

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 November 2005.

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley – Chairman.
Councillors I C Bates, N J Guyatt, A Hansard, 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 Mrs J Chandler.

89. MINUTES

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

90. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Simpson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 99 by virtue of his receipt of a pension from the Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

91. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2005/06

By means of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and having been acquainted with variations in the Capital Programme in the current year, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report be received and the expenditure variations and their capital and revenue impact noted; and
- (b) that the increases in the Capital Programme of £151,000 for the Car Park Strategy Scheme and associated additional staffing costs of £59,000 as outlined in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 of the report now submitted be approved.

92. FINANCIAL MONITORING - REVENUE BUDGET

The Cabinet received and noted a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing expected budget variation already identified in the current year.

RESOLVED

that the spending variations estimated in the Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2005 be noted.

93. 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, the cumulative total for the current year and comparisons with previous years.

94. FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

Further to Minute No. 05/51 and with the assistance of a report by the Head of Environmental Health Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the implications for the District Council of invoking adoptive powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for offences under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, 2003, the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environmental Act 2005 and other applicable legislation within an agreed enforcement framework.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the adoption of the default penalties within the legislative framework referred to in the report now submitted be approved in principle; and
- (b) that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor whose portfolio includes Community Safety, be authorised to appoint persons to issue relevant Fixed Penalty Notices (under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environmental Act 2005 and any subordinate legislation) on behalf of the District Council.

95. MOBILE HOME SITE, ST NEOTS, CONTAMINATED LAND SURVEY

By way of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the findings of a contaminated land survey of the Council's Mobile Home Park at Eynesbury, St Neots.

In noting, the information contained in the report, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that further reports be submitted to Cabinet when the further investigations of the land are completed.

96. NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES DISCRETIONARY RELIEF - BRAMPTON PARK GOLF CLUB

Further to Minute No 05/80, the Chief Executive reported that the "call-in" exercised by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) of the decision of the Cabinet to refuse the application by

Brampton Park Golf Club for discretionary rate relief had not resulted in a further reference either to the Cabinet or to full Council. The decision, therefore, took effect from 2nd November 2005.

97. REVIEW OF MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

With the assistance of a report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet were acquainted with the findings of the Panel's review of Member Development.

In considering the information contained in the report, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the suggestion with regard to the organisation of a programme of briefing sessions for Members to be as far as possible by service area every second month, be approved;
- (b) that the Chief Officer's Management Team be requested to remind Officers of the need to notify Members on matters of significance affecting their Wards as provided for in paragraph 10.2 of the approved Protocol on Member/Employee Relations;
- (c) that the Panel's suggestions with regard to the possible introduction of a mentoring scheme for newly-elected Councillors and the appointment of "Training Champions" be referred to the leaders of political groups represented on the District Council;
- (d) that the possible use of alternative training mediums as described in paragraph 7.2.5 of the report be investigated; and
- (e) that a further report be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet on the possible provision of broadband for Members for consideration in conjunction with the forthcoming review of the Medium Term Plan.

98. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

The report of the Safety Advisory Group held on 14th September 2005 was received and noted.

99. POLICE FORCES: RESTUCTURING

By way of a report by the Chief Executive (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the outcomes of a report by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary – "Closing the Gap: A Review of the 'Fitness for Purpose' of the Current Structure of Policing in England and Wales", the response by the Home Secretary and the timescale set for the consideration of options for the future restructuring of Police Forces in England and Wales.

Having expressed concern about the timescale involved, the potential

impact on current neighbourhood policing and workforce modernisation initiatives and on the morale of the Force in Cambridgeshire, the apparent predisposition towards larger forces and the likelihood that there would be little substantive consultation on only a narrow range of options for change, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Chief Executive be authorised to make representations to the Home Secretary for a preferred option to retain the existing single force option in Cambridgeshire; and
- (b) that the representations be copied to appropriate stakeholders and other interested parties.

Chairman