

CABINET

20 June 2007

Attendance:

Councillor Beckett – *Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economy and Tourism* (Chairman) (P)

Councillor Allgood – *Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources* (P)

Councillor Coates – *Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities*

Councillor Hollingbery – *Portfolio Holder for Performance and Communications*

Councillor Pearson – *Portfolio Holder for Environment, Health and Safety* (P)

Councillor Stallard – *Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport* (P)

Councillor Wood – *Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport*

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Evans and Nelmes

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Barratt, Busher and Higgins

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Coates, Hollingbery and Wood.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 17 May 2007 and 30 May 2007 (less exempt items), be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Rickman (TACT) requested that, if possible, agenda items relating to housing or other matters TACT might have an interest in, be placed at the beginning of the agenda. This would enable him to speak early on in the meeting and then leave to attend other TACT commitments.

The Chairman agreed that wherever possible, items in which TACT might have an interest would be placed early on the agenda.

4. **LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Stallard provided an update regarding the Tower Arts Centre and the County Council's proposal of transferring management of the Centre to Kings

School. She explained that the City Council currently supported the Centre through an annual revenue grant and had awarded it key client status. There was no intention to discontinue this grant, provided the Centre continued with its current programme of works targeted towards the wider community (such as young people and people with disabilities). She had requested that the relevant County Council Cabinet Member arrange a meeting between the County Council, City Council and Kings School, as soon as possible.

Councillor Stallard also advised that on Monday 26 June 2007, an event would take place at Sparsholt to which relevant individuals and sports organisations were invited, to discuss how Winchester could best be involved in the 2012 London Olympics.

Councillor Beckett reported on the well-attended Business Awards Dinner which was held at the Winchester Guildhall on 15 June 2007.

He also advised that the Winchester Business Improvement District (BID) process was underway, with invitation to vote information letters being posted to businesses on 14 June. The BID voting papers would be issued soon and the close of poll was 26 July 2007.

5. **CAPITAL OUTTURN 2006/07**
(Report CAB1470 refers)

Councillor Allgood stated that the Council had managed to spend approximately 80 per cent of its capital budget in 2006/07. He highlighted a number of the larger projects undertaken, such as the River Park Leisure Centre refurbishment. He thanked the Portfolio Holders and Officers involved in enabling the capital work to be done.

The Head of Finance confirmed that even if carry forwards were agreed, it was not a firm commitment that the capital funding would be approved. Each project would require a capital appraisal to be undertaken before it could progress and the Programme would be considered as part of the budget process later in the year. In addition, she advised that at its next meeting, Cabinet would be asked to agree the Capital Strategy for 2008/09, which set out the Council priorities in greater detail.

The Corporate Director (Governance) highlighted that some items might be submitted to Cabinet ahead of the budget process, if it was considered necessary for funding to be released earlier.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RECOMMENDED:

**THAT THE CARRY FORWARD OF CAPITAL FUNDS
TOTTALLING £2.213M FROM 2006/07 TO 2007/08 BE AGREED, IN
ACCORDANCE WITH FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULE 7.9.**

6. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2006/07**
(Report CAB1476 refers)

Councillor Allgood highlighted that the variance between the Council's outturn and working budget for 2006/07 had been an underspend of only £35,000. He stated that the new financial performance management system would allow improved monthly information to be available to the Heads of Division, which should significantly improve monitoring and consequently budget management.

Councillor Allgood reported that the forthcoming Financial Strategy would investigate whether any overspends in 2007/08 would be dealt with in the same manner as underspends (i.e. cases considered as to whether they should be carried forward to the following financial year).

With regard to the revenue underspend requests for carry forward from 2006/07 to 2007/08 listed in Appendix 6 of the Report, Councillor Allgood stated that a general guidance should be established that smaller amounts, for example those under £15,000, would not be carried forward. This was because Cabinet considered those smaller sums could be found from existing budgets.

Cabinet agreed that all the revenue carry forward requests listed in Sections 1 to 3 of Appendix 6 of the Report be approved for recommendation to Council, with the exception of the item relating to Insurance Risk Management.

With regard to the managed savings requests listed in Section 4 of Appendix 6, Councillor Allgood suggested that only the following two items be approved for recommendation to Council:

- Alternate Bin Collection £140,000
- Accountancy £ 18,000

However, the Corporate Director (Governance) and Corporate Director (Operations) stated that the cemetery cremation plot scheme would not be able to progress if the carry forward request was not approved. This would significantly delay the planned improvement scheme and could result in space for cremation plots no longer being available at Magdalen Cemetery. It was confirmed that the funding would ultimately be charged to the Winchester Town Account, although this was normally by means of a recharge over a number of years.

Following further discussion regarding this carry forward request (as detailed below), it was agreed that it be approved, subject to detailed discussion regarding the appropriate method of funding:

- Cemetery Cremation Plot £ 15,000

Whilst noting that it might not be appropriate to carry forward small items, the Corporate Director (Operations) highlighted that the items listed were projects that it was intended to undertake during the forthcoming year. He stated that without carry forward approval, it would be necessary to resubmit budget requests to Cabinet before any work could progress. However, the Chairman

commented that this would enable these requests to be considered against current priorities, which might have changed to when funding was originally approved.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RECOMMENDED:

1. THAT SUBJECT TO RECOMMENDATION 2 BELOW, A GENERAL FUND CARRY FORWARD INTO 2007/08 TOTALLING £665,000 BE APPROVED, AS A ONE-OFF CONTRIBUTION FROM THE 2006/07 BUDGET, FOR THE PURPOSES SPECIFIED IN APPENDIX 6 OF CAB1476 AS AMENDED ABOVE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULE 7.9.

2. THAT THE GENERAL FUND CARRY FORWARD OF £15,000 IN RELATION TO MAGDALEN HILL CEMETERY CREMATION PLOT BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE MANNER IN WHICH THE COSTS ARE CHARGED TO THE TOWN ACCOUNT BEING DELEGATED TO THE HEAD OF FINANCE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES, AND THE TOWN FORUM.

3. THAT THE CAPITAL FINANCING DETAILS AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 7 BE NOTED.

7. **PERFORMANCE REPORT 2006/07 (PERFORMANCE PLAN PART 2)**
(Report CAB1480 refers)

The Head of Performance and Scrutiny circulated an Addendum to CAB1480, containing a number of amendments to the Report, which had resulted from late information becoming available. The Chairman agreed to accept the Addendum onto the agenda, as an item requiring urgent consideration, in order that the information could be considered prior to recommendation to Council on 27 June 2007.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Nelmes stated there were a number of items in the Addendum over which she required further clarification. She also believed that some of the targets were not very ambitious and queried how they were set. In addition, she requested a key be provided explaining the status column.

The Head of Performance and Scrutiny stated that a key would be added to the document. Apart from a few targets which were specified by the Government, the Council set the targets outlined in the Report. Targets were set by Divisions as part of the Business Planning process and subsequently approved by Portfolio Holders.

Cabinet noted the good performance by the Council in relation to Cultural Services, Housing and Council Tax benefit.

The Head of Performance and Scrutiny advised that an amended and updated version of the Report would be submitted directly to Council for its approval at its meeting on 27 June 2007.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Performance and Scrutiny for her work in producing the document.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT THE PERFORMANCE REPORT (PERFORMANCE PLAN PART 2) 2006/07 AS SET OUT IN REPORT CL48 BE APPROVED.

RESOLVED:

That Report CAB1480 and the circulated amendment sheet be approved, and the Chief Executive be authorised to complete and refine the text of the document, in consultation with the Leader, for recommendation to Council.

8. COMMUNITY PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR WINCHESTER COMMUNITIES
(Report CAB1467 refers)

Councillor Pearson declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of this Report as a member of Swanmore Parish Council. Councillor Beckett declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest as a member of Compton and Shawford Parish Council.

The Head of Partnerships and Communication circulated an Addendum to Appendix 1 of the above Report, which contained additional comments received in relation to Housing Needs. The Chairman agreed to accept the Addendum onto the agenda, as an item requiring urgent consideration, in order that the updated information could be considered at the meeting.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Evans queried the wording of the proposed role for City Councillors, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Report. She expressed concern that it could give the impression that the Ward Councillor would take the lead role in producing Parish Plans. She also highlighted the requirement for further training for Councillors regarding this matter.

The Head of Partnerships and Communication confirmed that it was intended for Councillors to be involved in the production of Parish Plans, but not lead the projects. In addition, training for Councillors on the wider aspects of their roles in the community would be provided later in the year.

Cabinet welcomed the Report, but commented that it did not specify resource implications or how progress would be monitored. The Head of Partnerships and Communication advised that targets were currently being considered as part of the development of a Business Plan for the revised Division. It was highlighted that targets would need to consider for example, not just how many Parish Plans were produced, but how well the aspirations of each Plan had been met. However, the proposals within a Parish Plan must be reasonable and the Ward Councillor(s) would have a role in providing guidance to the community to this effect.

Following further discussion, it was agreed that a Report be submitted to a future Cabinet outlining the monitoring proposals in more detail, as set out in Recommendation 2 below.

The Chief Executive confirmed that it was expected that community plans would be produced for the unparished Winchester Town area, with the involvement of the Winchester Town Forum.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Community Planning Guidance and Community Planning Protocol documents be approved, as set out in Appendix 1 (as amended by the Addendum) and Appendix 2 to the Report respectively.

2. That the Corporate Director (Policy) reports annually to Cabinet upon the following:

- a) monitoring the production of Community Plans;
- b) monitoring the achievement of aspirations within those Plans;
- c) monitoring the involvement of other organisations in working towards achieving the Plans' objectives.

9. **COUNCILLOR AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT CABINET MEETINGS**
(Report CAB1477 refers)

The Chairman advised that the changes proposed in the Report were intended to improve the smooth and efficient running of Cabinet meetings and focus discussion on agenda items.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Evans outlined a number of concerns regarding the proposals, on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group. She stated that members of the public wished to be able to raise issues with the Council body that made the decisions (i.e. Cabinet), rather than at Scrutiny Panels which had no decision-making powers. She considered that the current time limit of three minutes for public speaking was adequate to manage the amount of time afforded to public participation at meetings, without the requirement for the further restrictions proposed. In summary, she considered

that limiting public participation was contrary to the Council's intentions of involving the wider community.

In response, Councillor Beckett stated that he considered the operation of Cabinet would be improved by restricting discussion to agenda items only. He highlighted that members of the public would still be able to raise more general issues at Council under the adopted procedures, in addition to other Council bodies including the Winchester Town Forum, Principal Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Panels. Alternatively, members of the public could approach individual Councillors with particular issues or concerns.

Councillor Beckett stated that the new arrangements would be reviewed after twelve months and adjusted at that time, if Cabinet considered it necessary.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the changes to the Public Participation procedure for Cabinet be agreed, as set out in Section 1 of the Report.
2. That the operation of the amended procedure be reviewed after twelve months.

10. **DEPOT SERVICES CONTRACT – HALF YEAR REVIEW**
(Report PS288 refers)

The Chief Executive advised that the Report had been discussed at Principal Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2007, which had noted the poor performance by Serco on turnaround times for housing voids. Almost all of this work had now been passed to alternative contractors and this had resulted in a significant improvement in performance.

Councillor Pearson drew Cabinet's attention to the good performance on Pest Control, highlighting that this demonstrated that the introduction of Alternate Weekly Collections had not caused additional problems in this area.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the report.

RESOLVED:

- That the contractor performance contained within the Report and Appendices be noted.

11. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

The Chairman expressed concern that a number of items listed in the Forward Plan had been considerably delayed from the decision dates originally intended.

Cabinet noted the following alterations to the current Plan:

- Operational Property Maintenance Plan - might be delayed from September;
- LABGI Update - probably to September meeting;
- Report on Governance of Partnership for Urban South Hampshire - probably to September meeting.
- Hockley Viaduct update - probably to September.

RESOLVED:

That the future items for consideration, as set out in the Forward Plan and amended above, be noted.

12. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
##	Exempt minutes of the previous meetings held on 17 May and 30 May 2007) Information relating to any) individual. (Para 1 Schedule) 12A refers))) Information which is likely to) reveal the identity of an) individual. (Para 2 Schedule) 12A refers))) Information relating to the) financial or business affairs of) any particular person (including) the authority holding that) information). (Para 3 Schedule) 12A refers))) Information relating to any) consultations or negotiations, or) contemplated consultations or

-) negotiations, in connection with
-) any labour relations matter
-) arising between the authority or
-) a Minister of the Crown and
-) employees of, or office holders
-) under, the authority. (Para 4
-) Schedule 12A refers)

13. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the previous meetings held on 17 May 2007 and 30 May 2007, be approved and adopted.

The meeting commenced at 10am and concluded at 11.50am

Chairman