
Cabinet

Report of the meeting held on 19th March 2015.

Matters for Information

41. EAST COAST MAIN LINE – LEVEL CROSSING CLOSURES FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Cabinet has received a progress report on the proposed closure of all crossing points on the East Coast Main Line throughout Huntingdonshire.

There was agreement amongst the Cabinet that Network Rail has endeavoured to undertake public consultation to establish local needs and that the proposed improvements would benefit both passengers and motorists.

Having noted the concerns expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) regarding closure of level crossings could lead to increased road traffic, it was explained that the concerns had been dispelled at the Panel meeting.

The Cabinet has expressed full support for the scheme and the investment in infrastructure. However, the Cabinet recognised that there remains an investment deficit to infrastructure, particularly the rail network, in this part of the country. The Cabinet has also noted that widening at Hatfield Viaduct was an essential improvement to the rail network and has urged East Coast Main Line to swiftly resolve the issue.

42. A14 CAMBRIDGE TO HUNTINGDON IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

A progress report on the A14 project has been considered by the Cabinet who have been informed that the Development Consent Order application to the Planning Inspectorate has been accepted, which now indicates the start of the formal examination process.

Regarding noise impact, statistics have indicated that as a result of the project, 2800 dwellings will benefit and 330 dwellings will be affected. It is important that appropriate mitigation measures be put in place for those dwellings that will be most affected by noise.

The Cabinet has noted that both Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have made a significant financial commitment to the scheme and have expressed their disappointment that Cambridge City Council, who will benefit greatly from the scheme, have yet to make a financial commitment.

The Cabinet has agreed that the Council should continue to engage with the Development Consent Order process relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement scheme and will seek to reach agreement on outstanding matters. The Cabinet has also agreed the Relevant Representation that has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

43. REQUEST FOR DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO PROCURE A NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM FOR THE HOME-LINK SCHEME AND HOUSING ADVICE AND OPTIONS SERVICE

The software currently used by the Housing Needs Team has been previously procured as part of the launch of a sub-regional Choice Based Lettings scheme in 2008, branded the Home-Link scheme. The original contract is due for renewal and the Home-Link Partnership has begun a joint tendering exercise to test the market to ensure that best value is achieved in the letting of the new contract.

The Cabinet has authorised the Head of Customer Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Customer Services, to accept the successful tender and sign the contract with the software provider. The Cabinet has accepted that if a new supplier is the successful bidder, additional capital implementation costs in the region of £30k are likely to be incurred and as such funding will be explored.

44. ONE LEISURE UPDATE REPORT

The Cabinet has received an update report on the performance of One Leisure which has provided an indication of the strategic direction One Leisure is taking in order to address the financial deficit. The Cabinet has been informed that One Leisure is being restructured and how it is intending to achieve realistic growth objectives with a reduced cost base without significant reduction to service levels. As of 1 April 2015 a new set of membership packages will be introduced.

The Cabinet has recognised that the 2015/6 budget will be challenging and there were risks attached to achieving the financial objectives. However, there were already signs of positive improvement and growth in the District which would assist in achieving the targets.

The Cabinet has expressed appreciation to Officers and Members for the improvements that have already been made and have requested that a further report be presented to the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) in six months.

45. PATHFINDER HOUSE; BEST USE OF SPACE AND EXTERNAL LETTINGS

(The following item was considered as a confidential item under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972).

The Cabinet has approved delegated authority to the Managing Director after consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder for long-term lettings of the office space within Pathfinder House and approved the use of space and external lettings at Pathfinder House.

Prior to the exercise of any delegated authority on such matters, the Cabinet have requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) to be consulted.

J D Ablewhite
Chairman