

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held at Cabinet Room on Thursday, 13 November 2003

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley - Chairman
Councillors I C Bates, Mrs J Chandler,
R L Clarke, N J Guyatt, T V Rogers and
L M Simpson

APOLOGY(IES): Mrs K P Gregory

IN ATTENDANCE: (none)

101. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23rd October 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

102. PFI AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Having considered a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) summarising the financial implications associated with the collection of recyclable and garden waste materials and a proposed joint public finance initiative as outlined in the reports referred to in Minute Nos. 03/03, 03/104 and 03/105 post, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the content of the report be noted.

103. 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 proposed for the supply of goods or services.

104. RECYCLING COLLECTIONS

Further to Minute No. 03/99 and 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 considered existing arrangements for the Council's green box recycling collection services and proposals to introduce a unified service throughout the District.

Having regard to the perceived limitations inherent in those arrangements and concerns as to the capacity of the external Contractor currently retained by the Council to expand effectively the

range of dry recyclables collected in certain areas of the District. the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the existing collection contract with Newsletter be terminated;
- (b) that the green box recycling collection service be unified throughout the District and the scheme undertaken by the Council's Operations Divisions; and
- (c) that, if appropriate, Newsletter employees be transferred under TUPE Regulations.

105. RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be re-admitted.

106. GARDEN WASTE TRIAL AND OPTIONS FOR SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION

Further to Minute No. 02/99 and by means of a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with progress on the garden waste wheeled bin collection service currently being trialled across 8,000 households in the District.

It was reported that the introduction of wheeled bin collections on a fortnightly basis had been well-received by users and consequently had produced higher tonnages than in previous years. In discussing financial and other issues associated with the phased introduction of the scheme to the remaining households in the District, particular reference was made to the need to minimise interruptions in the service when fully-laden vehicles returned to landfill sites. Having noted the increased estimated cost of rolling out the service throughout the District as a result of the higher than expected volumes of waste involved and an increase in the gate fee at the Peterborough Materials Waste Facility and the potential to bid for funding from the latest Government Challenge Fund, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the District-wide roll out of the twin wheeled bin, alternating fortnightly collection of household waste and garden waste be approved;
- (b) that the associated adjustment to the Medium Term Plan as outlined in paragraph 5.7 of the report now submitted be approved;
- (c) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to seek funding from the Government Challenge Fund to support the capital cost of the scheme;

- (d) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to seek funding from the Government Challenge Fund to meet the capital cost of providing a third wheeled bin for the collection of dry recyclables;
- (e) that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Service Delivery, be authorised to determine operational arrangements for implementation of the associated service developments.

107. PUBLIC FINANCE INITIATIVE FOR WASTE

By way of a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the proposed joint development of a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) by Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire principal authorities to fund investment in new disposal and, potentially, collection infrastructure to divert more waste from landfill.

Having noted the issues which would need to be addressed in involving a private sector partner in a waste management contract which would meet the objectives of the Joint Waste Strategy and secure the establishment of effective economic waste management arrangements over a 25 year period, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Council's involvement as a partner in the submission of the outline business case to the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for Private Finance Initiative Credit be approved;
- (b) that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Deputy Leader, be authorised to approve information to be included in the outline business case on behalf of the Council;
- (c) that the Director of Operational Services be requested to provide to a future meeting of the Cabinet an evaluation and financial appraisal of the options for the future delivery of services including joint procurement supported by PFI credits;
- (d) that a decision on the Council's involvement in any future joint procurement be deferred until the evaluation and financial appraisal by the Director of Operational Services has been received and considered; and
- (e) that representatives of City and District Councils in Cambridgeshire be invited to a meeting to discuss their potential involvement in the Private Finance Initiative bid.

108. SUPPORTING PEOPLE - RETRENCHMENT POLICY

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing funding proposals for the Supporting People Countywide Joint Member Group to address a projected budget shortfall for 2004/05.

Members were reminded that the District Council had benefited from a shift in funding to the supporting people budget of circa £99,000 towards the running costs of Coneygear Court, the homeless families hostel in Huntingdon and in view of the Joint Member Group's request that £41,784 be returned to the supporting people budget, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that provision in the sum of £42k be made in conjunction with the review of the Medium Term Plan in respect of reduced revenue support for Coneygear Court Homeless Hostel, Huntingdon.

109. CAMBRIDGE SUB REGION INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP

Further to Minute No. 03/53 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 with regard to the development of the Cambridgeshire Sub-Region Infrastructure Partnership.

In noting that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had allocated £12.41m to the sub-region including £3.31m for Oxmoor and £2.1m for establishing a formal infrastructure partnership delivery vehicle over 3 years, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the establishment of the infrastructure partnership be supported; and
- (b) that Councillor D P Holley be nominated as the District Council's representative on the Partnership Board.

110. BUDGET AND 2004 - 2009 MEDIUM TERM PLAN

Further to Minute No. 03/69 the Cabinet received a report by the Corporate Director, Commerce and Technology (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the proposed budget for 2004/05 and the capital and revenue effects of the Medium Term Plan (MTP).

It was reported that both Overview and Scrutiny Panels had been unable to conclude their recommendations on the Medium Term Plan and had agreed to convene special meetings to discuss the matter on 20th and 27th November 2003. Given that the budget was to be tabled for discussion at the meeting of full Council on 10th December 2003 and to facilitate consultation with Council taxpayers on options for Council tax levels, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the budget for 2004/05 and the Medium Term Plan be deferred until the next meeting to enable the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to be considered and that thereafter the Cabinet's recommendations be tabled at the meeting of full Council on 10th December 2003; and
- (b) that a supplementary estimate of £20,000 be approved in respect of the cost of commissioning specialist consultants to undertake an opinion survey to ascertain the preferences of Council Taxpayers on options for Council Tax levels and their impact on the delivery of District Council services over the period of the Medium Term Plan.

111. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2003/04

By means of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with expected variations in the Capital Programme in the current year.

Having noted the explanations for the variations, it was

RESOLVED

that the report be received and the expenditure variations noted.

112. PAPERLESS DIRECT DEBIT

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Revenue Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a proposal to introduce paperless direct debit for Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rate payments.

Having discussed the perceived benefits and the financial implications of the proposal, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the application to be an Originator of Paperless Direct Debit Instructions be approved.

113. 2003 IEG STATEMENT

By way of a report by the Customer First Programme Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the contents of the draft 2003 Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement for submission to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Having been acquainted with the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) on the document, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that full Council be recommended to approve the contents of the IEG Statement prior to its submission to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

114. DRAFT PPS7 - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS

By means of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the contents of a suggested response to the Government's draft planning advice on development in rural areas. In the light of comments by the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy as to the need to strengthen the responses to the key issues associated with housing in the open countryside, agricultural, business and tourism development and the re-use or redevelopment of existing buildings, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy be authorised to vary the comments set out in Appendix A to the report now submitted as the District Council's response to the proposed PPS7 on sustainable development in rural areas; and
- (b) that a copy of the response be sent to all Parish Councils in the District.

115. CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION KEY WORKER HOUSING RESEARCH

By way of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet were acquainted with the findings of a key worker research report, prepared by Employers' Consortium for Cambridgeshire, together with details of a Sub-Regional protocol for the allocation of key worker housing.

In considering the information contained in the report, the involvement of the District Council and having raised concerns about the definition of the term "key worker", the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the findings of the key worker research report be noted;
- (b) that approval be given to the District Council becoming a member of the Employers' Consortium and a signatory to the key worker protocol;
- (c) that the Head of Housing Services be requested to convey to the Employers' Consortium, the District Council's concerns with regard to the definition of a key worker; and
- (d) that the Head of Housing Services be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Housing Strategy, to sign the protocol for the allocation of key

worker housing.

116. SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY

Further to Minute No. 02/72 consideration was given to a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the updated Supporting People Strategy for Cambridgeshire containing a summary of the housing support priorities for 2004/05.

Having considered the information contained in the report, which had been submitted also to the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the updated Supporting People Strategy be endorsed and the 2004/05 housing support priorities approved for further discussion with partner agencies prior to the submission of proposals to the Housing Corporation and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

117. MEMBERS' E-GOVERNMENT ADVISORY GROUP

Further to Minute No. 03/33 and by means of a report by the Executive Director of Central Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a proposal by the E-Government Advisory Group to amend the Group's terms of reference to reflect their involvement in the customer first programme.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the amended terms of reference for the E-Government Advisory Group listed in paragraph 2 of the report now submitted be approved; and
- (b) that the E-Government Advisory Group be re-named "Customer First Advisory Group".

118. ST IVES MARKET TOWN TRANSPORT STRATEGY - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO WORKING GROUP

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the development of a market town transport strategy for St. Ives.

Having been acquainted with the proposed strategy process and in noting the establishment of a Sub-Committee of the Huntingdonshire Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee to assist the development of the strategy, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that Councillors M F Newman, K Reynolds and T D Sanderson be appointed to serve as the District Council's

representatives on the Sub-Committee of the Huntingdonshire Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee.

119. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

The Minutes of the meeting of the Safety Advisory Group held on 17th September 2003 were received and noted.

120. SHORT-TERM LOCATION FOR CONTACT CENTRE

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.

Councillor D P Holley
Chairman