

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley - Chairman

Councillors I C Bates, Mrs J Chandler,
R L Clarke, N J Guyatt, Mrs P J Longford,
T V Rogers and L M Simpson

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds

122. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th January 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

123. HUNTINGDON BUS STATION

With the aid of a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute book) the Cabinet was acquainted with the findings of a study into traffic management around and the siting of Huntingdon bus station. Executive Councillors noted the options considered for the location of the bus station and potential improvements to the configuration of the road network in the Town.

Having discussed the issues involved, the importance of the completion of works which would enable the A14 to be de-trunked and the need in the longer term for a public transport interchange at Huntingdon railway station, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the findings of the consultant's study be noted;
- (b) that, in the short-medium term, the bus station be retained on its existing site;
- (c) that a feasibility study be undertaken into an improved bus station layout; and
- (d) that the draft MTP be varied as set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report now submitted to enable the feasibility study for a new bus station layout to be completed in 2005/06.

124. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES: ARRANGEMENTS WITH TOWN COUNCILS

It was

RESOLVED

that consideration of the report by the Head of Environment and Transport on this matter be deferred pending the submission of a report by the Advisory Group for Public Conveniences to a future meeting.

125. ALCONBURY FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

(Councillor N J Guyatt, declared a personal interest in the following matter by virtue of his membership of the Council's Development Control Panel, which in due course would consider a planning application for the proposed scheme. Councillor Guyatt took no part in voting on the matter).

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the Environment Agency's "preferred option consultation" in respect of the proposed Alconbury Flood Alleviation Scheme. Executive Councillors were informed that the Scheme did not include Alconbury Weston as the required works to protect the village did not reach the cost-benefit threshold to attract Government grant.

Having noted details of the proposed scheme and the intended programme leading to completion of the works, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the inability of the Environment Agency to advance a Flood Alleviation Scheme for Alconbury Weston be noted;
- (b) that the preferred option for the alleviation of flooding in Alconbury as detailed in the Environment Agency's consultation document be supported in principle;
- (c) that the likely consideration to be given to the scheme later in the year by the Council as the local Planning Authority be noted; and
- (d) that the Head of Environment and Transport be requested to inform the Environment Agency that the proposed scheme should be sympathetic in terms of its design and the materials used with the character of the area.

126. SMALL SCALE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining progress on small scale environmental improvement schemes and proposing a programme of schemes for 2005/06.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the report now submitted be noted; and
- (b) that the programme of schemes for 2005/06, as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report now submitted, be approved and funding released from the MTP accordingly.

127. BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2006 - 2010

By way of a report by the Director of Commerce and Technology (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet was acquainted with a number of variations to assumptions made previously for the purpose of preparing the draft Budget and Medium Term Plan (MTP) for the period 2006 – 2010 and the level of Council Tax for 2005/06.

Having been acquainted with the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on this matter and the outcome of consultation with the business community on expenditure proposals, the Cabinet

RECOMMENDED -

- (a) that, subject to appropriate adjustments to reflect revenue implications inherent in resolution (d) in Minute No. 123 ante, the £8,000 reduction in Revenue Support Grant and the resulting impact on interest receipts, the spending proposals summarised in Annex C to the report now submitted be approved;
- (b) that a Council Tax level of £106.54 for a Band D property for 2005/06 and the indicative levels for 2006/07 onwards as shown in Annex C to the report now submitted be approved;
- (c) that, subject to any necessary variations relating to the adjustments referred to in resolutions (a) and (b) ante, the Prudential Indicators at Annex F to the report now submitted be approved;
- (d) that, notwithstanding the lack of information currently available which would enable the Council to guarantee achieving indicative targets in the Gershon efficiency review and in the light of revenue reserves likely to be available to the Council in 2005/06, the Director of Commerce and Technology's comments on the robustness of the budget as shown in Annex G now submitted be noted; and
- (e) that the 2005/06 and 2006/07 capital programme be approved to increase the opportunities for achieving lower tender prices.

128. 2005/06 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a proposed Treasury Management Strategy 2005/06. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that Council be invited to approve the 2005/06 Treasury Management Strategy as appended to the report now submitted.

129. QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF DEBTS WRITTEN-OFF

The Cabinet received and noted a report by the Head of Revenue Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) summarising debts which had been written off during the quarter October – December 2004, the cumulative total for the current financial year and comparisons with previous years.

130. CHEQUERS COURT URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute book) outlining the responses received to consultation on the Chequers Court Urban Design Framework and suggested amendments that had been made as a result, principally relating to the removal of references to a proposed Phase 2, to guidance for traffic and pedestrians' use of the area, to alternative entrances to the possible multi-storey car park, to improvements to access routes for buses and to comments on the built environment.

Councillor J D Fell addressed Executive Councillors with regard to views expressed by local residents on the framework document.

Having considered the responses and proposed amendments, it was

RESOLVED

that, subject to the inclusion of the words "and through an increase in the quantity and quality of floor space add to the viability and vitality of the Town Centre and" after the word "regenerated" in paragraph 2.5, the revised Urban Design Framework as amended to reflect the content of the Annex to the report now submitted, be approved as Interim Planning Guidance to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

131. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to particular employees.

132. REVIEW OF TOURISM SERVICES SECTION

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Community Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining proposed changes to the staffing structure of the Tourism Services Section of the Community Services Division. The report also referred to the implications of the decision by the County Council to terminate the lease of the Tourist Information Centre premises in Huntingdon library and the options available for continued delivery of the service. Having noted the decisions of the Employment Panel at its meeting held on 2nd February, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that option 3 in paragraph 3.9 of the report now submitted be approved as the preferred solution for the provision of Tourist Information Services in Huntingdon; and
- (b) that the financial implications as outlined with the revised structure of the Tourism Services section contained in Annex D to the report now submitted be approved.

133. BUSINESS GENERATION AT LEISURE CENTRES

Pursuant to Minute No.121, the Cabinet gave consideration to a report by the Head of Community Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the impact of the Business Generation Team at the Council's Leisure Centres and a suggested change to the structure of the Team. Having noted responses to questions raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) on the report, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) that the approval by the Employment Panel of the replacement of the post of Business Generation Manager with the post of Leisure Centres Promotions Officer also be noted; and
- (c) that the Leisure Centre Management Committees be invited to monitor the performance of the Business Generation Team.

Chairman