
Cabinet

Report of the meeting held on 22nd October 2009

Matters for Information

37. FINANCIAL MONITORING - REVENUE BUDGET

The Cabinet has noted the expected revenue budget variations already identified in the current year. Whilst welcoming a forecast reduction of £505,000 in the overall budget, the Cabinet has expressed some concern over the increasing cost to the Council of concessionary fares and the likely implications of the guided bus scheme given Cambridgeshire County Council's decision not to charge for parking at the new park and ride site in St Ives. Executive Councillors feel that this could have a detrimental effect on town centre parking with motorists switching to the availability of free parking given the close walking distance of the park and ride site to the town centre. Members have concurred with a suggestion that the Leader and the Chief Executive raise the matter with their counterparts at the County Council.

38. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 2009/2010 BUDGET

The Cabinet has been acquainted with variations in the capital programme in the current year. In discussing cost variations and timing changes to 2010/11, the Cabinet has welcomed forecast savings amounting to £1,423,000 in the current year.

39. HUNTINGDON TOWN HALL

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the conclusions reached by EW Consultancy (EWC) Ltd. over the long term sustainable use of Huntingdon Town Hall. The Town Hall is a grade II listed building for which the District Council holds the freehold ownership in trust for the "public good" of the people of Huntingdon.

Upkeep and maintenance of the building is being undertaken by the current leaseholder, Her Majesty's Court Service but they vacated the building in 2007 and are in discussions to surrender the lease. Given the importance of the building, the District Council commissioned EWC to undertake a review and to liaise with the various stakeholders involved including Huntingdon Town Council with a view to making recommendations on the building's future.

Having considered the proposals put forward by EWC, the financial implications, the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel

(Economic Well-Being) (Item No. 20 of their Report refers) and Huntingdon Town Council on the matter, the Cabinet has -

- ◆ agreed to establish a building preservation trust;
- ◆ agreed in principle to the transfer of ownership of the freehold of Huntingdon Town Hall to an appropriate building preservation trust when a viable long-term solution has been identified through an options appraisal;
- ◆ agreed to provide project management support to the building preservation trust until it is established and can provide its own project management arrangements;
- ◆ suggested that possible building preservation trustees be investigated;
- ◆ endorsed steering group arrangements in the short term;
- ◆ endorsed the development of terms of reference for the steering group and the organisations to be invited;
- ◆ agreed to consider initial start-up funding needed for matched funds for the optional appraisal;
- ◆ defer consideration of the question of long-term revenue funding for the building at the present time;
- ◆ defer consideration of a recommendation by the consultants to continue discussions with Her Majesty's Court Service on lease surrender on the basis that this is premature at the present time;
- ◆ supported the possibility of investigating the transfer of the freehold of the building to Huntingdon Town Council in exchange for land currently owned by them; and
- ◆ requested that further reports addressing this matter be submitted to future meetings of the Cabinet.

40. NEW STARTER UNITS, CAXTON ROAD, ST. IVES

The Cabinet has agreed to release the funding from the Medium Term Plan for the development of the former depot at Caxton Road, St. Ives as new industrial and commercial premises. The scheme will provide a flexible, mixed development of work spaces and small offices for new and small businesses and will achieve the targets set out in the Council's corporate plan and the Environmental Strategy.

At the same time, the Cabinet has authorised the Director of Central Services to accept an offer of capital funding from Cambridge County Council amounting to £150,000 for the scheme, subject to the agreement of the partnership terms.

41. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

Councillor P H Dakers has been replaced by Councillor P L E Bucknell on the Safety Advisory Group.

I C Bates
Chairman