

## 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, 2 February 2006.

PRESENT: Councillor L M Simpson – Vice-Chairman in the Chair

Councillors Mrs J Chandler, N J Guyatt,  
D P Holley, Mrs P J Longford,  
Mrs D C Reynolds and T V Rogers

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor I C Bates

### **148. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **149. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

### **150. FINANCIAL STRATEGY MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2007-2011 AND BUDGET 2006-2007**

Further to Minute No.05/106 by way of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with a number of variations to assumptions made previously for the purpose of preparing the draft financial strategy, Medium Term Plan (MTP), the budget and associated level of Council Tax for 2006/07.

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 the financial strategy summarised in Annex C to the report now submitted be approved;
- (b) that, subject to appropriate adjustments to Annexes B and C to reflect the potential requirement for additional compensatory savings/budget reductions as may be determined by Council at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2006, the proposed budget and Medium Term Plan as annexed to the report now submitted be approved;
- (c) that a Council Tax increase of 4.99%, representing a level of £104.69 for a Band D property be approved; and
- (d) that the prudential indicators at Annex E to the report now submitted be approved.

**151. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2006/07**

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and having considered a proposed Treasury Management Strategy 2006/07,

RESOLVED

that the Council be invited to approve the 2006/07 Treasury Management Strategy as appended to the report now submitted.

**152. LOCAL AUTHORITY BUSINESS GROWTH INCENTIVE**

The Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the Government's Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) Scheme designed to allow local authorities to retain a share of increased business rates revenue generated in their areas.

In considering the information contained in the report, Members were advised of the arrangements for the scheme's operation and having endorsed the sequential approach outlined in paragraph 2.3 with regard to the investment of revenue to be received, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the arrangements for introduction of the Government's LABGI Scheme be noted and that a further report be submitted when the amount of the Council's allocation under the scheme is notified.

**153. FOOTBALL IMPROVEMENTS**

By means of a joint report by the Leisure Development Manager and the Leisure Centres Co-ordinator (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with issues affecting a project within the Medium Term Plan to improve football facilities at the Priory Park, St Neots and the St Ivo Outdoor Leisure Centre.

In considering the financial implications of the changes Members were advised of the extent to which the schemes were reliant on the receipt of S106 contributions and on the success of a bid to the Football Foundation towards the cost of the scheme. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the revised funding within the Medium Term Plan for football developments at Priory Park and the St Ivo Outdoor Centre as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the report be approved.

**154. MEDIUM TERM PLAN: REQUESTS FOR THE RELEASE OF FUNDS**

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a

copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the release of funding from the Medium Term Plan in the sum of £4k in the current year and then £8k in each of the ensuing four years for the Health Improvement Scheme, Ref. 064, be approved.

**155. QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF DEBTS WRITTEN OFF**

The Cabinet received and noted the 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 October – December 2005 as irrecoverable.

**156. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY PORTFOLIO: SUPPORTING A STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY**

Consideration was given to a joint report by the Heads of Legal and Estates and of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposing a strategic direction for reinvestment in the Council's commercial property portfolio.

Having considered the adoption of a medium term strategic investment plan linked to the portfolio and the associated prioritising of certain commercial schemes within the Medium Term Plan, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the investment plan suggested in the report for the Council's commercial property portfolio be approved and that the implementation of each project be conditional on the approval of a detailed appraisal; and
- (b) that, subject to approval by full Council of the Medium Term Plan, rephrasing of expenditure as summarised in the Appendix to the report be approved.

**157. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT**

A report by the Head of Policy was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached a draft Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Cambridgeshire. The Agreement reflected the Government's intention to streamline funding, encourage partnership working and direct investment towards local priorities.

In discussing the Agreement and despite expressing concerns about the principles associated with LAAs in terms of obscuring local priorities and accountability and the additional costs of governance arrangements, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the Local Area Agreement for Cambridgeshire be supported.

**158. GREATER CAMBRIDGE PARTNERSHIP COMPANY LIMITED**

Having considered the proposed terms for membership of the Greater Cambridge Partnership Company which were set out in a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the District Council's membership of the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership Company be approved; and
- (b) that the Director of Central Services be authorised to complete the application for membership and execute a Deed of Adherence.

**159. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS LIMITED**

Further to Minute No.03/109 and with the assistance of a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered an application from English partnerships to become a member of the Cambridgeshire Horizons Limited, founded under the auspice of the Cambridgeshire Sub-Region Infrastructure Partnership. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the application by English Partnerships to become a member of Cambridgeshire Horizons Limited be approved and the Council's representative on the Board authorised to take any necessary action to enable this.

**160. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (2ND AMENDMENT)-  
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON PLANNING  
CONTRIBUTIONS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Further to Minute No.04/149 and by way of a report by the Planning Policy Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with two proposed amendments to the Local Development Scheme for Huntingdonshire in relation to affordable housing and planning contributions.

Having regard to comments received from Go-East, it was

RESOLVED

that the proposed amendments to the Local Development Scheme for Huntingdonshire as outlined in the report now submitted be endorsed for submission to the Secretary of State.

**161. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - WIND POWER**

Further to Minute No.05/55, the Cabinet considered a report by the Planning Policy Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the responses received to consultation on the Supplementary Planning Document – Wind Power.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the revised Supplementary Planning Document - Wind Power be adopted.

**162. DISTRICT COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS AND OTHER OFFICE ACCOMMODATION MEMBERS' ADVISORY GROUP**

A report of the meeting of the District Council's Headquarters and Other Office Accommodation Members' Advisory Group held on 9th January 2006 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) was received. Having considered issues regarding the appointment of consultants to prepare and implement a Communications Strategy and action plan, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Office Accommodation and Other Special Projects, be authorised to approve terms for the retention of a PR/Communications consultant to assist in the preparation and implementation of a communications strategy and action plan for the new headquarters and other accommodation project.

Chairman