

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, 16 October 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.

Councillors P L E Bucknell, K J Churchill,
D B Dew, A Hansard, C R Hyams,
Mrs D C Reynolds and L M Simpson.

AN APOLOGY: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor T V Rogers.

70. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 24th September 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

71. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

72. IMPROVING LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY CONSULTATION CHANGES TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY POWERS

With the aid of a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a suggested response on behalf of the Council to a consultation paper issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) on improving local accountability which proposed a number of changes to Overview and Scrutiny function. Executive Councillors were advised that the consultation paper had been produced in response to a recent White Paper "Communities in Control" which aims to encourage greater community involvement in local decision making.

In considering the Council's response to a series of questions set by the CLG, Members discussed the requirement to make provision for a dedicated scrutiny resource to support the overview and scrutiny function, Although not a requirement for district councils, Members were of the opinion that this should be at the discretion of the individual authorities depending on local circumstances. With regard to the overall package of proposals to raise the profile of overview and scrutiny, the Cabinet recognised that several of the initiatives have been either tried or implemented by the Council.

Having been advised of the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted and the suggested answers to the consultation paper set out in the Annex to the report now submitted incorporating the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels be endorsed, for submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

73. ALCOHOL DISORDER ZONES

Further to Minute No. 08/59 the Cabinet considered a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the use of Alcohol Disorder Zones (ADZs).

Members were reminded that the paper had been requested by the Cabinet following a proposal by the Overview and Scrutiny (Service Delivery) proposing an enhanced cleansing service on Sundays in the market towns. Members were advised that ADZs were short term, last resort measures intended only to address high levels of alcohol related nuisance and disorder, circumstances not applicable in the District. As such they were not appropriate to deal with the problem of litter and the additional cleaning costs. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the position with regard to the new powers to designate Alcohol Disorder Zones be noted.

74. MARKET RULES

By way of a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet was invited to consider revised rules for markets operating in Huntingdonshire controlled by the Council.

Members were informed that the rules had been revised to ensure that they were relevant and appropriate to current trading practices. Having noted that existing market traders had been consulted on the new rules, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the revised rules for Council-run markets in Huntingdonshire be approved and that the Director of Environmental and Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Operational and Countryside Services, be authorised to make any minor changes to the rules as may be necessary in the future.

75. REPRESENTATION ON ORGANISATIONS

(The Chairman announced that he proposed to admit the following urgent item in accordance with Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 given the need to ensure that Members are overseeing those risks associated with treasury management)

In view of the current turmoil in the banking sector the Cabinet has considered the exercise of delegation in respect of treasury

management matters. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillors J A Gray, T V Rogers and L M Simpson be appointed as the members with whom the Director of Commerce and Technology is required to consult on the exercise of delegated authority on treasury management matters.

Chairman