

Minutes of the Cabinet

10 May 2022

-: Present :-

Councillor Steve Darling (Chairman)

Councillors Cowell, Law, Long and Morey

(Also in attendance: Councillors Barrand, Brown, Douglas-Dunbar, Kennedy, Chris Lewis and David Thomas (virtually))

337. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stockman (who observed the meeting virtually) and Councillor Carter.

338. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 12 April 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

339. Communications

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services advised that several councillors and officers were taking part in the Fostering Network's Foster Care Walk which was taking part in Foster Care Fortnight (9 to 22 May 2022). The UK wide event was being run to raise awareness of fostering and hoped to achieve 5 million collective steps in recognition of the 70,000 children who need foster care support. The Cabinet Member encouraged people to consider becoming foster carers.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing updated members on TripAdvisor's Annual Travelers Choice Best of the Best Awards. Devon achieved six of the UK's top 25 bed and breakfasts with Torbay achieving five of those awards. These included The 25 Boutique B&B, The Elmdene, The Somerville, Kingsholm Hotel, Sampford Guest House and Stover Lodge, plus the Haytor Hotel achieving the most romantic hotel in the UK. The Cabinet Member highlighted that the ER BID Company's support for Torbay's tourist industry contributed towards achieving the awards and these lay the foundations for Torbay becoming a premier resort.

340. Matters for Consideration

The Cabinet considered the following matters, full details of which (including the Cabinet's decisions and recommendations to Council) are set out in the Record of Decisions appended to these Minutes.

341. Temporary Accommodation Sufficiency Implementation

342. Loan for Affordable Housing

This item was withdrawn.

Chairman

Record of Decisions

Temporary Accommodation Sufficiency Implementation

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 10 May 2022

Decision

1. That subject to final due diligence, the Divisional Director of Community and Customer Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Community Services be authorised to either:
 - a) undertake the required actions to activate the Council's Registered Provider status and apply for Investment Partner status with Homes England; or
 - b) utilise TorVistato hold the properties once acquired;
2. Subject to Full Council approval of the Prudential Borrowing or use of appropriate Capital Receipts for the purchase and renovation of properties for temporary accommodation;
 - (i) that authority be delegated to the Divisional Director of Community and Customer Services in consultation with the Director of Finance, Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing and Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Support, to award contracts to successful bidders on the Temporary Accommodation Development and Management Partner procurement;
 - (ii) That authority be delegated to the Divisional Director of Community and Customer Services in consultation with the Director of Finance, Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing and Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Support, to award contracts to successful bidders on the Temporary Accommodation Property Management Procurement; and
3. That the Director of Place be requested to prepare a business case setting out the opportunity to use the contractor appointed under this procurement, to procure properties for use as Social Rent in Torbay. Such report to be presented to enable the Cabinet to make any recommendations to Council in July 2022; and

That the Cabinet recommends to Council:

4. That prudential borrowing of up to £10m or use of appropriate Capital Receipts to fund the purchase and renovation costs of properties for the provision of temporary accommodation, be approved and that approval for the purchase of individual properties be delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance.

Reason for the Decision

Acquiring properties within Torbay will help ensure access to the required range and types of appropriate accommodation to meet the Council's statutory duties to homeless families. The Council will be able to secure properties and make them available for use within the shortest timeframe possible, addressing issues of both access and financial stability.

Implementation

The decision of the Cabinet will come into force and may be implemented on 23 May 2022 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

The recommendation of the Cabinet to Council will be considered at the meeting of the Adjourned Annual Council being held on 17 May 2022.

Information

The Council has a statutory duty to provide accommodation to homeless households. Torbay has no current contracts for temporary accommodation and is reliant on bed and breakfasts and other holiday-based accommodation.

The current housing crisis means more people need temporary accommodation (an increase in need of 150% compared to April 2018) and are staying in it for longer. To address the critical need to access accommodation for the provision of temporary accommodation for families in Torbay the Cabinet considered proposals to enable the rapid acquisition of 37 properties within Torbay. This would be undertaken via the Council re-activating its Registered Provider Status, or utilising TorVista, to hold the properties once acquired.

The submitted report included details of two procurements to be undertaken as part of this project, namely: a development and management partner to acquire and redevelop the properties; and a property management partner to oversee the maintenance and running of the accommodation once operational.

At the meeting Councillor Long proposed and Councillor Cowell seconded a motion, that was agreed unanimously by the Cabinet as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

Alternative options are set out in the submitted report.

Is this a Key Decision?

Yes – Reference Number: I090927

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

13 May 2022

Signed: _____ Date: 13 May 2022
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet