

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 19 April 2012.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Ablewhite – Chairman.
Councillors B S Chapman, J A Gray,
N J Guyatt, T D Sanderson and D M Tysoe.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor S Criswell for item No 112

105. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22nd March 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

106. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

107. CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL SCOPING REPORT

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which were attached responses to public consultations on the draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

Having considered the information contained in the report, which had been submitted also to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being), it was

RESOLVED

that the Head of Planning Services be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing, to finalise and approve the Sustainability Scoping Report.

108. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

By way of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were invited to consider the responses received to consultation on a new Statement of Community Involvement together with the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) and Development Management Panel thereon.

Members were reminded that the first Statement of Community Involvement had been adopted by the Council in October 2006. It was reported that the new Statement had been produced as part of the new local plan process and sets out how planning matters would

be consulted on in line with the Council's Corporate Consultation and Engagement Strategy. Having referred to the need to encourage public participation, Executive Councillors were advised that any interested party may register with the Council to be consulted on planning policies.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Housing and the Chairman of the Development Management Panel, the Head of Planning Services be authorised to finalise and approve the Statement of Community Involvement.

109. HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY CHARGING SCHEDULE 2012

Further to Minute No. 11/81 and by way of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered the content of the Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule 2012, the CIL Instalment Policy and the CIL Regulation 123 Infrastructure List.

In so doing, Members were reminded that the Schedule had been the subject of a formal public examination by an Independent Examiner appointed by the Planning Inspectorate. The Cabinet were advised that the document included a number of minor modifications identified by the Examiner but that subject to their inclusion he had found the Schedule to be viable. The Schedule could therefore be adopted by Council. It was explained that once approved, the CIL would be used in conjunction with the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document in order to determine the scale of developer contributions towards site related infrastructure and wider community infrastructure across the District.

Members were advised that the approved document would require "a correctable error", in accordance with Regulation 26 of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended). Having noted that this would legally clarify the position on charging where planning permission was granted to change the use of existing floor space, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that Council be recommended to approve the Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule 2012, the CIL Instalment Policy and the CIL Regulation 123 Infrastructure List for implementation from 1st May 2012;
- (b) that Council be requested to approve, as a point of legal clarification, a "correctable error" for the Charging Schedule referred to in paragraph 4.2 of the report now submitted; and

- (c) that the Head of Planning Services be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning and Housing, to undertake the necessary procedures required to make the “correctable error” identified and to commence implementation of the approved Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule on 1st May 2012.

110. FINANCIAL MONITORING - CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12

By means of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and having been acquainted with anticipated variations in the Capital Programme in the current year, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the report be received and the expenditure variations noted.

111. FINANCIAL MONITORING - REVENUE BUDGET 2011/12

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the projected budget outturn for 2011/2012 together with details of variations from the previous forecast.

Executive Councillors noted that the expected outturn of revenue expenditure was now £20.8m which was £1.6m less than assumed in the draft 2011/2012 budget, however £1.8m of reserves would still need to be used to cover the 2011/2012 deficit. Having expressed their thanks to staff for their efforts in achieving the budgetary outcomes, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the spending variations for the revenue budget 2011/12 be noted; and
- (b) that the position on debts written-off as set out in Annex B to the report now submitted also be noted.

112. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS WORKING GROUP

(Councillor S Criswell, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) was in attendance and spoke on this item).

A report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which summarised progress to date of a study by the Panel on the impact and operation of the Neighbourhood Forums since their introduction in January 2010, together with recommendations for taking them forward as part of the proposed Local Joint Committees (LJC's) in Huntingdonshire.

In discussing the Panel's recommendations, Executive Councillors' attention was drawn to a variety of issues relating to boundary areas, elected Member representation, constitutional terms for LJC's, voting and decision making. In so doing, reference was made of the importance of a balanced representation, involving Town and Parish Councils and the need for Senior Member attendance at the proposed LJC's from both the District and County Councils. Having thanked the Panel for producing a thorough and comprehensive report, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the report of the Neighbourhood Forum Working Group be noted and the proposed boundaries, composition, voting and constitution for Local Joint Committees endorsed as a basis for consultation with Town and Parish Councils.

113. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

In receiving a report of the Safety Advisory Group held on 7th March 2012, Members' attention was drawn to a number of issues that had arisen as a result of two fire evacuations at Pathfinder House in January and February 2012. Having received assurances from the Managing Director (Communities, Partnerships & Projects) that measures have been put in place to appoint a Responsible Person for Fire and to produce a comprehensive Fire Evacuation Plan and Policy, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report of the Safety Advisory Group be noted.

114. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the press and public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

115. DEVELOPMENT OF ONE LEISURE ST IVES

Further to Minute No. 11/36 and by way of a report by the General Manager (One Leisure) (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) the Cabinet were apprised of the outcome of the tendering process for the re-modelling of One Leisure, St. Ives. Executive Councillors were advised that the proposals were intended to reduce the net operating costs of One Leisure and to increase admissions for participation levels to meet both Government and Council health agenda targets. The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) whose comments were relayed to the Cabinet.

In discussing the tenders received, particular attention was drawn to

the views of the Panel over the need to identify the social benefits of the proposals. In that respect, Executive Councillors welcomed the work being undertaken by the One Leisure Finance Working Group to establish a methodology to quantify the social value of such projects.

Attention also was drawn to the existing rifle range, which had not been incorporated into the re-modelling proposals. As a consequence a request from the St Ives District Rifle and Pistol Club for assistance to move to alternative premises had been received. In considering the request, Executive Councillors concurred with the Panel that the Club be invited to provide a business plan and, subject to the information provided, the Council should consider providing the Club with an interest charged loan.

Having noted that the tender recommended for acceptance was the lowest one received and in receiving assurances that the tenderer's standard of work had been examined and was considered to be satisfactory, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the General Manager (One Leisure) be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Healthy and Active Communities, to award the contract for the redevelopment of One Leisure, St. Ives.

116. HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW

(Mr C Davidson and Mrs G Smith, representatives of ELAG Staff Side, were in attendance and spoke on this item).

Consideration was given to a report by the Managing Director (Resources) (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) summarising a range of options for the future management and potential out-sourcing of the District Council's Human Resource and Payroll Service. The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) whose comments were relayed to the Cabinet.

In discussing the options put forward, the Cabinet were advised of the concerns of ELAG Staff Side regarding the value and effect on the authority of outsourcing the service. Particular attention was drawn to the workload of the team since the departure of key members of staff and the likely savings arising from the options presented. The ELAG representatives drew Members' attention to the success of Resourcelink, the Council's H R and Payroll Self Service system and the likelihood that this would need to be replaced by an alternative system in the event that the service was outsourced.

Having stressed the need for strategic HR leadership, ELAG representatives concluded that an in-house onsite strategic HR management team with both the operational and strategic experience to lead organisational development and change together with the implementation of web recruitment would be ELAG's preferred option.

Whilst considering ELAG's concerns, the Cabinet acknowledged the need to develop shared services to safeguard the Council's financial

viability. Mention was made also of the benefits of entering into a shared service arrangement for the HR and Payrole service which would offer the ability to access broader specialist HR advice, scope for further savings, potential for better training, a reduction in workforce costs and the possibility of savings in other areas in the future.

Having recognised the difficulties and challenges any change would have for employees and the need to manage this process effectively, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Managing Director (Resources) be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Leader and the Executive Councillor for Resources, to enter into a shared service arrangement with Local Government Shared Services to provide a full HR service to the Council including the TUPE transfer of the current Council staff.

117. CASTLE HILL HOUSE

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.1 a Notice of Motion was submitted by seven Executive Councillors to enable the Cabinet to consider the rescission of the decision made at their meeting held on 28th February 2012 (Minute No. 96 refers) in respect of the potential sale of Castle Hill House and to allow the matter to be reconsidered at this meeting).

(The Chairman announced that he proposed to admit the following urgent item in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 given the need for the Council to respond to an offer made for the building in advance of the next Cabinet meeting and developments within the property market)

Pursuant to Minute No 11/96 and in receiving a Notice of Motion by seven Members of the Council, the Cabinet reconsidered their previous decision in respect of the sale of Castle Hill House.

Having discussed additional information relating to the offer and given current marking conditions, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the resolution in Minute No 96 (a) of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 28th February 2012 be rescinded and the following substituted therefor - "that an offer of £575,000 be accepted for Castle Hill House to include the hardstanding hatched area shown in Annex A of the report of the Managing Director (Resources)".

Chairman