

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held on the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 24 February 2005

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley - Chairman
Councillors I C Bates, Mrs J Chandler,
N J Guyatt, Mrs P J Longford,
Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers and
L M Simpson

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor R L Clarke

134. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd February 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

135. CONEYGEAR PARK AND IMPROVEMENTS TO OPEN SPACE: OXMOOR, HUNTINGDON

Further to Minute No. 03/191 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22nd April 2004, the Cabinet was acquainted with progress in implementing improvements to the green spaces in Oxmoor, Huntingdon. Executive Councillors were reminded of earlier decisions in relation to the creation and development of Coneygear Park, neighbourhood gardens and doorstep greens as essential elements of the Oxmoor Action Plan. With regard to the development of neighbourhood gardens and doorstep greens, the report outlined the steps which had been taken to engage with local residents to improve local open spaces and having been informed that the construction work on Coneygear Park was scheduled to commence in June 2005 with Phase I being completed in September 2005, it was

RESOLVED

that the content of the report now submitted be noted.

136. TRAVEL PLAN 2005 - 2010

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was appended a proposed travel plan for the District Council for the period 2005 – 2010. In considering the Plan, together with statistical information on employee travel data, which had been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for Planning and Finance on 8th February 2005, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the District Council travel plan for the period 2005 – 2010 as annexed to the report now submitted be approved for consultation;
- (b) that the consultation arrangements as set out in paragraph 4.3 of the report now submitted, be approved; and
- (c) that the outcome of the consultation and Action Plan be reported to a future meeting.

137. SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY 2005 - 2010

Having considered a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the content of an updated Supporting People Strategy and in recording its apprehension with regard to the estimated shortfall in Government funding to address the perceived needs in delivering housing – related support services in Cambridgeshire in the period 2005 - 2010, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that, on the understanding that the facility will be available later to consider tailoring implementation of the Strategy to match available resources the updated Supporting People Strategy for the period 2005 – 2010 be approved;
- (b) that the supporting people resource allocation for Cambridgeshire for 2005/06 and the projected reductions in available budget allocations be noted; and
- (c) that the apprehension of the Cabinet in relation to the shortfall in Government funding for housing - related support services in Cambridgeshire be conveyed to the Local Government Association and members of Parliament for the Huntingdon and North West Cambridgeshire Constituencies.

138. COUNCIL FUNDING OF MANDATORY DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

Further to Minute No. 04/41 consideration was given to a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the overall take-up of Disabled Facility Grants in the first three quarters of 2004/05 and the Government's contribution towards funding of the grants for 2005/06. Members noted that 184 DFGs had been processed to-date in 2004/05 at a cost of £993,000 and that it was projected that this would rise to 254 DFGs by the end of the year at an estimated cost of £1,366,000. While it was anticipated that the supplementary estimate approved by Cabinet on 2nd September 2004 would be sufficient to meet the cost of DFG's in the remainder of the current financial year, Executive Councillors expressed concern at the continuing reduction in Government funding of the grants, whereupon it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the content of the report now submitted be noted; and
- (b) that a further monitoring report be submitted to a future meeting setting out the overall position at the end of the current financial year.

139. WORKING WITH THE HSC AND HSE TO CHANGE ATTITUDES AND CULTURE IN HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT

With the aid of a report by the Head of Environmental Health Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet was acquainted with a proposed statement of intent for the 'Local Authorities and Health and Safety Executive Working Together' strategic programme. The strategic programme had been commissioned as one of a range of initiatives established to deliver a strategy for work place health and safety in Great Britain to 2010 and beyond.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the statement of intent for the 'Local Authorities and Health and Safety Executive Working Together' strategic programme be endorsed; and
- (b) that the Executive Councillor for Public Health and Community Safety (or in her absence her nominee) be authorised to sign a copy of the statement of intent on behalf of the District Council.

140. TREASURY MANAGEMENT: INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which reviewed the respective levels of performance achieved during the quarter 1st April – 31st December 2004 by external fund managers in the matter of investment of the Council's capital receipts.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report now submitted be noted.

141. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to terms proposed in the course of negotiations for the acquisition of land.

142. ACQUISITION OF LAND AT HOUGHTON ROAD, ST. IVES

(Councillor I C Bates declared a personal interest in the

following matter by virtue of his membership of Cambridgeshire County Council)

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the annexe to the Minute Book) seeking approval to the proposed acquisition of land comprising circa 7.9 acres or thereabouts at Houghton Road, St. Ives from Cambridgeshire County Council. The land had been allocated in the Local Plan Alteration for residential purposes.

Having been acquainted by the Head of Housing Services with the possibility that the County Council might either offer the land to the District Council for immediate sale on to a Registered Social Landlord (“RSL”) or direct to an RSL nominated by the District Council, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that an exception to the District Council's Code of Procurement be not approved in this case and that three RSL's be invited to submit their proposals for development of the land;
- (b) that Cambridgeshire County Council be invited to offer the land directly to an RSL nominated by the District Council failing which and, subject to satisfactory resolution of the issue of stamp duty payable, terms be negotiated for the acquisition of the land by the District Council for the sale onto an RSL as described in the report now submitted;
- (c) that if required, a supplementary capital estimate equivalent to the purchase price of the land and any related costs be approved; and
- (d) that in the event the land is acquired by the District Council for sale onto an RSL –
 - the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council be authorised to approve terms for the transactions; and
 - the availability of a capital receipt from the sale of the land to an RSL and the consequential absence of any financial impact on the District Council be noted.

Chairman