

**CABINET****21 April 2008****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* (P)

Councillor Hollingbery – *Portfolio Holder for Performance and Communications* (P)

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* (P)

**Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:**

Councillors Beveridge, Busher, Evans and Read  
Mr A Rickman (TACT)

**Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:**

Mr J Bond (TACT)

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**1. MINUTES****RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 March 2008 be approved and adopted.

**2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr A Weeks (Winchester Residents' Association) spoke regarding the Housing Strategy (Report CAB1653 refers) and his comments are summarised under the appropriate agenda item below.

**3. LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

As this was the last meeting of the Municipal Year, the Leader thanked the Council officers for their assistance and the public for their contributions to debate.

The Leader reported that the Council had been awarded Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI) grant of £710,352 for 2007/08. It was proposed that the funds would be allocated using the same process as in the previous year.

Councillor Wood stated that the Council had exceeded the Government's Standards for the processing of all planning applications for the first time. He expressed his thanks to all the officers involved in achieving this improvement. The Corporate Director (Operations) agreed to relay this message to staff.

Councillor Allgood welcomed to the meeting the Council's new Principal Financial Accountant, Martin Rutherford.

4. **HOUSING STRATEGY**  
[\(Report CAB1653 refers\)](#)

Councillor Coates introduced the Report and highlighted that it was setting out a framework to further develop the Housing Strategy, which would be brought back to a future Cabinet for consideration.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr A Rickman reiterated TACT's comments as outlined in Paragraph 9 of the Report. In addition, he stated that TACT would continue its challenge through the European Court of Human Rights regarding the negative subsidy. Therefore, TACT would wish it to be recorded in the Housing Strategy that, if the situation regarding negative subsidy improved, the Council would rethink its stance regarding affordable housing, including considering building new Council homes. Mr Rickman also mentioned that he had requested information from the Council regarding HRA funds to housing partners for affordable housing, over the previous five years.

The Chairman thanked Mr Rickman for his comments and stated that the Council would support TACT with information as far as possible, but could not offer financial support.

Mr Weeks (Winchester City Residents' Association) reiterated comments made at the previous Cabinet meeting in support of the Emmaus Centre for the homeless at Bar End and the Winchester Rotary Club sponsored walk.

The Chairman noted the comments made and highlighted that the Council had been involved in supporting the Emmaus Centre for some time. The Chief Executive advised that the sponsored walk had been promoted to Council staff.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Housing Strategy vision and priorities be adopted and used as a basis to develop the Housing Strategy.
2. That the Housing Strategy be considered at a future meeting of Cabinet (target date for draft to be presented - July 2008).
3. That the subsequent housing implementation and action plans be considered for approval by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities under the portfolio holder decision making scheme.

5. **SUB-REGIONAL CHOICE BASED LETTINGS – COMMON SCHEME OF ALLOCATION**  
[\(Report CAB1658 refers\)](#)

Councillor Coates requested that this Report be deferred for consideration at the next Cabinet meeting on 15 May 2008, to enable some outstanding queries to be investigated further. This was agreed.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Busher highlighted that the proposed Scheme did not address how housing applications from armed service personnel would be dealt with. The Head of Strategic Housing stated that it had not been

included as there was no proposal to alter the current application procedure regarding service personnel.

It was agreed that Councillor Coates consider the issues raised by Councillor Busher and whether any amendment was required to the Report before it being considered at the next meeting.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Report be deferred for consideration at the next Cabinet meeting on 15 May 2008.

6. **ALLOCATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING GRANT TO SUPPORT THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT GRANGE ROAD, ALRESFORD**  
[\(Report CAB1654 refers\)](#)

In his introduction, Councillor Coates highlighted that the Affordable Housing Grant was available as a result of the sale of two vacant Council properties, in accordance with agreed policy. This would enable the provision of five new affordable housing units as described in the Report.

Cabinet agreed to an amendment to Recommendation 1 of the Report to clarify that the approval was for funds to be allocated to the Housing Association to provide five *additional* homes for social rent.

In response to questions, the Head of Strategic Housing explained that Swaythling Housing Association would own the units, but the Council would obtain nomination rights by legal agreement.

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

RESOLVED:

1 That Affordable Housing Grant of £260,000 is allocated to Swaythling Housing Society to provide 5 additional homes for social rent at Grange Road, Alresford.

2 That the Head of Landlord Services determine, in consultation with the Corporate Director (Governance), whether to allocate the assistance against the limit in S25 General Consent F, or to obtain a special consent from the Secretary of State.

3 That the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities is granted delegated authority under paragraph 3.2 1 (a) of the Portfolio Holder delegation scheme to award Affordable Housing Grant to support the provision of future affordable housing provided that such an award would not exceed £500,000.

7. **LEASING OF VACANT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT DWELLINGS**  
[\(Report CAB1657 refers\)](#)

Under the Council's Constitution, Access to Information Procedure Rules (Rule 15.1 General Exception), this was a Key Decision, which had not been included in the Forward Plan. Under this procedure, the Chairman of Principal Scrutiny Committee had been informed.

Cabinet noted that the Report would be submitted to Principal Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2008 for it to consider if it wished to exercise its powers of call-in.

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

**RESOLVED:**

That subject to the matter not being called in by Principal Scrutiny Committee:

1. 1 Hyde Gate and 21 Penton Place be leased to Stonham for a term of 10 years and that lease charges be based on the Government's Rent Restructuring formula (i.e. the same as City Council tenants would pay).
2. Following consultation with residents, the Head of Landlord Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, be given delegated authority to approve a further 2 one bedroom flats at Hyde Gate be leased to Stonham for a term of 10 years on the basis set out in paragraph 8 of the Report.
3. The Head of Landlord Services determine, in consultation with the Corporate Director (Governance), whether to allocate the assistance against the limit in S25 General Consent F, or to obtain a special consent from the Secretary of State.

8. **REVIEW OF THE OPEN SPACE STRATEGY AND FUNDING SYSTEM**  
[\(Report CAB1645 refers\)](#)

Cabinet noted a number of corrections to the Report as set out below:

- Paragraph 5.1; date should be 31 March 2008;
- Paragraph 5.1; last sentence should be deleted;
- Paragraph 5.2; last sentence should be deleted.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Beveridge requested that the Council investigate the possibility of acquiring an area of open space land in Erskine Road Winchester from the Ministry of Defence, in order that it could be used as a play area. He highlighted that there were a number of affordable housing units nearby housing families who could benefit from such a facility.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Beveridge for his contribution and requested that the Corporate Director (Operations) investigate the suggestion further.

In response to questions, the Corporate Director (Operations) confirmed that it was acceptable for a Parish Council to accumulate funds if it could demonstrate it was for a specific purpose.

The Corporate Director (Operations) also highlighted that the current Open Space system was likely to be replaced by the Government's proposed Community Infrastructure Levy, within the next few years. He also confirmed that the current system allowed some flexibility between funding for play areas and sports schemes, taking account of the justification for collecting the original contribution.

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

RESOLVED:

1 That the Open Space Funding System should continue to operate throughout the District, using the procedures approved by the City Council on 16 November 1994, and subsequently amended on 26 March 1998.

2 That the Open Space Strategy attached as Appendix 3 to the Report be adopted as the relevant background paper to the Winchester District Local Plan Review for the period from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009, and thereafter subject to annual review.

3 That the updated contribution scales set out in paragraph 5.3 of the Report be approved for use with the System for applications determined between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009.

4 That the post of Landscape and Open Spaces Technician (estimated at Scale 3) be 50% funded by an additional contribution from the Open Spaces Fund administrative levy, in recognition of the portion of the work that it will carry out in maintaining records and managing business processes directly associated with the Open Space Fund.

9. **PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT) GRANTS 2008/09**  
[\(Report CAB1655 refers\)](#)

Councillors Allgood and Wood both declared personal (but not prejudicial) interests in respect of this item, due to their membership of the South Downs Joint Committee. They remained in the room, spoke and voted thereon.

With regards to the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, Councillor Wood reported that the Council would require that proposed schemes should be reviewed as to their future viability. The Corporate Director (Operations) confirmed that this would be done as part of the establishment of Service Level Agreements (SLAs).

During discussion, Members requested that all grants be dealt with centrally by the Council's Grant Officer in the future, although monies for Environmental Improvement grants should be ring fenced. It was agreed that the Corporate Director (Policy) should consider how this request could be taken forward.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the following planning grants for 2008/09 be approved:

- a) Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre - £8,040
- b) South Downs Joint Committee (formerly East Hampshire AONB) - £11,400
- c) Hampshire Wildlife Trust (restoration of St. Faiths Meadow) - £7,000
- d) Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (wardening of Winnall Moors and St. Faith's) - £10,500
- e) British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (for local environment projects) - £5,500
- f) Itchen Navigation Project £10,000 (£10,000 per annum for five years, this being year three of a total contribution of £50,000)

2. That the establishment of Service Level Agreements with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and British Trust for Conservation Volunteers be endorsed.

10. **ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS – DENMEAD VILLAGE CENTRE**  
(Report CAB1661 refers)

Cabinet noted a proposed amendment to Recommendation 1(ii) to increase the supplementary capital estimate proposed to £18,000, to be funded from the current years Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LAGBI) allocation (rather than the Major Investment Reserve). Councillor Wood advised that the extra funding would enable improvements to be carried out, as originally intended.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Read (a Ward Councillor for Denmead) welcomed the proposals, which were also supported by Denmead residents. He thanked the officers involved for their work in bringing forward the Report.

Councillor Allgood also thanked the officers involved and emphasised that the improvements would be a significant factor in attracting business to the village centre. The extra £10,000 proposed would enable the work to be carried out as to a similar standard as the first stage of the project which was completed in 2002.

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

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Cabinet agrees to proceed with the second and final phase of the Denmead Village Centre Improvement Scheme and, in order to implement this approves:

(i) the carry forward of £56,000 in the capital programme from 2007/08 to 2008/09, and

(ii) a supplementary capital estimate of £18,000 to be funded from the current year's LABGI allocation.

11.

**COMMUNITY GRANTS – COMMUNITY CHEST SCHEME**  
[\(Report CAB1636 refers\)](#)

The Head of Partnerships and Communications confirmed that an overview of all grants awarded by the Council would be undertaken, in order that they could all be administered centrally.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Evans supported the proposed changes regarding the Community Chest Scheme. However, she believed that the Scheme was not the most appropriate place to administer twinning grants due to a lack of flexibility. She emphasised the importance of twinning to communities and requested that Cabinet reconsider funding proposals as the current reserve would run out in 8 years time.

In response, Councillor Stallard advised that the Council had £15,000 in reserves for twinning if required and she was not aware of any difficulties caused because of lack of flexibility. Following further discussion, Cabinet agreed that Councillor Stallard (as Portfolio Holder) be requested to investigate matters relating to twinning further.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the revised project/activity specific criteria for applicants to the Community Chest Grant Scheme be approved as set out in Appendix I of the Report.
2. That the increased budget of £2,000 per annum for twinning grants be approved and the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport review the current provision and make proposals for changes if appropriate through the portfolio holder decision making system.
3. That the revised Eligibility Criteria/Grant Terms and Conditions be approved as set out in Appendix II of the Report.
4. That the following three new grant streams be included alongside the Community Chest Scheme:
  - (a) Biodiversity Grant
  - (b) Carbon Reduction Fund
  - (c) Community Planning Grants

12. **ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER**  
[\(Report PS327 refers\)](#)

Cabinet noted that the extract from the minutes of the Principal Scrutiny Committee held 31 March 2008 relating to this Report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman agreed to accept the minute extract onto the agenda as an item requiring urgent consideration, in order that the Committee's recommendation could be considered with the Report.

With regard to the Principal Scrutiny Committee's recommendation, the Chief Executive clarified that Members has expressed concern that the change in the method of inspecting incidents of graffiti could lead to the misinterpretation that graffiti was more of a problem than it actually was. He agreed to check that this concern had been taken on board in the redrafting of the Letter.

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

RESOLVED:

That subject to the clarification regarding graffiti requested by Principal Scrutiny Committee, the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be accepted as presented.

13. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007 – CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**  
[\(Report CAB1656 refers\)](#)

In response to questions, the Corporate Director (Governance) confirmed that an updated paper copy of the Council's Constitution could be made available to any Councillors who requested it.

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

**RECOMMENDED:**

**THAT THE CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AS SET OUT IN APPENDICES 1- 4 OF REPORT CAB1656 BE APPROVED.**

RESOLVED:

That further consideration be given in 2009/10 as to whether it is appropriate to establish a special Committee, in accordance with political balance rules, to undertake functions in respect of the review of executive arrangements and possible review of electoral cycles.

14. **MINUTES OF THE SOCIAL ISSUES SCRUTINY PANEL, HELD 10 MARCH 2008**  
[\(Report PS331 refers\)](#)

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Social Issues Scrutiny Panel held 10 March 2008 be received and their contents be noted.

15.



**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL, HELD 12 MARCH 2008**  
[\(Report PS330 refers\)](#)

Councillor Coates reported on a factual error in Minute 2 of the Panel (relating to approval of the previous Panel's minutes), to clarify that the additional cost to the developer (in excess of the costs of current affordable housing development), of building a new home to Level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (COSH) standard would be in the order of £35,000.

Members expressed some concern about the method used by Panel's in reporting back their recommendations to Cabinet. The Corporate Director (Governance) confirmed that the Panel had followed the agreed process regarding the Final Report of the Planning Enforcement Informal Scrutiny Group (Report EN54 refers). The Minute reported the position to Cabinet and it was for Cabinet to determine how the formal response to the scrutiny panel should be prepared. Following discussion, Cabinet agreed that the matters raised be referred to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport to consider further and respond in due course.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That with regard to the Minute relating to the Planning Enforcement Informal Scrutiny Group Final Report (Report EN54 refers), the Group be thanked for their work and the recommendations be referred to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport to consider and respond in due course through the portfolio holder decision making system.

2. That the remaining minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Panel held 12 March 2008 be received and their contents be noted.

16. **MINUTES OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL, HELD 18 MARCH 2008**  
[\(Report PS332 refers\)](#)

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Local Economy Scrutiny Panel held 18 March 2008 be received and their contents be noted.

17. **MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL, HELD 19 MARCH 2008**  
[\(Report PS333 refers\)](#)

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Resources Scrutiny Panel held 19 March 2008 be received and their contents be noted.

18. **MINUTES OF CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE HELD 2 APRIL 2008**  
[\(Report CAB1660 refers\)](#)

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Cabinet (Local Development Framework) Committee held 2 April 2008 be received (attached as Appendix A to these Minutes).

19. **MINUTES OF THE WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM HELD 2 APRIL 2008**  
[\(Report CAB1662 refers\)](#)

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons outlined in the Report.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Winchester Town Forum held 2 April 2008 be received and their contents be noted.

20. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

RESOLVED:

That the future plans for consideration, as set out in the Forward Plan for April 2008, be noted.

21. **DECISIONS TAKEN BY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS UNDER THEIR DELEGATED POWERS**

RESOLVED:

That the decisions taken by Portfolio Holders under their delegated powers since the last Cabinet meeting, as set out on the agenda sheet, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 11.40am

Chairman