

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 12 December 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Ablewhite – Chairman.

Councillors B S Chapman, J A Gray,
N J Guyatt, R B Howe, T D Sanderson and
D M Tysoe.

53. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21st November were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

54. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

55. BUDGET UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report by the Assistant Director, Finance and Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) setting out the draft budget for 2014/2015 and the Medium Term Plan (MTP) for the period 2014 – 2019.

An addendum to the report was also circulated outlining the impact on revenue savings of the Government's announcement in the Autumn Statement that the pooling of the New Homes Bonus would now only apply to authorities within the London Local Enterprise Partnership. Executive Councillors were advised that despite this announcement, the Council would still need to achieve savings of £3.6m by 2018/19. In that respect, the Cabinet reiterated that the Facing the Future process would continue and remained an important element of the savings programme.

With regard to the proposed variations within the Base Budget, attention was drawn to those items identified as an extra cost or reduced income. With reference to the charge for second green bins, Members were informed that the income target did not reflect the revenue savings anticipated from reusing returned bins. Members referred to the cost of providing wheeled bins to new properties. Executive Councillors were reminded that the Developer Contributions SPD 2011 required new housing development to make a contribution towards the provision of residential wheeled bins. Having been advised that this only applied to new housing applications received after January 2013, the Cabinet were of the view that the cost of providing any new bin should be recouped from either the developer or house owner.

In relation to the targeted savings, the Cabinet revisited the decision not to provide grants to Town and Parish Councils to offset the

implications of the Government's Local Council Tax Support Scheme on their precepts. In that respect, Executive Councillors commented on the importance of all levels of authorities making efficiencies and referred again to the concept of localism.

Members' attention was drawn to the conclusions reached by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being). In that respect, the Cabinet confirmed that provision would need to be made in the Medium Term Plan for costs arising from the potential redevelopment of Wyton Airfield over the period 2014/2017 and that the outcome of the pay review and senior management review would be reflected in the final budget report to Council in February 2014, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the report now submitted be noted; and
- (b) that the draft Medium Term Plan be recommended to Council as a basis for the development of the 2014/2015 budget and the revised Medium Term Plan 2015/2019.

56. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

A report by the Assistant Director, Finance and Resources was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which reviewed the respective levels of performance achieved during April to September 2013 by external fund managers in the matter of investment of the Council's Capital Receipts.

Having received the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that Council be recommended to note the contents of the report.

57. NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATING - CHANGES TO DISCRETIONARY POLICY

By way of a report by the Head of Customer Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with an initiative by the Government to encourage local authorities to provide rate relief on newly built and unoccupied non domestic properties for up to 18 months after they are completed, from 1st October 2013 until 30th September 2016.

Having received the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and in noting that the Government would reimburse billing authorities for the cost of providing the exemption, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Head of Customer Services be authorised to award 100% discretionary rate relief to qualifying newly built non domestic properties completed from 1st October 2013 to 30th September 2016, for a maximum period of up to 18 months.

Chairman