

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held at Cabinet Room, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon on Thursday, 23 October 2003

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley - Chairman

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

89. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 2nd October 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

90. A14 THRAPSTON TO BRAMPTON - GRADE SEPARATED JUNCTIONS

In the light of the petition submitted to full Council on 24th September 2003, consideration was given to a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the deferment by the Highways Agency of junction improvements on the A14 road from Thrapston to Brampton.

The Cabinet received representations from Councillors M Baker and J C Mugglestone and concurred with their concern in relation to the urgent need for improvements to these junctions in the interests of road safety. In that respect and in acknowledging also the advantages of seeking support from other interested authorities and organisations, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Strategy, be authorised to lobby the Highways Agency, Go-East and the Department for Transport to reinstate the A14 Thrapston to Brampton Grade Separation scheme as originally proposed and as a matter of urgency.

91. PROPOSED PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE: ERNULF COMMUNITY SCHOOL/ST NEOTS LEISURE CENTRE SITE

A report by the Head of Community Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing proposals by Ernulf Community School to develop a performing arts college on the site of the School and the St Neots Leisure Centre.

Having noted the perceived benefits in making the facilities proposed available for wider use by the local community and in acknowledging the possible involvement of the District Council in that respect, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the bid by Ernulf Community School for Performing Arts College status be supported; and
- (b) that the Head of Community Services, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Leisure, be authorised to explore further the opportunities that may arise from a shared approach to managing and developing community cultural services at the Ernulf School/St Neots Leisure Centre site and to report thereon to a future meeting.

92. PROPOSED CHANGES TO PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE 3 (PPG3): HOUSING

By means of a joint report by the Heads of Planning and of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the contents of a suggested response to changes which the Government intended to make to planning policy guidance for housing.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the contents of the Appendices to the report now submitted be approved for the purpose of the District Council's response to the Government's proposed changes to PPG3 – Housing.

93. PROGRESS ON THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH STRUCTURE PLAN 2003, REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND (RPG14 AND ASSOCIATED STUDIES)

Further to Minute No. 03/19 and by way of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with progress on and the future timetable for the publication of the Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England (RPG 14) and a range of other studies impacting on the Eastern Region.

In so doing, Members' attention was drawn to the findings of the Stansted/M11 corridor development options study and the Milton Keynes study which would contribute to the RPG and influence the final settlement pattern. Whilst expressing reservations about the areas of overlap inherent in some of the study areas and having been advised that the Peterborough and Fens Sub Area had been renamed the Greater Peterborough Sub-Region Members noted that the final version of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan had been adopted on 21st October 2003. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the findings of the Stansted/M11 Development Options Study and the Milton Keynes Study be

supported;

- (b) that the adoption of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 be noted;
- (c) that the programme for delivering the Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England (RPG 14) be noted; and
- (d) that the Council's position with regard to proposals for the Greater Peterborough Sub-Region be reserved at the present time to ascertain its capacity for delivering growth in the region.

94. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: SELF ASSESSMENT

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was appended a first draft of the District Council's self-assessment for the forthcoming comprehensive performance assessment.

Members were acquainted with background to the assessment framework which had been introduced by the Government, under the aegis of the Audit Commission, to help Councils deliver better services to local communities, remove restrictions and requirements on planning, spending and decision-making for high performing authorities and to establish targeted support and for intervention for those which required it. Whereupon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report and draft self assessment be noted.

95. 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 debts which had been written off during July-September 2003 as irrecoverable.

96. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the terms proposed for the supply of goods and services and/or a particular applicant for financial assistance provided by the authority.

97. FUNDING FOR TEMPORARY HOUSING INITIATIVE

Consideration was given to a joint report by the Heads of Housing and of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) on a proposal to provide capital funding to the

Nene Housing Society to facilitate the acquisition of housing for temporary use by homeless families.

Having considered the financial and other implications of the proposal, including –

- ◆ the wider range of solutions which thus would be available in which to address the problems of homelessness throughout the District;
- ◆ the requirement for approval of a supplementary capital estimate;
- ◆ the use of commuted sums derived from Section 106 Agreements; and
- ◆ the need to reflect the revenue costs in the forthcoming review of the Medium Term Plan

- the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the District Council contribute the sum of £386,400 towards the cost of acquisition by the Nene Housing Society of housing in the District to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households; and
- (b) that approval be given to a supplementary capital estimate of £218,400 and the use of commuted sums amounting to £168,000 for the purposes referred to in the preceding resolution.

98. CAR PARKING STRATEGY - CONSULTATION DRAFT

By way of a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the contents of a draft Car Parking Strategy prepared following the completion of a comprehensive car parking study.

Members were informed that the initial aim of the Strategy was to establish an appropriate balance between economic, transportation and environmental policies to optimise the use of avoidable parking provision in the District. Having discussed proposals outlined in the report for public consultation and in noting that appropriate provision would need to be made in the forthcoming review of the Medium Term Plan, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the draft Car Parking Strategy be approved for consultation purposes;
- (b) that the consultation arrangements outlined in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the report be approved; and
- (c) that the outcome of the public consultation be reported to Cabinet on 8th January 2004.

99. RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

With the assistance of a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) the Cabinet received a report outlining proposals designed to unify the Council's green box recycling collection services.

Having been advised of the consideration currently being given by the Cambridgeshire Councils' Waste Forum to the requirements for fully integrated waste collection and disposal arrangements, recent developments with regard to the Peterborough Materials Recycling Facility and the associated implications for the Medium Term Plan, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that consideration of the matter be deferred until the next meeting.

Chairman