

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 13 March 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.
Councillors P L E Bucknell, D B Dew,
C R Hyams, T V Rogers and L M Simpson.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors A Hansard and Mrs D C Reynolds.

115. MINUTES

Subject to the addition of “and an Executive Councillor also referred to the need to avoid references to an overspill car park in the master plan for the Riverside Park, Huntingdon” at the end of the penultimate sentence in the second paragraph of the preamble in Minute No. 107, the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st February were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

116. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

117. CAR PARKING STRATEGY

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 13.1 a Notice of Motion was submitted by seven Executive Councillors to enable the Cabinet to consider the rescission of the decision made at their meeting held on 21st February 2008 (Minute No. 105 refers) in respect of the introduction of car parking charges and to allow the matter to be reconsidered at this meeting).

With the aid of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet reconsidered the level of charging to be introduced as part of the Car Parking Strategy Action Plan.

Members were reminded that at their meeting on 31st January 2008, charging Option 1 had been approved. Following “call-in” by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) the decision had been reconsidered by the Cabinet and charging Option 2 approved including a 50% reduction in season tickets for vehicles with CO² of 120g/km or less.

Mindful of the potential impact Option 2 charges would have on the overall delivery of the action plan, the environment strategy and the

local economies of the District's market towns and having regard to an amended Annex incorporating a new hybrid charging option and the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) thereon, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the resolution in Minute No 105 (e) of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21st February 2008 be rescinded and the following substituted therefor –

“that the proposed car parking charges outlined as option 1 hybrid, as shown in the revised annex now submitted, be approved and advertised”.

118. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Cabinet received and noted a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which reviewed the Council's performance against targets within the Corporate Plan – “Growing Success”. In so doing, Executive Councillors were advised that the timing of the preparation of a new Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement would facilitate the review of the Corporate Plan in late summer for submission to Council in September 2008.

119. SHARED SERVICES

By way of a report by the Director of Commerce and Technology (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were updated on progress with regard to the development of a shared services initiative by Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Councils.

Having considered the issues involved in promoting the sharing financial accounting software systems and payroll services, the possible scope for achieving efficiency savings and the potential for extending the concept to other services, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Director of Commerce and Technology, after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Finance and for Resources and Policy, be authorised to finalise arrangements for sharing financial accounting software and payroll services.

120. SUPPORTING COUNCILLORS: A MANIFESTO FOR COUNCILS

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Administration to which was attached a copy of “Supporting Councillors: A Manifesto for Councils” published by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) to promote and enhance the role of Councillors.

In considering the twelve actions identified in the manifesto, the Cabinet recognised that while some had already been implemented by the Council there were likely to be resource implications in introducing the additional measures, some of which would be

dependent on legislative change. Having discussed the recommendations of a Councillors Commission, established by the Department of Communities and Local Government, to investigate the incentives and barriers to serving on Council's, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Council recognises that Councillors have a valuable representative role which helps to ensure that local people have an active role in the development and delivery of council services.
- (b) that the recommendations of the Councillors Commission Report be noted and the Government's formal response thereon awaited; and
- (c) that the Council welcomes the Local Government Information Unit's document "Supporting Councillors; A Manifesto for Councils" considers it important to support actions that would help make a real difference to existing and future Councillors; calls on Government to help people be active and effective Councillors; and agrees to support and act on the 12 action points set out in the manifesto attached so that local democracy is strengthened.

Chairman