
Cabinet

Report of the meeting held on 3rd February 2005

Matters for Decision

117. BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2006 – 2010

The Cabinet has considered the content of the 2005/06 draft budget, the Medium Term Plan for the period 2006 – 2010 and the level of Council Tax for the following year. The financial report considered by the Cabinet at their meeting held on 3rd February 2005 has been reproduced as an Appendix to the report of the Director of Commerce and Technology entitled Budget and Medium Term Plan 2006 – 2010 which appears on the Agenda for the Council to consider at Item 2.

Having been acquainted with the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on this matter and the outcome of consultation with the business community on expenditure proposals, the Cabinet

RECOMMEND

- (a) that, subject to appropriate adjustments to reflect the revenue implications arising from the commissioning of a feasibility study at Huntingdon Bus Station, an £8,000 reduction in Revenue Support Grant and the resulting impact on interest receipts, the spending proposals summarised in Annex C of the report of the Director of Commerce and Technology submitted to the Cabinet on 3rd February 2005 be approved;
- (b) that, for the financial year commencing 1st April 2005, the level of Council Tax for a Band D property be increased to £106.54 and the indicative levels for 2006/2007 onwards as shown in Annex C of the report of the Director of Commerce and Technology be approved;
- (c) that, subject to any necessary variations relating to the adjustments referred to in resolutions (a) and (b) ante, the Prudential Indicators at Annex F of the report of the Director of Commerce and Technology be approved;
- (d) that, notwithstanding the lack of information currently available which would enable the Council to guarantee achieving indicative targets in the Gershon

efficiency review and in the light of revenue reserves likely to be available to the Council in 2005/06 the comments of the Director of Commerce and Technology on the robustness of the budget as indicated in Annex G be noted; and

- (e) that the 2005/06 and 2006/07 capital programme be approved to increase the opportunity for achieving lower tender prices.

118. 2005/06 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Reproduced as an Appendix is a proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2005/06. The strategy, which complies with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice, has clear objectives for the management of the Council's borrowing and investments. Having been satisfied that the Strategy meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and Government guidance, the Cabinet

RECOMMEND

- that the 2005/06 Treasury Management Strategy be approved.

Matters for Information

119. HUNTINGDON BUS STATION

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the findings of a consultant's study into traffic management in Huntingdon and the siting of the bus station in the town. The study included options for the relocation of the bus station and potential improvements to the configuration of the local road network.

Given the importance of the completion of works which would enable the A14 to be de-trunked and the need in the longer term for a public transport interchange at Huntingdon Railway Station, the Cabinet has agreed, in the short to medium term, that the Bus Station should be retained on its existing site and that the Medium-Term Plan be varied to enable a feasibility study to be undertaken into a new bus station layout for completion in 2005/06.

120. ALCONBURY FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

The Cabinet have indicated their support in principle for the preferred option for the alleviation of flooding in Alconbury as detailed in an Environment Agency consultation document. The scheme will comprise substantial improvements to the length of the Alconbury Brook between the A1M flyover to upstream of the heritage bridge in Alconbury village centre. The scheme will not include Alconbury

Weston as the required works to protect the village do not reach the cost benefit threshold to attract Government grant. The benefits which will result from completion of the scheme are described in a copy of the consultation document "Alconbury Flood Alleviation Scheme – Preferred Option Consultation" which is available in the Members Room.

Having regard to the programme leading to completion of the works, the Cabinet has noted that consideration will be given to the scheme later in the year by the Council as the local planning authority and in this regard they have requested the Head of Environment and Transport to inform the Environment Agency that the scheme should be sympathetic with the character of the area in terms of its design and the materials used.

121. SMALL SCALE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

The Cabinet has noted progress on small scale environmental improvement schemes and have approved a programme of schemes for 2005/06 together with the release of the appropriate funding from the Medium Term Plan.

A summary of the schemes approved for 2005/06 is available on request from the Democratic Services Section.

122. QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF DEBTS WRITTEN-OFF

The Cabinet has been advised of those individual debts which have been written-off as irrecoverable during the period October – December 2004.

A summary of the list is available on request from the Democratic Services Section.

123. CHEQUERS COURT, URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Having considered responses received to consultation on the Chequers Court Urban Design Framework and been acquainted with the amendments which had been made to the document as a result, the Cabinet has approved the adoption of the Urban Design Framework (as amended) as Interim Planning Guidance.

124. REVIEW OF TOURISM SERVICES SECTION

In conjunction with the Employment Panel, the Cabinet has approved proposed changes to the staffing structure of the Tourism Services Section of the Community Services Division. At the same time and in the light of the decision by the County Council to terminate the lease of the Tourist Information Centre premises in Huntingdon Library, the Cabinet have considered options available for continued delivery of the service and indicated that this should be provided through existing communication channels and via an information kiosk in Huntingdon Town Centre.

125. BUSINESS GENERATION AT LEISURE CENTRES

Having noted the impact of the Business Generation Team at the Council's Leisure Centres and the approval by the Employment Panel of the replacement of the post of Business Generation Manager with that of Leisure Centres Promotions Officer, the Cabinet has requested the Leisure Centre Management Committees to monitor the future performance of the business generation team.

D P Holley
Chairman