

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC SUITE (LANCASTER/STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 18 March 2025

PRESENT: Councillor S J Conboy – Chair.

Councillors S W Ferguson, J E Harvey, S A Howell, B A Mickelburgh, T D Sanderson, S L Taylor and S Wakeford.

APOLOGY: An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor L Davenport-Ray.

67 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2025 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

68 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

69 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024/25 QUARTER 3

The Cabinet received and noted a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) presenting an update on delivery of the Corporate Plan during Quarter 3 (October to December 2024).

In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance drew attention to the performance indicators that had been discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) at their meeting on 5th March 2025. Matters that were discussed included the issues being experienced with the Disabled Facilities Grants, the decline in performance levels for the waste performance indicators and the positive impact the Enforcement and Operations Team were having in respect of fly tipping. Having regard to the former, it was noted that investigations by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task and Finish Group were now underway with Cabinet Members acknowledging the complicated process that existed when working with partners such as the Home Improvement Agency and Places for People which impacted upon the delays experienced. Having regard to missed bin collections, Cabinet Members were mindful that this was partly attributed to unintended consequences of incidents such as road closures but the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Waste and Street Scene delivered assurances that attempts were made by refuse crews to return and pick up missed collections.

With reference to paragraph 4.9 of the report, the Chief Executive advised that the information reported was a true and accurate reflection of the meeting but that she would be requesting Officers to provide the correct update to Councillor

D Terry and Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance and Growth) accordingly.

A brief discussion then ensued on further education provision within St Neots. Cabinet Members acknowledged that the District Council was working with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to tackle the shortfall in provision within the area with work being undertaken to engage with existing providers on how the present offer could be enhanced. Formal bidding offers were currently being put forward. The Chair undertook to ensure that St Neots District Ward Members, and Members generally, were kept informed of any developments arising from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

Having commended Officers for the production of a comprehensive report, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet has considered and commented on progress and performance during Quarter 3 as summarised in the Corporate Performance Report and detailed in Appendices 1, A and B of the report now submitted.

70 GARDEN WASTE INCENTIVE SCHEME

A report by the Head of Operational Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) updating the Cabinet on the findings from the delivery of the incentive schemes that were introduced as part of the garden waste subscription service and seeking the Cabinet's approval on various proposals.

The Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene acquainted the Cabinet with the background to the report, drawing attention to the five non-statutory garden waste incentive schemes introduced in April 2024. Of the five, one had been regarded as not viable, namely the Saturday Freighter service.

Cabinet Members then considered the additional recommendation proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities & Partnerships) which was noted by the Cabinet. The view was held that as the schemes would become business as usual activity, it would be within Overview and Scrutiny's gift to seek information as necessary without requiring Cabinet's approval. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that the subject matter was one of general interest to Members, as well as the Town and Parish Councils, and that any developments would be picked up as part of normal communication activity.

Following a brief discussion on community bins which had been prompted by a question raised by the Executive Councillor for Planning, the Chair, as Executive Leader of the Council, undertook to ensure the opportunities to partake within the scheme would remain available to Town and Parish Councils and raised through established communication channels and briefings.

Whereupon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Place and Corporate Director of Finance and Resources (S151 Officer), in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Parks and Countryside, Waste and Street Scene, to embed garden waste incentives into business-as-usual activity. This includes the authority to continue, discontinue or modify schemes as appropriate, and to develop and implement a resident communication plan regarding service changes.

71 MARKET TOWNS PROGRAMME - SPRING UPDATE

A report by the Regeneration and Housing Delivery Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing an update on activity across all strands of the Market Towns Programme.

The Executive Councillor for Economy, Regeneration & Housing delivered a comprehensive update on all strands of the Market Towns Programme which included the Ramsey Town Centre enhancement, Cromwell Museum expansion in Huntingdon, Digital Information Screens across all Market Towns and the Shop Front Grant Scheme. He then went on to report upon the various projects being undertaken in St Neots which included the Priory Centre, Old Falcon, Town Centre Improvements and the Performance Stage.

In acknowledging the extent of the work undertaken to deliver the various projects across the Market Towns, in particular, the work which had been completed to date in St Neots, Members placed on record their thanks to Officers for their hard work and efforts to date.

In noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth) and in acknowledging that further discussion on the schemes within St Neots that were commercially sensitive would be discussed next in a private meeting of the Cabinet (Minute No. 24/73 refers), it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet note the contents of the report and delivery progress concerning the Market Towns Programme and related activities.

72 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

73 MARKET TOWNS PROGRAMME - SPRING UPDATE

Consideration was given to an exempt report (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) which provided an update on elements of the Market Towns Programme that had commercial confidentiality.

Cabinet Members discussed the contents of the report and raised a number of questions which were responded to at the meeting by the Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy & Housing. Having noted the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to receive and note the contents of the exempt report now submitted.

74 LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES REPORT

An exempt report by the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book).

Following a detailed presentation from the Head of Leisure, Health & Environment the Cabinet received responses to a number of questions which had been raised during the course of their discussions. In noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment, Communities & Partnerships), it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet approve recommendations a) to d) of the exempt report now submitted.

The meeting concluded at 8:41pm.

Chair