

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Thursday, 11 January 2007

PRESENT: Councillor Dr DR Bard (Cabinet Member)
Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader of Council)

Councillors: JA Hockney Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder
RMA Manning Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
Mrs DP Roberts Housing Portfolio Holder

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Holly Adams	Democratic Services Officer
Steve Hampson	Executive Director
Greg Harlock	Chief Executive
Tony Marks	Enforcement Officer - Development Control
Simon McIntosh	Corporate Manager (Policy, Performance and Partnerships)
Dale Robinson	Corporate Manager (Health & Environmental Services)

Councillors JD Batchelor, RF Bryant, EW Bullman, Mrs A Elsby, R Hall, Mrs EM Heazell, Mrs CAED Murfitt, CR Nightingale and RT Summerfield were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors SM Edwards, Mrs VG Ford and SGM Kindersley.

Procedural Items

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2006, subject to the following correction:

Updates from Cabinet Members Appointed to Outside Bodies (Minute 22)

“...members expressed their support of Councillor Manning’s *candidature for the* interim Leadership.”

1 (a) Matters Arising

Shepreth: 74-76 Frog End: Outcome of Options Appraisal (Minute 12)

Councillor Dr SEK van de Ven, local member for Shepreth, had sent an e-mail requesting a correction to this minute, but Cabinet agreed to retain the original text, which they felt was an accurate précis of the debate. Cabinet noted that it was not necessary to produce a verbatim record.

Milton Country Park – Improving Facilities / Future Management (Minute 13)

A statement from Councillor Mrs VG Ford, Community Development Portfolio Holder, was read, correcting recent media reports and stating that the Council did not want to close the park but, following capping, could not continue to run it at its historic costs. Full

Council had agreed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy that the park would generate £75,000 income, and a long-term partner was being sought for its management. The Council did not profit from the sale of refreshments at the kiosk.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor JD Batchelor declared a personal interest as an elected member of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Recommendation to Council

3. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

Relief traditionally had been awarded to qualifying local organisations and small businesses which relied on financial assistance to remain viable and the proposed policy would formalise existing practice for the award of discretionary rate relief other than for charitable organisations. All applications would be considered on their individual merits and a degree of flexibility would be retained to award relief in exceptional circumstances where an application was considered to be particularly deserving but fell outside the scope of the policy. The Chief Executive clarified that village halls run as charities could apply for relief in accordance with the policy adopted by Cabinet in December 2005 on discretionary rate relief for charitable organisations, whilst those with other management arrangements could be considered under this proposed policy.

Cabinet **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the policy for the award of discretionary rate relief set out in the appendices to the Cabinet report be adopted in order to facilitate future awards of relief from the financial year 2007/08 onwards.

4. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (MILESTONES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS) QUARTERLY REPORT 2006/07 - 6 MONTH REPORT

Cabinet received the six-month performance report, which focussed on areas where performance risked not meeting targets. Individual portfolio holders would be reviewing specific areas of concern and the actions undertaken to achieve the targets would be the subject of a future report. The Chief Executive clarified that "critical delays" referred to areas where failure to achieve the targets would have a major impact on the organisation. Cabinet acknowledged that performance against some targets was driven by factors beyond the authority's control.

Cabinet **AGREED** to:

- (a) Confirm the importance of trying to achieve performance indicator targets and milestone dates in relation to the areas identified in paragraphs 7 to 20 of the report; and
- (b) Review action at each portfolio holder meeting on the performance indicators and milestones listed in paragraph 27 of the report to ensure that 2006/07 targets are achieved whenever possible.

5. DIRECT LABOUR ORGANISATION BUSINESS PLAN

The Housing Portfolio Holder commended officers for their efforts over the past two years to bring the Direct Labour Organisation up to its current standard: it was expected to break even and could make a small surplus. Officers were working to identify ways to

bring in more work in the future and to be in a successful position to compete on the open market in two years' time. It was confirmed that the Orchard system was reconciled regularly to the Financial Management System (FMS).

Cabinet **AGREED** to allocate additional Kitchen and Bathroom refurbishment work to the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO), to the value of up to £200,000 within the current financial year.

Cabinet **NOTED** the DLO Working Business Plan.

At the request of Councillor Mrs EM Heazell, Cabinet offered its congratulations to all officers of the DLO involved with the recent successes of the DLO.

6. CAMBRIDGESHIRE WASTE COLLECTION / DISPOSAL PARTNERING AGREEMENT

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder commended the final draft of the Waste Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Agreement, which was not a legal document but a partnership agreement to be presented by Cambridgeshire County Council to the successful PFI contractor as part of the overall contract.

Cabinet **AGREED** to:

- (a) Approve the final draft (v6, 01/12/06) of the Waste PFI Partnering Agreement (the Agreement) for future waste disposal arrangements in the County; and
- (b) Delegate authority to the Environmental Health Portfolio Holder to sign the Agreement.

7. EXTENSION OF HOURS TO POST D.2.32

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder highlighted concerns expressed by parish councils about the need for enforcement. Extension of the hours of this post would increase resources available for enforcement action and would not incur any additional costs to the General Fund.

Cabinet **AGREED** that:

- (a) Post D.2.32 be extended to 37 hours per week, taking effect from 1 February 2007;
- (b) The cost of this be met from the earmarked reserves for Traveller Issues; and
- (c) The 18-month contract be reviewed in June / July 2007 following agreement of the medium term priorities.

Cabinet thanked the enforcement team for their work under often difficult circumstances.

Information Items

8. QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT INCLUDING BUDGETARY CONTROL AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS: THIRD QUARTER 2006/07

The Leader drew attention to the projected underspends on the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital, resulting from efforts to reduce expenditure and from increased interest rates nationally.

Cabinet **NOTED** the projected expenditure position and the monitoring of prudential indicators, and **REFERRED** the report to the next Resources, Staffing, Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder meeting for more detailed consideration.

Cabinet extended its thanks to officers for their work on the projected expenditure position and the prudential indicators.

Standing Items

9. **MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

None.

10. **UPDATES FROM CABINET MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

A letter had been sent to Yvette Cooper with the proposals for joint working arrangements between South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire Horizons. Details had been circulated to the groups as agreed and a press release had been issued shortly before Christmas.

11. **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

Councillor Dr DR Bard confirmed that his resignation as Leader of the Council would take effect immediately after the Cabinet meeting and thanked his Cabinet colleagues and members of Council for their support. Cabinet members thanked Councillor Dr Bard for his Leadership during a difficult time in the Council's history.

**The Meeting ended at 10.51
a.m.**
