

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, 20 July 2006.

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 from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor P L E Bucknell.

37. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 29th June 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

38. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Bates declared a personal interest in Minute No. 46 by virtue of his membership of Cambridgeshire Horizons.

Councillor Rogers declared a personal interest in Minute No. 51 as the District Council's representative on the Huntingdonshire Citizens Advice Bureau.

39. REVENUE MONITORING:2005/06 REVENUE OUTTURN & 2006/07 BUDGET

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of the outturn of revenue expenditure for 2005/06 and the variations between the original and revised budget provision for that year.

Having noted the total net variations of £1.986m from the original budget and the action to be taken to enhance the budget monitoring process in the future, it was -

RESOLVED

- (a) that the spending variations for the revenue budget 2005/06 be noted;
- (b) that the preliminary view of additional savings required in 2006/07 be noted; and
- (c) that the action to be taken to improve financial monitoring as outlined in Annex D to the report be noted.

40. CAPITAL MONITORING 2005/06 OUTTURN AND 2006/07 BUDGET

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing the outturn of capital expenditure during 2005/06, and the implications for 2006/07.

Having noted those projects which had been delayed in 2005/06 and information on the schemes which had incurred additional costs, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the capital schemes monitoring reproduced at Annex B to the report now submitted be noted;
- (b) that the spending variations reported in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 of the report and the receipt of additional disabled facilities grant be noted;
- (c) that the deferrals from 2005/06 and the forecast variations for the current year as set out in paragraph 4.1 be noted; and
- (d) that the revenue implications of the variations in 2006/07 and 2007/08 be noted.

41. BUDGET AND MTP PROCESS 2007/2012

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the preparation, consideration and review of the financial strategy, 2007/08 Budget and the 2008/12 Medium Term Plan.

Having been advised of the views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate and Strategic Framework), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the timetable and stages for considering the financial strategy, budget and MTP be approved; and
- (b) that the proposed approach to identify savings be noted.

42. MEDIUM TERM PLAN: REQUEST 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 relevant funding as outlined in the revised Annex A to the report now submitted be released from the Medium Term Plan (Scheme Ref: 615) in respect of the Social Housing Grant for Affordable Housing.

43. 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 April-June 2006 as irrecoverable.

44. HOUSING STRATEGY 2006-11

By way of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the content of the Housing Strategy 2006-11, Empty Homes Strategy 2006-11 and Homeless Strategy 2006-08.

Having been advised that the documents would be submitted to Go-East, in September 2006, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Council be recommended to approve the Housing Strategy 2006-11, Empty Homes Strategy 2006-11 and Homelessness Strategy 2006-08 for submission to Go-East.

45. THE DUTY TO PROMOTE RACE EQUALITY: UPDATE TO RACE EQUALITY SCHEME

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached a copy of a Race Equality Scheme for the Council as required by the Race Relations Act.

Having noted the aims and objectives of the scheme and the associated action plan, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the Race Equality Scheme and associated Action Plan attached to the report now submitted be approved.

46. QUALITY OF LIFE STRATEGIES - ARTS CULTURE, MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES, & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE.

By way of a report by the Head of Planning Services, the Cabinet was invited to consider three Quality of Life Documents:

- ◆ Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region;
- ◆ A major sports facilities strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region; and
- ◆ Cambridge Sub-Region Culture and Arts Strategy commissioned by Cambridgeshire Horizons to help shape and guide growth across the sub-region. Copies of the documents are appended in the Minute Book.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region be adopted as technical guidance to guide the preparation of any open space/recreation/leisure strategies and as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals;
- (b) that projects in the Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region in Huntingdonshire be considered for incorporation in the forthcoming Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document; and
- (c) that the content of the Cambridge Sub-Region Culture and Arts Strategy and the Major Sports Facilities Strategy be noted and the outcomes of further discussion with Cambridgeshire Horizons and adjoining authorities on the provision and financing of strategic sports and culture and arts facilities awaited.

47. EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN: REPORT OF EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

With the aid of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet was acquainted with a summary of the independent Panel's report of the Public Examination of the draft East of England Plan. Members were reminded that the plan outlined the strategic planning approach proposed for the East of England until 2021 and would set out the Strategic Planning Framework to guide future development.

In considering the terms of a suggested response, Members also endorsed references with regard to a limitation of four sub-regions in the Eastern Region and the need for appropriate steps to ensure the availability of adequate water resources.

RESOLVED

that the Head of Planning Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, be authorised to make representations to the East of England Regional Assembly based on the content of paragraph 3 of the report now submitted.

48. GREAT FEN PROJECT - MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Further to Minute No.02/32 and by way of report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with progress on the project to restore over 3,000 hectares of wetland in and around the Woodwalton Fen and Holme Fen Nature Reserves by way of a partnership of organisations comprising the District Council, the Environment Agency, English Nature and the Wildlife Trust for Cambridgeshire.

Having considered the content of the draft Memorandum of Agreement designed to replace and strengthen the existing Memorandum of Understanding for the project, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to sign a Memorandum of Agreement between the Wildlife Trust, English Nature, Environment Agency and the District Council in relation to the Great Fen Project.

49. ST NEOTS CONSERVATION AREA: BOUNDARY REVIEW, CHARACTER STATEMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached draft copies of a Boundary Review, Character Statement and Management Plan for the St Neots Conservation Area.

In noting the main aims and objectives of the documents, Members were advised that the boundary review proposed to amalgamate the existing conservation areas in St. Neots, Eynesbury and Eaton Socon in line with English Heritage's general guidance on the management of conservation areas. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Boundary Review, Character Statement and Management Plan for the St Neots Conservation Area be approved as a basis for public consultation.

50. CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Members considered a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the possible relocation of Marshall of Cambridge Aerospace Limited and the availability of the Company's business plans in order to inform discussion among the local authorities and other organisations involved.

Having acknowledged the commercially sensitive nature of the business plan, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Director of Central Services be authorised to enter into a Confidentiality Agreement with Marshall of Cambridge Aerospace Limited on behalf of the District Council and the Director of Operational Services appointed as the designated Officer under the Agreement.

51. CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU, HUNTINGDON

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining details of a

request from the Citizens Advice Bureau for the Council to act as a guarantor of a lease of new premises, in All Saints Passage, Huntingdon.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Executive Director of Central Services, be authorised to approve arrangements for the Council to act as guarantor for a lease of premises in All Saints Passage, Huntingdon to the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Chairman