around Princes Parade proceeding?
- The bid by Economic Development would be welcomed to the area, particularly with Brexit on the horizon, and he hoped that the Government would underwrite it.

The Leader responded to comments made with the following additional points:

- Otterpool was a large area, and the restraints as to where the council could not build were clear.
- In terms of Princes Parade, the costs were not known as yet. The council intended to replace Hythe Pool, and if the development was a way of doing that, then the council would seek to do this.

Proposed by Councillor Monk
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee

RESOLVED:

That the announcements be noted.

180. Opposition Business

Councillor Meyers presented the item which was “the formation of a cross party working group to consider the impact of Brexit”. He asked that the working group carry out a time limited review of the current and likely future impact on Shepway of the UK exiting the EU and consider actions the council could take such as lobbying and local projects to capitalise on the opportunities and challenges that exiting the EU would bring and move forward.

Proposed by Councillor Meyers
Seconded by Councillor Laws; and

that the subject be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their observations before deciding whether to make a decision on the issue.

(Voting: 9 for; 12 Against; 2 Abstentions).

The motion was therefore defeated and the item **FELL**.

181. Appointment of External Auditors

Report A/16/23 details the arrangements for appointing external auditors following the abolition of the Audit Commission and the end of the transitional arrangements at the conclusion of the 2017/18 audit. It recommends opting into a Sector Led Body (Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited) to negotiate and make the external auditor appointment be agreed as the preferred procurement route.

Proposed by Councillor Miss Carey,
Seconded by Councillor Owen; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. To receive and note report A/16/23.**
- 2. That the Council opts in to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the appointment of external auditors.**

(voting: 24 For, 0 against, 0 abstentions)

182. Housing Revenue Account 2017/18

Report A/16/26 set out the Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Budget for 2017/18 and proposed a decrease in rents and an increase in service charges for 2017/18.

Proposed by Councillor Ewart-James,
Seconded by Councillor Collier; and

RESOLVED

1. **To receive and note Report AC/16/26.**
2. **To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2017/18. (Refer to paragraph 2.1 and Appendix 1)**
3. **To approve the decrease in rents of dwellings within the HRA on average by £0.85 per week, representing a 1.0% decrease with effect from 3 April 2017. (Refer to paragraph 3.2)**
4. **To approve the increase in service charges. (Refer to section 3.5)**
5. **To approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme budget 2017/18. (Refer to paragraph 4.1 and Appendix 2)**

(voting: 24 For, 0 against, 0 abstentions)

183. Update to the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme and Quarter 3 Monitoring 2016/17

Report A/16/22 updated the General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme for the five year period ending 31 March 2022 and provided a projected outturn for the General Fund capital programme in 2016/17, based on expenditure to 30 November 2016. The report also set out both the prudential indicators for capital expenditure and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement to be approved by full Council. The General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme is required to be submitted to full Council for consideration and approval as part of the budget process. Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 17 January 2017 ahead of Cabinet approving it on 18 January 2017 to be submitted to full Council.

Proposed by Councillor Miss Susan Carey,
Seconded by Councillor Monk; and

RESOLVED:

1. **To receive and note report A/16/22.**
2. **To approve the updated General Fund Medium Term Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.**
3. **To approve the Prudential Indicators for capital and borrowing set out in the Appendix 3 to this report.**
4. **To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement set out in Appendix 4 to this report.**

(voting: 24 For, 0 against, 0 abstentions)

184. **Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18 including Treasury Management Indicators**

Report A/16/24 set out the proposed strategy for treasury management for 2017/18 including the Annual Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Indicators to be approved by full Council. Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 17 January 2017 ahead of Cabinet approving it on 18 January 2017 to be submitted to full Council.

Proposed by Councillor Miss Carey,
Seconded by Councillor Monk; and

RESOLVED:

1. **To receive and note Report A/16/24.**
2. **To approve the strategy for treasury management in 2017/18 set out in the report is adopted.**
3. **To approve the 2017/18 Annual Investment Strategy set out in the report is adopted.**
4. **To approve the treasury management indicators set out in the report.**

(voting: 24 For, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

185. **General Fund budget and Council Tax 2017/18**

Report A/16/25 concluded the budget-making process for 2017/18. It set out recommendations for setting the council tax after taking into account the district's council tax requirement (including town and parish council requirements and special expenses in respect of the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity), the precepts of Kent County Council, the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner and the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Service.

Proposed by Councillor Miss Carey,
Seconded by Councillor Monk; and

RESOLVED:

1. **To receive and note Report A/16/25.**
2. **To approve the District Council's budget for 2017/18 as presented in Appendix 1 to this report and the council tax requirement for 2017/18, to be met from the Collection Fund, of £11,444,953.**
3. **To approve that the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2017/18 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:**

- a) **£99,405,985** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act (as in Appendix 2).
- b) **£87,961,032** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act (as in Appendix 2).
- c) **£11,444,953** – being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year (as in Appendix 2).
- d) **£305.75** – being the amount at 3(c) above divided by the tax base of 37,431.37 calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year.
- e) **£2,573,344** – being the aggregate of all special items (including parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- f) **£237.01** - being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the tax base of 37,431.37 calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates, ie Old Romney and Snargate.
- g) **Part of the Council's area**

Folkestone	325.83	Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council area mentioned here divided in each case by the appropriate tax base calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.
Sandgate	309.15	
Hythe	294.64	
Lydd	321.16	
New Romney	321.73	
Acrise	239.29	
Elham	260.53	
Elmsted	246.79	
Hawkinge	309.45	
Lyminge	268.97	
Lympne	266.59	
Monks Horton	246.42	
Newington	270.47	
Paddlesworth	247.73	
Postling	254.66	
Saltwood	261.41	
Sellindge	296.33	

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Stanford	270.09
Stelling Minnis	256.51
Stowting	251.16
Swingfield	282.07
Brenzett	275.58
Brookland	298.12
Burmarsh	271.41
Dymchurch	272.89
Ivychurch	288.04
Newchurch	269.74
Old Romney	237.01
St Mary in the Marsh	263.26
Snargate	237.01

(h) Part of the Council's area

Valuation Bands

Parish	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Folkestone	217.22	253.42	289.62	325.83	398.23	470.64	543.05	651.66
Sandgate	206.10	240.45	274.80	309.15	377.85	446.55	515.25	618.30
Hythe	196.42	229.16	261.90	294.64	360.11	425.59	491.06	589.28
Lydd	214.11	249.79	285.47	321.16	392.53	463.89	535.26	642.32
New Romney	214.49	250.24	285.98	321.73	393.23	464.72	536.22	643.46
Acrise	159.53	186.11	212.70	239.29	292.46	345.64	398.81	478.58
Elham	173.69	202.63	231.58	260.53	318.42	376.32	434.22	521.06
Elmsted	164.53	191.95	219.37	246.79	301.63	356.47	411.32	493.58
Hawkinge	206.30	240.68	275.07	309.45	378.22	446.98	515.75	618.90
Lyminge	179.31	209.20	239.08	268.97	328.74	388.51	448.28	537.94
Lympne	177.73	207.35	236.97	266.59	325.83	385.07	444.31	533.18
Monks Horton	164.28	191.66	219.04	246.42	301.18	355.94	410.70	492.84
Newington	180.31	210.37	240.42	270.47	330.58	390.68	450.79	540.94
Paddlesworth	165.15	192.68	220.20	247.73	302.78	357.83	412.88	495.46
Postling	169.77	198.07	226.36	254.66	311.25	367.84	424.43	509.32
Saltwood	174.27	203.32	232.36	261.41	319.50	377.59	435.68	522.82
Sellindge	197.55	230.48	263.40	296.33	362.18	428.03	493.88	592.66
Stanford	180.06	210.07	240.08	270.09	330.11	390.13	450.15	540.18
Stelling Minnis	171.01	199.51	228.01	256.51	313.51	370.52	427.52	513.02
Stowting	167.44	195.35	223.26	251.16	306.98	362.79	418.61	502.32
Swingfield	188.05	219.39	250.73	282.07	344.75	407.43	470.12	564.14
Brenzett	183.72	214.34	244.96	275.58	336.83	398.07	459.31	551.16
Brookland	198.75	231.87	265.00	298.12	364.37	430.62	496.87	596.24
Burmarsh	180.94	211.09	241.25	271.41	331.72	392.03	452.34	542.82
Dymchurch	181.92	212.24	242.56	272.89	333.53	394.17	454.81	545.78
Ivychurch	192.03	224.03	256.04	288.04	352.05	416.06	480.07	576.08
Newchurch	179.83	209.80	239.77	269.74	329.68	389.63	449.57	539.48
Old Romney	158.01	184.34	210.68	237.01	289.68	342.35	395.02	474.02
St Mary in the Marsh	175.51	204.76	234.01	263.26	321.76	380.26	438.76	526.52
Snargate	158.01	184.34	210.68	237.01	289.68	342.35	395.02	474.02

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(f) and 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

4. To note that for the year 2017/18 Kent County Council, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner and the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Service have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Kent County Council	785.88	916.86	1,047.84	1,178.82	1,440.78	1,702.74	1,964.70	2,357.64
Kent Police and Crime Commissioner	104.77	122.23	139.69	157.15	192.07	226.99	261.92	314.30
Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue	48.90	57.05	65.20	73.35	89.65	105.95	122.25	146.70

Major preceptor amounts remained subject to confirmation at the time of preparing this report.

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2017/18 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

(i) Part of the Council's area Valuation Bands

Parish	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Folkestone	1,156.77	1,349.56	1,542.35	1,735.15	2,120.73	2,506.32	2,891.92	3,470.30
Sandgate	1,145.65	1,336.59	1,527.53	1,718.47	2,100.35	2,482.23	2,864.12	3,436.94
Hythe	1,135.97	1,325.30	1,514.63	1,703.96	2,082.61	2,461.27	2,839.93	3,407.92

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Lydd	1,153.66	1,345.93	1,538.20	1,730.48	2,115.03	2,499.57	2,884.13	3,460.96
New Romney	1,154.04	1,346.38	1,538.71	1,731.05	2,115.73	2,500.40	2,885.09	3,462.10
Acrise	1,099.08	1,282.25	1,465.43	1,648.61	2,014.96	2,381.32	2,747.68	3,297.22
Elham	1,113.24	1,298.77	1,484.31	1,669.85	2,040.92	2,412.00	2,783.09	3,339.70
Elmsted	1,104.08	1,288.09	1,472.10	1,656.11	2,024.13	2,392.15	2,760.19	3,312.22
Hawkinge	1,145.85	1,336.82	1,527.80	1,718.77	2,100.72	2,482.66	2,864.62	3,437.54
Lyminge	1,118.86	1,305.34	1,491.81	1,678.29	2,051.24	2,424.19	2,797.15	3,356.58
Lympne	1,117.28	1,303.49	1,489.70	1,675.91	2,048.33	2,420.75	2,793.18	3,351.82
Monks Horton	1,103.83	1,287.80	1,471.77	1,655.74	2,023.68	2,391.62	2,759.57	3,311.48
Newington	1,119.86	1,306.51	1,493.15	1,679.79	2,053.08	2,426.36	2,799.66	3,359.58
Paddlesworth	1,104.70	1,288.82	1,472.93	1,657.05	2,025.28	2,393.51	2,761.75	3,314.10
Postling	1,109.32	1,294.21	1,479.09	1,663.98	2,033.75	2,403.52	2,773.30	3,327.96
Saltwood	1,113.82	1,299.46	1,485.09	1,670.73	2,042.00	2,413.27	2,784.55	3,341.46
Sellindge	1,137.10	1,326.62	1,516.13	1,705.65	2,084.68	2,463.71	2,842.75	3,411.30
Stanford	1,119.61	1,306.21	1,492.81	1,679.41	2,052.61	2,425.81	2,799.02	3,358.82
Stelling Minnis	1,110.56	1,295.65	1,480.74	1,665.83	2,036.01	2,406.20	2,776.39	3,331.66
Stowting	1,106.99	1,291.49	1,475.99	1,660.48	2,029.48	2,398.47	2,767.48	3,320.96
Swingfield	1,127.60	1,315.53	1,503.46	1,691.39	2,067.25	2,443.11	2,818.99	3,382.78
Brenzett	1,123.27	1,310.48	1,497.69	1,684.90	2,059.33	2,433.75	2,808.18	3,369.80
Brookland	1,138.30	1,328.01	1,517.73	1,707.44	2,086.87	2,466.30	2,845.74	3,414.88
Burmarsh	1,120.49	1,307.23	1,493.98	1,680.73	2,054.22	2,427.71	2,801.21	3,361.46
Dymchurch	1,121.47	1,308.38	1,495.29	1,682.21	2,056.03	2,429.85	2,803.68	3,364.42
Ivychurch	1,131.58	1,320.17	1,508.77	1,697.36	2,074.55	2,451.74	2,828.94	3,394.72
Newchurch	1,119.38	1,305.94	1,492.50	1,679.06	2,052.18	2,425.31	2,798.44	3,358.12
Old Romney	1,097.56	1,280.48	1,463.41	1,646.33	2,012.18	2,378.03	2,743.89	3,292.66
St Mary in the Marsh	1,115.06	1,300.90	1,486.74	1,672.58	2,044.26	2,415.94	2,787.63	3,345.16
Snargate	1,097.56	1,280.48	1,463.41	1,646.33	2,012.18	2,378.03	2,743.89	3,292.66

6. To determine that the District Council's basic amount of council tax for 2017/18 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The motion was put to a recorded vote in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 as set out below:

FOR: Councillors Ann Berry, Susan Carey, John Collier, Malcolm Dearden, Alan Ewart-James, Peter Gane, Clive Goddard, David Godfrey, Susie Govett, Janet Holben, Jenny Hollingsbee, Claire Jeffrey, Len Laws, Rory Love, Philip Martin, Iain Meyers, David Monk, David Owen, Dick Pascoe, Paul Peacock, Stuart Peall, Rodica Wheeler and Roger Wilkins (24).

AGAINST: 0.

ABSTENTIONS: 0

(Voting: For 24; Against 0; Abstentions 0).

186. Motions on Notice

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Lawes
Seconded by Councillor Miss Govett.

'Should we as a council and society do more to help the 'homeless' in our district?'

Substantive Motion

Proposed by Councillor Love.
Seconded by Councillor Monk.

That the motion be amended to read as follows:

'This Council asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the question:

"Should we as a council and society do more to help the 'Homeless' in our district?"

in order to take account of:

1. the details provided tonight by the Cabinet Member for Housing on Shepway's current activities, and
2. the emerging agenda of the Homelessness Reduction Bill, once it has completed its passage through Parliament.'

Upon being put, the substantive motion was **carried**.

(Voting: 24 For; 0 Against; 0 Abstentions).

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Public questions and answers:

1. From Bryan Rylands to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

Please could SDC provide me with the total sum of any pension deficit they may have and an explanation of how this has come about.

ANSWER (RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR MISS CAREY):

To put this answer in context it should be noted that the Local Government Pension Scheme is one of the very few public sector pension schemes which actually has funds set aside to meet liabilities. So pensions for workers in the NHS, teachers or uniformed police or fire service employees could be said to be 100% in deficit as they rely on day to day taxation to meet ongoing and future commitments.

Shepway employees are part of the Superannuation Fund run by Kent County Council. Independent actuaries assess whether the fund can meet its liabilities both now and in the future and a formal assessment is made every three years and contributions by employers are raised if there is a shortfall. The Kent fund was assessed at 31 March 2013 as having a funding level of 83%. It is the actuary's duty to set the level of employer contributions to see that the fund can meet its present and future liabilities. This is done by calculating life expectancy and assessing the performance of the investments. The fund has to pay present pensioners but those who are still below pensionable age do not yet receive their pensions and the fund has the chance to grow in time to meet this future liability.

The total deficit for the Kent Pension Fund at 31 March 2016 was £546.6m; reducing from £784.1m at the last revaluation in 2013 against total assets of £4.6 billion. The latest news we have is that the actuary has said that employers contributions to the fund should remain at 20% of salary with any employer in the fund with a shortfall required to pay more.

Shepway's share of the pension fund deficit has reduced from £26.1m to 23.6m and I am pleased to report that the actuary has confirmed our contribution stays at 20% which is reflected in to the budget proposals before us tonight.

The Local Government Pension scheme is a defined benefit scheme an excellent benefit for employees providing real security for retirement. Such pensions used to be widespread but in 1997 Gordon Brown removed Advanced Corporation Tax relief for pension funds which fundamentally undermined all pension savings by reducing both the tax benefit to pension savings and the amount invested on behalf of pension funds. This hit the stock market and reduced the long term investment returns that pension funds rely on to grow their assets and meet their liabilities. The Kent Pension Fund

suffered from this too but returns have been much better in recent years and are ahead of the benchmark set by the actuary.

The other factor that creates pension deficits is that everyone is living much longer so the liabilities are continuing to be revised upwards.

So in conclusion the Shepway pension deficit is £23.6m. The reason for the deficit is that this is a defined contribution scheme and the actuary has calculated the gap between what is in the fund at present and what it will need to meet future liabilities. The actuary has also confirmed that Shepway's current level of payments to the Pension Fund can stay at their present levels.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

Within the Kent Pension Scheme, would Shepway District Council consider having an ethical policy, selecting investment based upon ethical grounds, for example fossil fuels, climate change, etc?

ANSWER:

The first obligation of the Superannuation scheme is to its beneficiaries, and it will not 'play politics'.

2. From Graham Corr to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

Are Investors in Private Capital Ltd the guarantors for Cozumel estates, who have a collaboration agreement with SDC?

ANSWER

Yes, Investors in Private Capital Ltd is the UK based guarantor for Cozumel estates, which has a collaboration agreement with SDC.

3. From Christopher Deane to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

In the light of almost daily reports on the crisis in our cash strapped hospitals, and the particular problem of 'bed blocking' brought about by cuts in funding and social care provision for the elderly at a local level, will Shepway District Council be lobbying for the maximum permissible increase Council Tax in order to facilitate the best possible local provision.

ANSWER:

Council Tax helps pay for local services, and applies to all domestic properties whether owned or rented. Each organisation that provides services in the district sets their own proportion of the Council Tax bill you receive.

These are:

- Kent County Council

- Shepway District Council (SDC)
- your Town or Parish council (if you have one)
- Kent Police
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service

Kent County Council (KCC) has the statutory responsibility for adult social care, rather than the district Council. Therefore, KCC sets the portion of your overall Council Tax bill, which relates to their services. In 2017/18, the Government allowed social services authorities (KCC in our area) to include a further increase totalling 6% over the next 3 years to fund extra spending on adult social care. This is written on your bill as "precept to fund adult social care". Therefore, it is KCC, rather than SDC, who will be lobbying for the maximum permissible increase in their proportion of Council Tax payable in order to facilitate the best possible local provision for adult social care.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

How could the public be assured that funds set aside as new funding will not be offset against existing expenditure?

ANSWER:

The Government carried out regular audits of local authority expenditure.

4. **From Aaron Roche to Councillor Alan Ewart-James, Cabinet Member for Housing**

"Could the Council please detail the exact criteria and methods of assessment for the triggering of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) and whether there are any instances where these criteria have been met but SWEP not implemented in time this year?"

ANSWER

SWEP is a process that is put in place to ensure that people sleeping rough are not at risk of harm or, in the worst case, of dying during periods of extreme cold and severe weather. The purpose is to provide shelter for rough sleepers who under normal circumstances would not be owed a statutory duty under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, or who would not normally engage with services.

The purpose of SWEP is to ensure that a place of warmth and safety is available, during severe weather conditions, for people sleeping rough and who are not normally eligible for statutory services. There is no strict definition of what counts as 'severe weather'. The understanding is that local authorities should proactively identify any weather that could increase the risk of serious harm to people sleeping rough and put measures in place to minimise this. This includes extreme cold, wind and rain. It is important not to presume when, or in what form, severe weather will occur. It is seen to be more about a

common sense approach to put in place procedures to protect rough sleepers in all types of 'severe weather'.

SWEP applies to anyone identified as sleeping rough on the streets during the period that it is in operation. The criteria that must be met in order for a rough sleeper to qualify for assistance through SWEP are:

- They must be at risk if they continue to sleep rough during the course of the severe weather.
- They must have nowhere available to them to sleep indoors during the course of the severe weather (indoors does not include cars, sheds or garages).
- They must agree to assistance.
- They do not need to have an entitlement to public funds.

SWEP arrangements will be triggered when the night time temperature is predicted to be zero degrees celsius or below for three consecutive nights. Consideration will be given to implementing SWEP when exceptionally cold or inclement weather is forecast that falls short of this definition.

The Housing Options team will ensure that every effort is made to engage with individuals accommodated during the extreme cold weather period so they do not return to the streets this will include working with our partner agencies and voluntary organisations.

Once activated the SWEP provision will be provided for a minimum of a three-day period even if temperatures rise before this point. This will allow the Housing Options team (and other agencies) time to work with the individual to find a more lasting solution.

This year, there have been no instances where the criteria have been met, but the SWEP not implemented. Where the criteria has been met, the SWEP has always been implemented in time.

5. From Nick Southgate to Councillor Alan Ewart-James, Cabinet Member for Housing

“Can the council clarify its position on both social and affordable housing? In particular, how many proposed new-build homes will be utilised for social housing and how much would a first-time buyer need to be earning, assuming they have a 10% deposit, to purchase a new-build 'affordable home'?”

ANSWER

Under the council's affordable housing policies, the council works to ensure, that subject to viability, 30% of new homes on sites of 15 units or more are delivered for affordable housing, with 60% of these being provided for affordable rent and 40% for shared ownership. The majority of the shared

ownership homes sold in the district are sold at shares as low 25% -50% of market value. This significantly reduces the amount of the deposit that purchasers have to provide and means that households with incomes as low as £20,000 to £25,000 are able to access home ownership through shared ownership.

Over the next 12 months the council and its affordable housing partners will deliver at least 80 additional homes for rent and shared ownership in the district. The council itself will have 41 homes onsite and under construction in Military Road and Roman Way by the end of March this year.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

Based on average earnings in Kent in 2016, those working in the Shepway District earned £85 per week less than those working in Ashford. Is a need for social housing of greater importance?

ANSWER:

This question has already been answered in the response to the original question.

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Full Council – 22 February 2017

Councillor questions:

1. By Councillor Mrs Claire Jeffrey to Councillor Alan Ewart-James, Cabinet Member for Housing

"How is SDC dealing with homelessness and working to prevent it?"

ANSWER:

The Housing Options team are working to prevent homelessness in a number of ways;

- Negotiate with landlords to enable customers to remain
- Liaised with housing benefits where this was not being paid in full or not in payment at all
- Maintain regular contact with customers
- Make contact with customers as soon as we become aware of properties that may become available that may be suitable for their needs.
- Complete personal budget forms to establish affordability and refer to agencies that can support with eg debt management, budgeting
- Pay off arrears where households have accrued arrears through no fault of their own and landlords are prepared to give them a new 12 month tenancy.
- Attending domestic abuse drop in service
- Liaison and signposting to the voluntary sector

The Housing Options Team had been restructured in July 2016. Since then, homelessness prevention had occurred for 260 households presenting as homeless.

Our Prevention Officers are making contact with customers who are served notice or who are threatened with homelessness within an average of 4 working days to discuss their housing situation and their options, offering advice and assistance and preparing personal housing plans with all information and advice offered.

Our Housing Options Officers carry out homeless assessments giving customers their options with advice and information that enables them to make informed decisions about how they would like to proceed. They also prevent homelessness where ever possible but most of their customers complete homeless applications and require temporary accommodation.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

What were the councils long term plans to continue to alleviate homelessness?

ANSWER:

The Housing Accommodation Officers are actively liaising with landlords to try and increase the number of properties that can be made available to sign post our customers to who may need to secure alternative accommodation in the private

rented sector. The team is currently developing a landlord task group to work with landlords to assist with issues with tenants and also to procure more properties.

The Social Lettings Agency provides an avenue where we can discharge our homeless duty and also prevent customers from becoming homeless by referring them to our Social Lettings Agency.

The Housing Options team is currently in the process of developing factsheets and advice and information pack to offer to customers that will assist them to be able to self help on a number of housing issues. We are also developing our website.

The Housing Strategy Manager and Housing Options Manager are also looking at how we can procure more suitable temporary and permanent accommodation in the district and are currently reviewing the allocations policy.

2. By Councillor Mrs Mary Lawes to Councillor David Monk, Leader of Council

“How many homes have been built in Hawkinge since 2002? Can you tell me what the population figures for Hawkinge are as of January 2017?”

ANSWER:

Council Tax records indicate that there have been 1,284 new properties in Hawkinge since 2002. This figure includes both residential ‘new build’ and ‘conversions’.

With regard to the population figures the most recent data is the 2015 mid-year estimates. The lowest level this data is produced at is by Ward. Hawkinge falls within the North Downs East Ward, which also includes other settlements such as Elham and Densole. The 2015 mid-year population estimate for the North Downs East Ward is 11,791.

The 2011 Census indicates that the population of the Parish of Hawkinge and Paddlesworth was just over 8,000.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

Why had a Secondary School never been built in Hawkinge?

ANSWER:

The building of schools fell within Kent County Council’s remit, and therefore, this question should be directed to them.

3. By Councillor Mrs Mary Lawes to Councillor Stuart Peall, Cabinet Member for Environment

“Given that approval by the cabinet on 19 October 2016 for 2 extra cameras and Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN £300) in lower Dover Road ‘Pilot Scheme was

agreed'. Why have the new measures not been implemented? Should there not be a collaboration of various interested parties including residents and officers to try and come up with a solution that will solve most, if not all the issues affecting the pilot scheme".

ANSWER:

The Dover Road Bin Pilot came about as a result of working very closely with the Dover Road Residents' Associations and other groups. These collaborations resulted in an agreed programme, which has been implemented over the last 2 years and has led to vast improvements across the area. There have been a wide range of interventions that have been put in place.

This work has resulted in:

- Regular collections of waste and reporting of issues
- Daily cleansing
- Regular patrols by Environmental Enforcement Officers
- Ongoing engagement with residents and Businesses
- Installation of bins at key locations
- Trial of different types of bins to encourage recycling
- S46 Letters and education advise stepped up
- Immediate reporting of issues and cleansing and Large items are collected daily as/when required
- Specifically where 133 Dover Rd was an issue a new bin has been installed and this has pleased residents and commercial owners alike. Where bags were being dumped outside 133 Dover Road (the ex ambulance hall) a 660lt bin has been provided for waste collections on a weekly basis as there are 6 flats in this building and to provide bins for them all to recycle would mean 12 bins outside. Therefore the decision to do one medium size bin for collections weekly will cover their need and hopefully reduce the need for them to leave bags at any given time. They were all given an educational/warning letter as well so a notice can be issued if this carries on. In general the majority of Dover Road has been clear each time an officer has checked it.
- There has been no build up of waste where the camera was installed at Queens Alley
- CCTV cameras are due to go up in the next few weeks there has been a delay in receiving essential information from 3rd parties. However, columns are identified, forms for energy supply are being organised, commando sockets are on order and the installer is arranging dates for mounting cameras.
- OSC received a detailed report on 18th October 2016 outlining costs to date and provision was then made to purchase 2 additional wireless CCTV cameras (£20k was allocated by Cabinet for this additional resource).
- All deposited waste eg fly tipped waste around bins is sifted through to see if there is any evidence for prosecution. Where there have been opportunities for small fly tips enforcement and where a £300 fine could be applied, to date there has been no evidence to trace the owner of

the rubbish which would be required in order for an interview under caution to take place which is an essential part of the enforcement process.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

How often would cameras be monitored?

ANSWER:

The CCTV cameras are monitored by the lifeline team, and if a particular issue was noticed, this would be highlighted for the enforcement process.

4. By Councillor Mrs Mary Lawes to Councillor David Monk, Leader of Council.

“Can you tell me how much it will cost to build the new leisure centre at Princes Parade? How many houses will be needed to be sold in order to 'wash it's face', as quoted in the cabinet meeting on 7 February 2017?”

ANSWER:

At its meeting on 7th February Cabinet decided:

“That, should planning permission be granted, then the full business case and financial appraisal should be considered by Cabinet prior to any building work commencing.”

The questions will be addressed at that time.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

How was the 'wash its face' statement made?

ANSWER:

The costs will not be known until it is clear exactly what is to be built.

5. By Councillor Len Laws to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

“I have been informed by the Head of Planning that no Brownfield Sites Register has been compiled because it is not compulsory . Are there plans in place to produce one for Shepway Council if so when?”

ANSWER:

The District Council is planning to publish a Brownfield Land Register but we are still waiting for guidance from the Government following the pilot schemes that were undertaken last year.

It is still not clear when they will become compulsory but the Government's recent White Paper 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market' indicates that local authorities will need to '...prepare and maintain these ... from this spring'. The District Council will prepare and publish the Brownfield Register as soon as the guidance is made available.

In Councillor Sacre's absence, it was agreed that questions 6, 7 and 8 will be deferred, and a written response provided to Councillor Sacre separately.

6. By Councillor Mrs Carol Sacre to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

"We are very aware of the current pressure on our NHS resources through bed-blocking. Should we in Shepway not play our part and would it surely be beneficial to utilise the original Royal Victoria Hospital in Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone, which it may be recalled, was funded and built by those citizens local to Folkestone as a hospital. For the present time, to continue to serve Shepway residents as a short term convalescent centre, thereby releasing those much needed Hospital beds at the William Harvey Hospital, the Kent and Canterbury Hospital and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital?"

ANSWER:

Bed blocking occurs when someone is medically fit to be discharged, but care has not yet been organised to help them outside hospital. Problems at the hospital front door are linked to delays at the back door. In Kent (and across the country), this is because a shortage of Kent County Council (KCC) social care beds has created an 'exit block' in hospitals, meaning patients who no longer need to be in hospital can't be discharged, because there is simply nowhere for them to go.

Kent County Council has the statutory responsibility for adult social care in Kent. However, due to ongoing cuts in spending on adult social care, it means people have to wait longer for home care packages or nursing home places, leading to an increase of hospital bed-blocking.

This current government is pushing for greater integration between the NHS and social care, underlining the importance of joined-up care within the NHS and the dependence of hospitals on well-functioning social care services – particularly for older people living at home. This joint work is being championed locally by the South Kent Coast Health and Wellbeing Board through the development of an Integrated Accountable Commissioning Organisation in partnership between the NHS, KCC Social Care and district/borough councils.

Based on an assessment of local need by the NHS, the Royal Victoria Hospital, Folkestone transformed into a community hospital offering a range of local services, including a minor injuries unit with a walk-in centre, an outpatients department, a specialist gynaecological and urological outpatient department, diagnostic services, and mental health services.

Therefore, to provide a short term convalescent centre would come at a cost and as there is no additional budget for either the NHS or KCC Social Care, who are already buckling under financial constraints, it is difficult to understand how this could be realised in practice.

7. By Councillor Mrs Carol Sacre to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

“Who was and is responsible for the public toilets (which have been closed for some considerable time), located in Folkestone bus station? I have not been given a conclusive response from those parties I felt would have the answer”.

ANSWER:

The toilets at Bouverie Square are part of the Bouverie Place development and are managed by their team.

Planning consent granted for the Bouverie Place retail development (reference Y04/0416/SH) included conditions requiring the provision of public toilets. The condition reads as follows:

Condition 28: The public toilet facilities indicated on the approved drawings shall be constructed and made available for public use in accordance with an agreed management plan, including times of opening, prior to the first public opening of the foodstore unless the Local Planning Authority gives its prior written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure provision of appropriate public toilet facilities in accordance with Shepway District Local Plan policies INT1 and FTC1 and Shepway District Local Plan Review (Revised Deposit Draft) policies INT1 and FTC1.

Bouverie Place Centre management have managed the public toilets and report that they are subject to significant vandalism and misuse. It has resulted in the public toilets having to be closed and repairs being carried out frequently at significant cost. The Centre Management report that there have also been incidences of the toilets having been used for drug taking with the paraphernalia left behind being a significant danger to the public and the Centre’s employees. The toilets are currently closed and the Centre indicate they will be seeking a meeting with the Planning Authority to discuss the situation and find a way forward.

8. By Councillor Mrs Carol Sacre to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

“I understand from Moat Homes Ltd of Dartford, who own the High rise flats in Pilgrim Spring, they will be demolished, (there are 6 remaining families who own their flats). Are you planning to rebuild as a joint venture with Moat Homes Ltd, and possibly Roger de Haan, luxury apartments on that site?”

ANSWER:

The Council has no such plans.

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