

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 20 June 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor N J Guyatt - Vice-Chairman in the Chair.

Councillors B S Chapman, J A Gray,
R B Howe, T D Sanderson and D M Tysoe.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor J D Ablewhite.

10. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th May 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

12. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

With the aid of a report by the Accountancy Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered the Council's performance of its treasury management activities for the year ending 31st March 2013.

In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management Code of Practice, Executive Councillors received the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on the matter.

Having acknowledged that the Council had performed well with regard to the returns it had achieved on its investment in the year, the Cabinet

RECOMMEND

that Council receives the Treasury Management Annual Report 2012/13.

13. MEETING OUR OBJECTIVELY ASSESSED NEED FOR HOUSING MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION - SUPPORTING THE SPATIAL APPROACH 2011-2031

The Cabinet considered a report by the Assistant Director, Environment, Growth and Planning (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached a proposed Memorandum of Co-operation setting out the objectively assessed need for additional

housing to 2031. The report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) whose comments were relayed to the Cabinet.

Members were reminded that Local Planning Authorities have a requirement under the National Planning Policy Framework to have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. The guidance states that planning authorities should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities within their strategic housing areas.

Attention was drawn to the methodology employed to determine housing allocations across each local area including housing mix and density. Members were advised that 17,000 homes would be required in Huntingdonshire by 2031 and 21,000 homes by 2036.

In the discussion that ensued, Executive Councillors stressed the need to be mindful of the plans of neighbouring authorities outside the strategic housing area which could have a considerable impact on the district.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the effective partnership working that has taken place between all the planning authorities within the strategic housing areas be noted; and
- (b) that the Memorandum of Co-operation appended to the report now submitted be endorsed.

14. HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY SHARED SERVICE REVIEW AND DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT BUDGET

Further to Minute No.11/20 and by way of a report by the Housing Strategy Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the outcome of a review of the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) Service with Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils following its first year of operation.

Members were reminded that a major part of the service was the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants, usually following a referral from an Occupational Therapist. Whilst there had been some problems experienced during the first 6 months of operation, the service currently was operating as intended. It was reported that waiting times for Occupational Therapists had reduced from 8 months in March 2012 to 4 months in March 2013. Attempts would now be made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service further through the introduction of competitive tendering for equipment and the procurement of adaptation works from local businesses.

In terms of the Council's commitment to supporting the delivery of DFGs and the difficulties faced by the authority in forecasting future levels of demand, Members were advised that the 2013/14 budget had been increased and would be able to manage the current

demands placed upon it.

In discussing the contents of the report, Members' attention was drawn to the conclusions reached by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). In that respect and given the pressure on Council's budgets, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the report be noted and the additional modelling of current and future demand be undertaken over the summer to feed into the Council's MTP process in September 2013; and
- (b) that Officers be requested to report further to Members after two years of Cambs Housing Improvement Agency operation.

15. HUNTINGDONSHIRE REGULATION 123 AND INFRASTRUCTURE BUSINESS PLAN 2013/14 LIST

Further to Minute No. 12/105, the Cabinet considered a report by the Assistant Director Environment, Growth & Planning (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the consultation responses on the draft Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy Regulation 123 List. (A copy of the List was tabled at the meeting and is also appended in the Minute Book).

The List, which sets out the infrastructure that will be funded in whole or in part by the levy to ensure that there is no duplication with Section 106 contributions, had been considered also by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) whose comments were relayed to the Cabinet.

Reference was made to the Infrastructure Business Plan for 2013/14 which contains a broad range of requirements across the District that could be eligible for CIL funding in the period to 2026. In that respect, Members referred to the concerns of Town and Parish Councils that CIL receipts will not be tied to the development area to which they relate and stressed the need to work with them to identify their priorities as part of the next stage of the Business Plan process.

RESOLVED

that the draft Huntingdonshire Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 List be approved.

16. COMMUNITY RIGHT TO CHALLENGE

Further to Minute No 12/54, consideration was given to a report by the Procurement Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining a timetable for the acceptance of expressions of interests under the new Community Right to Challenge Initiative.

In noting the information contained in the report, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the timetable for the acceptance of expressions of interests appended to the report now submitted be approved.

17. REPRESENTATION ON ORGANISATIONS 2013/14

Consideration was given to a report by Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the Council's representation on a variety of organisations/partnerships.

Having received an update schedule of organisations/partnerships to which the Council appoints representatives, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that nominations be made to the organisations as set out in the schedule now submitted; and
- (b) that, in the event that changes are required by the Council's representative in the course of the year, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, after consultation with the Deputy Executive Leader and Vice-Chairman of the Cabinet be authorised to nominate alternative representatives as necessary.

18. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the press and public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority that holds that information).

19. LOAN TO HUNTINGDONSHIRE REGIONAL COLLEGE

(The Chairman announced that he proposed to admit the following urgent item in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 given the need for the Council to respond to the College as soon as possible).

With reference to a joint report by the Head of Legal and Democratic and Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a request from Huntingdonshire Regional College for a loan to enable them to fund the expansion of their facilities.

In discussing the risk associated with the request, Members were advised that adequate security would be available to the Council in the form of a charge against land in excess of the value of the outstanding loan.

Having recognised the community benefit the improvements will have for the area, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the principle of a loan to Huntingdonshire Regional College be approved; and
- (b) that the Assistant Director Finance and Resources be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Leader and the Executive Councillor for Resources, to finalise the details of the loan.

Chairman