

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held at Cabinet Room on Thursday, 31 July 2003

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley - Chairman

Councillors I C Bates, Mrs J Chandler, Mrs K P Gregory, N J Guyatt, T V Rogers and L M Simpson

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted by Councillor R L Clarke

### 49. RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM - CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Consideration was given to a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached a copy of the County Council's document – 'Cambridge to Huntingdon Rapid Transit System', summarising a proposal to use guided bus technology on the A14 to provide a high quality public transport link between Huntingdon and Cambridge.

In discussing the content of the paper, Members' attention was drawn to the opinion of consultants retained by the Council who had reviewed the proposals against relevant strategies and policies including national, regional and local objectives from CHUMMS, the Council's MTP and the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan.

Having acknowledged the advantages gained by the District Council thus far in influencing the decision on the routing of the scheme, that consideration would need to be given in the future to 'park and ride' facilities in Huntingdon, and the clarity of the Government's decision rejecting either of the rail options, the Cabinet

#### RESOLVED

- (a) that the County Council's proposal for a Cambridge to Huntingdon Rapid Transit System be supported in principle;
- (b) that the Director of Operational Services be requested to convey to Cambridgeshire County Council, the District Council's concerns with regard to the potential impact of the proposed system on the District's built, historic and natural environment; and
- (c) that, in the event of the concerns referred to in (b) above remaining unresolved, the County Council be informed that the District Council would be disposed to object to the application required under the Transport and Works Act, 1992.

**50. PAVEMENT CAFES**

Further to Minute No 03/17 and by way of a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the outcome of consultations with town centre businesses and other interested bodies on proposals to introduce a licensing scheme for pavement cafes.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that a scheme for licensing pavement cafes be approved and introduced in town centres throughout the District;
- (b) that an annual licensing fee of £220 for pavement cafes be introduced;
- (c) that the Head of Administration, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources, Welfare, and Information Technology, be authorised to determine applications; and
- (d) that the Head of Administration be authorised to take any necessary consequential action to introduce a licensing scheme at the earliest possible date.

**51. HOLYWELL-CUM-NEEDINGWORTH VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**

A report by the Planning Policy Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached a draft copy of a village design statement for Holywell-cum-Needlingworth which had been produced by residents of the village in consultation with the Parish and District Councils and the Environment Agency.

Having welcomed the initiative taken by local people to produce the design statement, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that, subject to the incorporation of the amendments contained in the Annex to the report now submitted, the Holywell-cum-Needlingworth village design statement be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**52. GODMANCHESTER (EARNING STREET) CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER STATEMENT**

Further to Minute No 02/214 and by way a report by the Planning Policy Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the outcomes of the consultation exercise undertaken on the draft Conservation Area Character Statement for Godmanchester (Earning Street).

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that, subject to the incorporation of amendments to reflect the responses referred to in Annex 1 to the report now submitted, the Conservation Area Character statement for Godmanchester (Earning Street) be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**53. STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT: APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS**

The Cabinet considered a joint report by the Heads of Planning Services and of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the need to appoint consultants to undertake a strategic flood risk assessment to underpin the new local plan and inform other planning, environmental and engineering decisions. Whereupon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Heads of Planning Services and Environment and Transport be authorised to approve a select list of appropriate firms from which tenders may be invited to undertake a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as outlined in the report now submitted and that the necessary departures from the Code of Procurement also be approved for that purpose.

**54. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES - TENDERING PROCESS**

Further to Minute No 02/98 consideration was given to a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the annex to the Minute Book) seeking approval to a select list of contractors to be invited to tender for the delivery of a public convenience service in the District's market towns.

In the light of remarks as to the possible removal of a condition appertaining to the requirement for a guarantee from the parent company on behalf of one of the companies from which it was proposed to invite a tender, it was

RESOLVED

(a) that, subject to further checking and to the relevant Directors being satisfied with the proposal, the requirement for a parent company guarantee be dispensed with in the case of the second company

listed in the table referred to in paragraph 4.3 of the report now submitted;

- (b) that the first, fourth and sixth companies referred to in paragraph 4.3 of the report also be invited to tender for the delivery of a public convenience service in the District's market towns;
- (c) that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Service Delivery, be authorised to prepare the specification and associated contract documentation to reflect the content of paragraphs 5.1-5.10 of the report now submitted;
- (d) that the rephrasing of capital expenditure in the MTP referred to in paragraphs 6.1-6.4 of the report be noted;
- (e) that the proposals for post-tender negotiations and consultation with the Executive Councillor for Service Delivery be noted; and
- (f) that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Service Delivery, be authorised to recommend the final choice of contractor to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

## **55. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 10th July 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **56. BUDGETARY CONTROL - CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2002/03 AND 2003/04**

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding capital expenditure incurred by the Council in 2002/03 compared with the approved programme and the implications of variations described on the programme for the current year.

Members' attention was drawn to those projects which had been delayed in 2002/03 and those already identified in the 2003/04 programme. Having considered the scope for funding an additional scheme from savings identified in 2002/03 and requests for additional funding in respect of schemes for the refurbishment of changing rooms at the Ramsey Leisure Centre and for a bar/kitchen/creche extension at the St Neots Leisure Centre, the Cabinet

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that the report be received and the variations noted;
- (b) that the cost of rebuilding a retaining wall at Henbrook in St Neots, estimated at £48,000 be funded from savings in the 2002/03 programme;

- (c) that additional funding of £19,000 be approved for the refurbishment of the Ramsey Changing Rooms; and
- (d) that consideration as to the funding of the bar/kitchen/crèche extension at the St Neots Leisure Centre be deferred pending the submission of further information.

**57. BUDGETARY CONTROL - REVENUE**

In receiving a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) describing the projected outturn of the 2002/03 budget and outlining several budget variations already identified in the current year, the Cabinet noted remarks by the Head of Planning Services to the effect that she proposed to report further in September 2003 on the proposed withdrawal by the District Council from the direct provision of a septic tank employing service.

**58. QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF DEBTS WRITTEN-OFF**

The Cabinet received and noted a report by the Head of Revenue Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) summarising debt which had been written off during the period April – June 2003 as irrecoverable.

**59. REPRESENTATION ON ORGANISATIONS**

Further to Minute No 03/25 consideration was given to a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking the appointment of an Executive Councillor to the Huntingdonshire Enterprise Forum. Attention having been drawn to a vacancy on the Norman Cross Road Safety Committee and a request from the Little Gransden Aerodrome Consultative Committee for a District Council representative, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that Councillor Mrs J Chandler be appointed to serve on the Huntingdonshire Enterprise Forum;
- (b) that Councillor L M Simpson be appointed to serve on the Huntingdonshire Enterprise Agency;
- (c) that Councillor Mrs B Boddington be appointed to serve on the Little Gransden Aerodrome Consultative Committee; and
- (d) that Councillor J Watt be appointed to replace Councillor P Mitchell on the Norman Cross Road Safety Committee.

**60. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to terms to be proposed in the course of negotiations for a contract for the supply of goods or services.

## **61. FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

A report by the Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) containing details of the Council's current financial position and options to consider before proposing a financial strategy within which the medium term plan and community and corporate strategies could be achieved.

Members noted that a series of assumptions had been made in relation to inflation, interest rates, revenue support from Central Government. However, the Cabinet also were alerted to other issues which remained to be resolved, including the connotation, and other factors associated with the Government's new funding principles introduced in the current year and the arrangements which would supersede those formerly applying to social housing grant, and their potential impact on Council Tax levels in future years. In those circumstances, it was

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that variations in cash limits for 2004/05 - 2007/08 as approved in the current MTP be adjusted in accordance with the tabulation reproduced at Annex A to the report now submitted;
- (b) that any additional spending which is proposed in conjunction with the review of the MTP be met from within the overall, updated levels of expenditure referred to in (a) above;
- (c) that unless related to demographic considerations, no additional provision for revenue developments be made in 2008/09 and that £3.5m p.a. be earmarked for capital investment (at current prices);
- (d) that, further consideration be given to the level of acceptable development post 2008/09 and Council Tax levels at future meetings; and
- (e) that, in conjunction with the forthcoming review of the MTP, consideration be given to the scope for identifying further savings.

## **62. CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP**

Further to Minute No. 01/114 and by way of a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with progress in relation to deliberations by the Cambridge Sub-Regional Infrastructure Partnership with regard to lobbying to remedy the perceived deficit of

funding in respect of the Sub-Region.

Having reviewed the issues involved and in noting that a contribution of 17.5K had been sought from the District Council, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the work of the Cambridge Sub-Regional Infrastructure Partnership be supported; and
- (b) that a subscription of £17,500 towards the work of the Partnership be made from within the Council's contingency budget for the current financial year and that an MTP bid be prepared in respect of a subscript for 2004/05 onwards.

Chairman