

CABINET

26 July 2006

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*

Councillor Lipscomb – *Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport (P)*

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

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

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Evans, de Peyer, Pines and Wood

Mr P Wilson (Adams Hendry)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Bennetts, Learney, Saunders, Sutton and Wagner

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Hollingbery.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 10 July 2006 (less exempt items) be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr J Hayter stated that he had yet to receive a reply from the Director of Development regarding the queries he had raised at the previous Cabinet meeting in relation to the Open Space Strategy (Report CAB1276 refers). In response, the Director of Development advised that Mr Hayter had submitted additional queries to those raised at the meeting which required further investigation. However, he hoped to be able to reply within the next week.

Mr Hayter also raised a number of points regarding the Statement of Community Involvement (Report CAB1302 refers) which are outlined under the relevant minute below.

4. **LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader welcomed to the meeting two representatives from the IDeA who were visiting the Council to offer advice on possible efficiency improvements to be made.

5. **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE**

(Report CAB1302 refers)

Mr Hayter made a number of points during the public participation period, as summarised below:

- The above report raised a number of issues but failed to note that the response to these issues was “no change”, except for editorial clarifications;
- The proposed responses should not be accepted because it could result in a reduction in the current tested methods of public involvement without any further public consultation;
- In addition, the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) set minimum standards and exceeding these did not require a review of the whole SCI (as was stated in the Report);
- The responses were inconsistent with the Leader and Cabinet’s commitment to a enabling a more interactive dialogue;
- The SCI should be corrected to include reference to Sustainability Appraisals and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hayter for his comments and advised that Cabinet had agreed that more time was required to evaluate the responses to the SCI more thoroughly. It was therefore proposed that a Special Cabinet meeting be arranged in August. Although this meeting would be formal, it was proposed that interested parties (for example, Parish Councils) would be given the opportunity to attend and contribute to discussions.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Evans, de Peyer and Pines spoke regarding this item and their comments are summarised below.

Councillor Evans made the following points:

- She welcomed the new facility under the planning system which enabled the public to comment at an earlier stage;
- She emphasised that it was important to allow changes already introduced as a result of the Planning Improvement Programme to settle in before considering whether further changes were required to the Planning Development Control Committee procedures;
- Discussion was required about whether a new Committee was required to consider Planning Policy documents to replace the former Winchester District Local Plan Committee;
- The response to Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) proposals should be strengthened to emphasise that sometimes national policies took precedence over strongly held views of the community.

Councillor Pines made a number of general points regarding community involvement as summarised below:

- A 'customer-friendly' chart should be made available summarising which officers were responsible for which services in the Council, with relevant telephone and email contact information included;
- The Council's Website should include access to information and statistics held by the Council and maps of the area;
- Further consideration was required of who the Council consulted: for example, there were not many representative groups in the un-parished area of the City and more use should be made of youth councils and community associations;
- A suggestion that existing publications, such as the Members' Briefing Note, should be utilised to give information on staff changes etc.

The Chairman thanked Councillors Evans and Pines for their comments and accepted their offer of providing detailed comments in writing, so they could be given further consideration prior to the Special Cabinet meeting.

Councillor de Peyer requested that the SCI include a requirement that relevant community groups and parish councils etc were informed when a lead officer dealing with their scheme left the Council and supplied with the name of the replacement officer.

In response, the Chief Executive emphasised that customers would continue to be encouraged to use the Customer Service Centre as their first contact point. It was preferable if outside organisations related to the appropriate Council post, rather than relying on a particular individual. In addition, the Chief Executive advised that the Council were investigating the requirement for an 'A to Z' directory on the Webpage and the provision of more Council statistics and maps on the Internet.

Councillor Allgood mentioned that he had requested the Members' Briefing Note include information on staff arrivals and departures. In addition, he suggested that the Council's monthly Parish Newsletter could include details of key staff changes.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the above Report be deferred.
2. That a Special Cabinet be arranged during August 2006 to enable further consideration of the results of the public consultation exercise.

6. **DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS ON LOCAL RESERVE SITES AND INFILLING POLICY: PROPOSED ADOPTION**
(Report CAB1280 refers)

Cabinet also referred to Report CAB1273 which had been submitted to its previous meeting on 31 May 2006 in consideration of this item.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Evans requested clarification of what revisions to the Supplementary Planning Documents were proposed in Recommendation 1 of the above Report. She also expressed support for reserve sites as these enabled the Council to retain more control over development.

In addition, the Chairman requested confirmation that the revisions would incorporate decisions made at Council on 31 May 2006 in relation to Local Reserve Sites, noting that there would be a review as to whether such sites were still needed, when the work on the Local Development Framework was undertaken.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr P Wilson from the planning consultants Adams Hendry, responded to the questions raised. Mr Wilson reminded Cabinet that Adams Hendry had been commissioned by the Council to produce the draft Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which were referred to Cabinet for approval.

Mr Wilson stated that two changes were proposed to the Local Reserve Site SPD. One was to change the references to affordable housing to make it consistent with those in the adopted Local Plan. The second change proposed was to clarify that the SPD was an interim policy pending formulation of the new Local Development Framework. To this end, revised wording was suggested to paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 and this would be agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.

With regard to the Infilling Policy SPD, Mr Wilson emphasised that its purpose was to offer guidance when dealing with planning applications rather than being too prescriptive. A number of changes were proposed as a result of the public consultation and these were outlined in Appendix 2 of Report CAB1273 (considered by Cabinet on 31 May 2006).

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Supplementary Planning Documents on (i) the Implementation of Local Reserve Sites and (ii) the Implementation of Local Plan Infilling Policy, as proposed to be revised in Report CAB1273, be adopted with immediate effect.

2. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, be given delegated authority to approve minor editorial and updating changes to the Supplementary Planning Documents as necessary, prior to publication.

7. SPRINGVALE ROAD LOCAL AREA DESIGN STATEMENT

(Report CAB1301 refers)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Evans and Wood spoke regarding this item.

Councillor Evans spoke on behalf of Councillor Beveridge (as former Planning Portfolio Holder) who was very supportive of the Local Area Design Statement (LADS).

Councillor Wood stated that the LADS was too vague and left too much scope for developers (for example, it should be more specific regarding maximum height of buildings). He considered that the Council should toughen its approach and seek to prevent development in semi-rural areas and not rely on an automatic assumption of thirty dwellings per hectare. In addition, he mentioned that the requirements for

affordable housing could be circumvented by developers submitting applications for dwelling numbers below the set threshold.

The Chief Executive advised that extensive public consultation had been undertaken on the proposed LADS. It was one of four LADS which were intended specifically to address concerns about high density developments resulting from the requirements of PPG3.

The Chief Executive apologised for an oversight in the Report whereby the draft LADs had not been attached as an Appendix. However, the document had been previously circulated as a Portfolio Holder Decision Notice (PHD36) and was available on the Council's Website.

In response to Councillor Wood's concerns, the Chief Executive emphasised that the LADS could not be too prescriptive, as its role was to provide a framework under which planning decisions could be based on judgements of the issues involved in individual applications. However, some Members believed that further investigation was required as to whether the wording could be strengthened, to try to prevent developments that were considered to be inappropriate in terms of their scale or numbers of dwellings.

Whilst recognising these concerns, the Director of Development emphasised that it was important that expectations should not be raised about what could be achieved within the boundaries of Government guidance, such as PPG3. The Chief Executive stated that the planning application process offered the more appropriate system whereby individual schemes could be judged. In addition, some Members commented that the adoption of the LADS should not be unduly delayed as it was urgently required in this area.

One Member commented that references to PPG3 should perhaps be updated to the new PPS3 and references to the Local Plan be amended to the adopted Local Plan.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the LADS be approved, subject to changes to take account of the above discussions to be agreed by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport. Any major changes would be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Springvale Road Local Area Design Statement, as revised following public consultation (paragraph 4 of the report refers), be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Winchester District Local Plan Review.
2. That the Chief Executive be authorised to undertake the necessary procedural/regulatory requirements to enable the adoption of the LADS as a Supplementary Planning Document.
3. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, be authorised to undertake any editing and up-dating changes that may be necessary before publication with any major changes brought back to Cabinet for approval.

8. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT ENTERPRISE CENTRE**

(Report CAB1297 refers)

One Member suggested that Winchester Area for Community Action could have a role within this project. This was agreed provided the focus remained on the enterprise element of their work.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That, subject to planning consent being obtained, the City Council be authorised to enter into the lease for 10 Parchment Street for a period of five years with the possibility of an early termination after one year, and on the other terms set out in Appendix 2.

2. That the sub-letting of this lease be authorised jointly to the Winchester City Centre Partnership and the North Hampshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry for dedicated use of the premises as the Winchester District Enterprise Centre on "back to back " terms which reflect the terms of the Council's lease.

3. That a grant of £15,000 be made towards the fitting out cost of 10 Parchment Street, to be funded from the LABGI budget allocated to economic development activities.

4. That during the five year period of the lease, a revenue contribution of £5,000 per annum be made towards the running costs of the centre, to be funded from the economic development revenue budget.

9. **CAPITAL STRATEGY AND PROGRAMME 2006**

(Report CAB1270 refers)

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

RECOMMENDED:

THAT THE DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2006 BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO MINOR EDITING TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES.

10. **FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2007/08 TO 2011/12**

(Report CAB1269 refers)

It was noted that this Report would also be submitted to Principal Scrutiny Committee on 11 September 2006 for its consideration.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Financial Strategy 2006 be approved, including the key principles to be applied to the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue budgets for 2007/08.

2. That Scrutiny Panels be advised of the Financial Strategy, and any comments made by Principal Scrutiny Committee following its consideration of this report, for their deliberation of the budget.

11. **EFFICIENCY STRATEGY**
(Report CAB1291 refers)

It was noted that this Report would also be submitted to Principal Scrutiny Committee on 11 September 2006 for its consideration.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Efficiency Strategy and Programme, as set out in the Report, be approved.

12. **PROCUREMENT UPDATE**
(Report CAB1306 refers)

On behalf of Cabinet, the Chairman expressed his thanks to the Head of Performance and Management for her work in producing the Report.

Members requested that a report outlining progress against the Strategy be submitted to the Resources Scrutiny Panel in approximately nine months time.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the draft Procurement Strategy be adopted, as set out at Appendix 1 of the Report.

2. That the "Selling Guide to the Council" be agreed, as set out at Appendix 2 of the Report.

3. That the further work taking place to improve the Council's procurement practices be noted.

4. That a report outlining progress against the Strategy be submitted to the Resources Scrutiny Panel in March 2007.

13. **RIVER PARK LEISURE CENTRE REFURBISHMENT – INTERIM PROJECT REPORT (LESS EXEMPT APPENDICES)**
(Report CAB1307 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.

On behalf of Cabinet, the Chairman expressed his congratulations to the Head of Contracts and Property Services for his work overseeing the refurbishment contract, which had been completed on time and mostly within budget.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the outcome of the recent refurbishment works at River Park Leisure Centre be noted.

2. That the actions taken regarding (i) the upgrading of the Building Management System and (ii) considers the approach to be taken in carrying out further works to the Voice Evacuation System part of the Fire Alarm System and (iii) the provision and installation of pool covers be noted, as set out in Exempt Appendix 2 of the Report.

3. That the estimated cost projections of the refurbishment works carried out by Raymond Brown and other associated costs connected with the refurbishment project be noted and, subject to the matter not being called in by Principal Scrutiny Committee, a supplementary estimate of up to £100,000 be granted from the 2006/07 Capital Programme to cover the estimated costs likely to be incurred in the carrying out of the original defined project, and other subsequently defined works items as defined in Exempt Appendix 2 of the Report.

4. That the further asset management issues associated with River Park Leisure Centre be noted, as outlined in Section 4 of the Report.

14. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items, as set out in the Forward Plan for August 2006, be noted.

15. **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 meeting, held 10 July 2006 - Preferred Agency Contract for the use of Temporary Staff) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
##	River Park Leisure Centre Refurbishment – Interim Project Report Exempt Appendices)
##	Decision under Section A2 of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers: Letting of Bar End Offices)

16. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 July 2006 be approved and adopted.

17. **RIVER PARK LEISURE CENTRE REFURBISHMENT – INTERIM PROJECT REPORT – EXEMPT APPENDICES**

(Report CAB1307 refers)

Cabinet considered the Exempt Appendices to the Report which set out details regarding issues that emerged during and after the contract works period and an update on project costs, and recommended a way forward (further detail in exempt minute).

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the reasons for additional expenditure incurred in the upgrading of the Building Management System during the recent refurbishment works be noted, and included in the projected total cost of Contract Works and Associated Fees that together exceed the original approved budget of £1.5m by approximately £41,000 (2.7%).

2. That the principle of the installation of a replacement Voice Evacuation System be approved as detailed within the report as part of the supplementary estimate of up to £100,000 from this years 2006/07 Capital Programme. The works to be carried out as soon as practically possible in conjunction with DC Leisure, and with as little disruption to the public as possible.

3. That the decision to whether any of the costs incurred on previous modifications to the Voice Evacuation System are recoverable (as described in Exempt Appendix 2 Section 2 refers), be delegated to the Director of Communities and the City Secretary and Solicitor.

4. That the principle of the installation of pool covers, as detailed within Section 2.3 of Exempt Appendix 2 of this report be agreed, on a shared cost basis with DC Leisure (having regard to the discussions outlined in the exempt minute below) as part of the supplementary estimate of up to £100,000 from this years 2006/07 Capital Programme.

18. **DECISION UNDER SECTION A2 OF THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS: LETTING OF BAR END OFFICES**

(Report CAB1296 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the decision made under Section A.2 of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, as detailed in the report, be noted and the minor variation in the service charge approved.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.35pm

Chairman