

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, 22 February 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.

Councillors P L E Bucknell, Mrs J Chandler, N J Guyatt, A Hansard, Mrs P J Longford, Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers and L M Simpson.

154. COUNCILLOR N J GUYATT

In light of his anticipated forthcoming resignation as a District Councillor, the Chairman and Executive Councillors expressed their appreciation for the services rendered to the Council, latterly as Executive Councillor for Environment and Transport, by Councillor N J Guyatt who was attending his last Cabinet meeting prior to relocating to Luxemburg. The Cabinet extended their best wishes for the future to Councillor Guyatt and his wife.

155. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15th February 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

156. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillors A Hansard and Mrs D C Reynolds declared personal interests in Minute No's 157 and 158 by virtue of their membership of St Neots and St Ives Town Councils respectively.

157. EXPANSION OF CUSTOMER SERVICES IN ST. IVES & ST. NEOTS

By way of a report by the Head of Revenue Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a proposal to re-model the cash offices in St. Ives and St. Neots as customer service centres and thereby expand the range of services available.

Having considered the information contained in the report, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the development of customer service centres at St. Ives and St. Neots cash offices be approved; and
- (b) that the associated budget adjustments, referred to in paragraph 6.3 of the report now submitted be noted.

158. CASH PAYMENTS

By way of a report by the Head of Revenue Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with a proposal to transfer the handling of cash payments at the Council's three cash offices to an alternative payment provider.

Having discussed the issues involved, the benefits of introducing additional payment locations and the associated financial implications, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the introduction of additional payment locations be approved and the payment of cash transactions at the Council's three cash offices withdrawn;
- (b) that the Director of Commerce and Technology be authorised to select the payment provider to handle cash payments; and
- (c) that the proposed use of under-spends and savings in the existing budgets to finance the net costs of the proposal be noted.

159. TREASURY MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which reviewed the respective levels of performance achieved by Fund Managers during the quarter 1st October to 31st December 2006 in managing the investment of the Council's capital receipts.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report now submitted be noted.

160. DRAFT ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR CORE STRATEGY DPD AMENDMENT

The Cabinet were advised that in the light of further information the item on draft issues and options which would amend the Council's core strategy DPD had been withdrawn from the Agenda and that it was anticipated a report by the Head of Planning Services would be submitted to a future meeting.

161. EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN - THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DRAFT REVISION OF THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY AND STATEMENT OF REASONS.

By means of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the details of the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the draft revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England and Statement of Reasons.

Having considered the conclusions emerging from the Secretary of State's proposals and the suggested response, the Cabinet emphasised that the latter should address their apprehension with regard to the ability of the proposals to achieve sustainable development, the intimation that a regional aspiration of 35% affordable housing provision would be sufficient and the lack of provision for improvements to the infrastructure given the proposed increase in new housing the district's demographic profile and the existing infrastructure deficit in the Eastern Region..

Having also recorded their concern with regard to the continued export by road of waste to Cambridgeshire landfill sites from the London area, Executive Councillors

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Leader and the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, be authorised to make appropriate representations to the Secretary of State in response to the draft revision of the Strategy and Statement of Reasons; and
- (b) that the Council's commitment to working with other Cambridgeshire Planning Authorities, and Regional and Sub-Regional partners, in order to submit appropriately co-ordinated responses to the strategic planning issues, be endorsed.

162. REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the timetable for the review of the Council's Constitution by the Corporate Governance Panel and seeking suggestions for any change to the present Constitutional arrangements.

Having being reminded of issues raised on the occasion of the last review and in recording its view that the Council's Constitution should continue not to permit substitution arrangements, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the report be received and noted.

163. GREAT FEN PROJECT STEERING GROUP

Having been advised of the resignation of Councillor N J Guyatt from the Great Fen Steering Group, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that Councillor P L E Bucknell be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Great Fen Steering Group for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

164. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

165. LAND AT BURY ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE RAMSEY

By way of a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book), the Cabinet considered proposed terms for the settlement of a claim against the Council by the purchaser of the freehold reversion of land at Bury Road, Ramsey.

Having been acquainted with the recommendations of Counsel on this matter, it was

RESOLVED

that the terms set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report now submitted be approved in full and final settlement of all claims by the Company in connection with this matter.

Chairman