

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 15 December 2005.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.

Councillors Mrs J Chandler, 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 was submitted on behalf of Councillor D P Holley.

121. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 24th November 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

122. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

123. IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT STATEMENT 2005

Further to Minute No.05/33 and by way of report by the Head of Information Management (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the contents of the final 2005 Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement for submission to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

RESOLVED

that Council be recommended to approve the submission of 2005 IEG Statement

124. CALL CENTRE PERFORMANCE AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO CALL HANDLING ARRANGEMENTS

A report by the Director of Commerce and Technology was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which reviewed the levels of performance achieved by the call centre in its first month of operation.

Having considered proposals to improve the service further, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted, the number of operational lines increased and the trial use of call queuing arrangements for a three month period as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report now submitted be approved.

125. BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC (BME) HOUSING STRATEGY

By way of a report by the Head of Housing Services (copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the content of a proposed Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy.

Having been advised that the document would be submitted to Go-East, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the 2005/06 Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Strategy be approved.

126. NUISANCE VEHICLES

Consideration was given to a report by the Public Health Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the availability and proposed adoption of devolved powers from the DVLA to remove untaxed vehicles from the public highway. In so doing, the Cabinet noted that point 3 in Annex B should have read "prefix" and not "suffix".

Having considered the information contained in the report, a code of practice produced by the DVLA, issues surrounding insurance and responsibility for damage to vehicles whilst removing and transporting them to the vehicle pound, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that devolved powers from the DVLA for dealing with the clamping and removing of untaxed vehicles from the public highway be adopted;
- (b) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to appoint officers to enforce the provisions of the powers referred to in (a) above;
- (c) that the Head of Environmental Health Services be authorised to subscribe to the DVLA code of practice on behalf of the District Council;
- (d) that the Head of Environmental Health Services be authorised to enter into an agreement with the Council's existing abandoned vehicles contractor to collect, store, destroy, return, sell or otherwise dispose of untaxed nuisance vehicles in accordance with the DVLA code of practice in return for the fees set out in the Vehicles Excise Duty (Immobilisation, Removal and Disposal of Vehicles) Regulations 1997 (as amended);and
- (e) that local Parish Councils and other interested organisations be advised of the new arrangements.

127. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Members noted that since the publication of the agenda the report of the Public Conveniences Advisory Group and associated improvement proposals had been deferred to facilitate their prior consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources).

128. HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION OFFICER: REQUEST FOR THE RELEASE OF FUNDING

By way of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a request for the release of funding from the Medium Term Plan to facilitate recruitment to the vacant post of Homelessness Prevention Officer on a permanent contract.

Having considered information contained in the report about the contribution made by the post to the avoidance or amelioration of the problems associated with homelessness in the District, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the release of relevant funding from the Medium Term Plan be approved to make permanent the existing temporary post of Homelessness Prevention Officer.

129. ALFRED HALL MEMORIAL FIELD/EYNESBURY ROVERS FC DESIGN BRIEF

Further to Minute No.05/54 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 Design Brief for the redevelopment of the Alfred Hall Memorial Field.

Having considered the responses received and in noting that traffic calming proposals for the Hall Road area would be considered as part of the Planning Application for any new development, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

(a) that the design brief, as amended to reflect the content of the appendices to the report now submitted, be approved as Interim Planning Guidance to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan; and

(b) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to make any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy

130. RAMSEY CONSERVATION AREA: BOUNDARY REVIEW, CHARACTER ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

Further to Minute No.05/34, the Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the consultation responses to the draft

Management Plan for the Ramsey Conservation Area.

Having considered the schedule of responses and amendments outlined in the appendices to the report, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that, subject to the incorporation of the specified changes identified within the consultation responses, the proposed Ramsey Conservation Area be designated according to the boundary in the revised Ramsey Boundary Review document attached as appendix 2;
- (b) that, subject to the incorporation of the specified changes contained in appendix 3 to the report, the revised Ramsey Conservation Area Character Statement be adopted;
- (c) that the Ramsey Conservation Area Management Plan be adopted as a set of proposals for the enhancement of the Conservation Area and the basis for further discussion and project work; and
- (d) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to approve any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations as a result of the changes above after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy.

131. DEVELOPMENT BRIEF: THE GRAND CINEMA, RAMSEY

Further to Minute No.05/70, the Cabinet considered a report by the Planning Policy Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the consultation responses to the draft Design Brief for the Grand Cinema in Ramsey. In noting proposed revisions to the development brief, together with comments by the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy as to the future submission of a Medium Term Plan bid to facilitate preparatory work in a review of the Council's car parking strategy, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the Design Brief for the Grand Cinema in Ramsey, as amended to reflect the content of the Annex to the report now submitted, be approved; and
- (b) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to approve any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations as a result of the changes referred to in (a) above after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy.

132. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SITE, MOORHOUSE DRIVE, HUNTINGDON

By way of a joint report by the Heads of Housing Services and of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet considered suggested arrangements for the sale of Council-owned land at Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon to the Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership (HHP) for residential development, 29% of which would comprise affordable housing.

Having noted that funding had been secured by HHP for social housing grant from the Housing Corporation towards the affordable housing element of the scheme and while noting views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) on a preferred higher threshold of affordable housing for the site, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the sale of land at Moorhouse Drive, Huntingdon to Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership be approved in principle; and
- (b) that the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Resources and Policy, and for Finance, be authorised to approve detailed terms for sale of the land.

133. THE COUNCIL'S SCHEME OF DELEGATION: INTERIM VARIATION PENDING THE APPOINTMENT OF A DIRECTOR OF COMMERCE AND TECHNOLOGY

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered interim arrangements suggested in relation to the Council's scheme of delegation pending the recruitment of the replacement of the Director of Commerce and Technology.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that with effect from the 20th January 2006 and pending the recruitment of a new Director, the Chief Executive be authorised to exercise powers delegated to the Director of Commerce and Technology in the Council's Scheme of Delegation, with the exception of those relating to the Financial Proper Officer and Local Government Act, 1972, Section 151, functions.

134. APPOINTMENTS PANEL

In anticipation of the forthcoming vacancy in the post of Director of Commerce and Technology, the Cabinet considered the appointment of a Member of the Cabinet to serve on the Appointments Panel alongside Councillors Baker, Davies, Rogers and Simpson.

Whereupon it was

RESOLVED

that Executive Councillor for Office Accommodation and Other Special Projects be appointed to serve on the Appointment Panel for the purpose of appointing to the post of Director of Commerce and Technology.

135. EMPLOYMENT PANEL

Following the appointment of Councillor Bates as Leader of the Council, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Executive Councillor for Office Accommodation and Other Special Projects be appointed ex-officio Member of the Employment Panel.

136. RISK MANAGEMENT

Arising from a review of Risk Management procedures, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Executive Councillor for Finance be designated as Risk Management "Champion".

Chairman