

CABINET**11 September 2013****Attendance:**

Councillor Wood -	<i>Leader (Chairman) (P)</i>
Councillor Humby -	<i>Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development (P)</i>
Councillor Coates -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Housing (P)</i>
Councillor Godfrey -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Finance & Organisational Development (P)</i>
Councillor Miller -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Business Services (P)</i>
Councillor Warwick -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods & Environment (P)</i>
Councillor Weston -	<i>Portfolio Holder for Built Environment (P)</i>

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Hutchison, Learney, Pines, Scott, Verney and Weir

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillors Achwal, J Berry, Hiscock and Izard
Mrs Steventon Baker and Mr Bond - TACT

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Humby declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to his role as a County Councillor. Councillor Godfrey declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of agenda items due to his role as a County Council employee. However, as there was no material conflict of interest, they remained in the room, spoke and voted under the dispensation granted on behalf of the Standards Committee to participate and vote in all matters which might have a County Council involvement.

Councillor Coates declared a personal, but not prejudicial, interest in respect of item CAB2505 as his granddaughter was employed by DC Leisure. However, she did not work at the River Park Leisure Centre site and was not involved in a managerial capacity. He remained in the room, spoke and voted thereon.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 26 June 2013 and 15 July 2013 (less exempt item), be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr J Beveridge (WinACC) and Mr C Gilham (Winchester Friends of Earth) spoke regarding Report CAB2511. Mrs C Holloway (WinACC) spoke regarding Report CAB2503. Ms E Back, Mr G Shepherd, Mr C Higgins and Mr T Geddes spoke regarding CAB2505. All participants' comments are summarised under the relevant agenda item below.

4. **LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Councillor Wood reported with regret that Rodney Sabine, a former Leader of the Council, had passed away. Cabinet stood for a few moments in silent tribute to his memory.

Councillor Warwick reported on a joint partnership proposed with East Hants District Council on textile recycling. She confirmed that the Council would match the income to charities that currently have clothes collection recycling bins that would be removed under the new partnership.

Councillor Coates congratulated the Trinity Centre in its success of being awarded a Department of Health grant towards a project aimed at preventing homeless people being discharged from hospital to no fixed abode.

Councillor Wood gave an announcement on the latest situation regarding the new homes building programme. In summary, the first priority would be the three schemes already on site which were due for completion in March 2014: Dever Close, Micheldever; Bourne Close, Otterbourne; and Station Close, Itchen Abbas. Over the next three years, it was proposed to take forward another three major schemes: The Queens Head, Stanmore; Victoria House, Winchester; and an "Extra Care" housing scheme for elderly people. If additional funds became available, small sites in Alresford, Colden Common, Otterbourne and Swanmore would be considered. Councillor Wood stated that when more funds became available from 2016 onwards, schemes in Westman Road, Weeke; Wilberforce Close and Somers Close, Stanmore; and Hillier Way and two garage sites at Chaundlers Road and Hussey Close, Abbots Barton would be developed. He stated that there were no plans to develop Dyson Drive or Charles Close in Abbots Barton in the foreseeable future.

Councillor Wood announced that the agreement for lease to River Cottage for Abbey Mill was due to be signed soon, with a view to the restaurant being opened in March 2014.

5. **FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014/15 - 2018/19**
(Report CAB2502 refers)

Cabinet noted that the above Report had not been made available for publication within the statutory deadline. The Chairman agreed to accept the item onto the agenda as a matter requiring urgent consideration, to enable Cabinet Members to consider its contents prior to The Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 September 2013.

Councillor Godfrey highlighted that the Strategy set out significant proposals for spending on Council assets which were necessary in order to maintain their operating condition. He acknowledged that the plans would present challenges to the Council and necessitate additional savings to be made.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Learney spoke regarding the Report and CAB2510 (Capital Strategy 2013). In summary, she raised concerns about the high level of spending proposed in the Strategies and the consequential requirement for a significant increase in income to the Council and/or savings to be achieved. She also highlighted the length of time before the Council received any income to compensate for monies spent on Council assets, such as Abbey Mill. Councillor Learney requested that all Members be provided with credible proposals as to how the budget gap could be addressed, well in advance of the Cabinet budget meeting on 12 February 2014.

Councillor Godfrey acknowledged these concerns, but emphasised that it was essential the Council took steps to maintain its assets and also release the potential to generate additional income in the future. He also highlighted that the Council had previously demonstrated its ability to undertake capital projects on time and to budget.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Financial Strategy 2013 be approved, including the key principles to be applied to the General Fund Budget for 2014/15 and beyond.

6. **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2013**
(Report CAB2510 refers)

The Chief Operating Officer advised that it was not necessary for the Strategy to be referred to Council for approval as no significant changes were proposed from the previously agreed capital programme.

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

RESOLVED:

That the draft Capital Strategy for 2013 be approved, as set out in Appendix A to the Report.

7. **WINCHESTER DISTRICT CAR PARKING STRATEGY**
(Report CAB2511 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Report would also be considered by the Winchester Town Forum at its meeting that evening.

Councillor Warwick emphasised that the Report set out a consultation paper on a District Parking Strategy and would be subject to further discussions with relevant stakeholders. The key challenge was to balance the various demands by addressing air quality and/or congestion concerns against the requirements to support the local economy. The development of a strategy for parking should also be considered in conjunction with other strategies, such as the Winchester Town Access Plan and the District Cycling Strategy.

Mr J Beveridge (WinACC) and Mr C Gillham (Winchester Friends of the Earth) spoke during public participation and their comments are summarised below.

Mr Beveridge requested that WinACC be provided with the statistics behind the Strategy. He suggested the proposed increase in car parking provision was contrary to the Winchester Town Access Plan and Local Plan Part One. Air quality issues were not adequately addressed, and there was no consideration of transfer of travel from car to bike or walking and also for car parks to be positioned on the outskirts of the City. Finally, he requested that a meeting be held with WinACC and other interested parties to discuss the proposals.

Mr Gillham expressed disappointment in the proposals as they did not address air quality issues. He disputed any proposition that additional parking spaces brought in new business to Winchester as he considered people were deterred by the current levels of congestion and not by a lack of parking.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Weir, Pines and Verney addressed Cabinet and their comments are summarised below.

Councillor Weir expressed concern that the Strategy should not just consider off-street parking, but should look at other matters such as the use by commuters of unofficial “park and ride” areas on the Town outskirts and the appropriateness of retaining free half hour on-street parking bays. She agreed that the Strategy should link in with other Council strategies and requested that the data behind the survey results be made available.

Councillor Pines suggested that road signage within the Town area also be examined and the possibility of more shared use areas be considered. With regard to Park and Ride, he requested that this be extended to Winnall Industrial Estate and the use of the private County Council park and ride car park at Bar End also be reconsidered.

Councillor Verney emphasised the importance of convenient parking spaces for the economy and requested that more half-hour free on-street parking spaces be made available, for example, along the Upper High Street, Winchester and in New Alresford.

Cabinet thanked all the above for their contributions and requested that they be submitted in writing to the Head of Major Projects as part of the consultation process.

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

RESOLVED:

That the draft document, as attached as an Appendix to the Report, be approved for consultation purposes.

8. **REFRESH OF THE WINCHESTER DISTRICT SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2010-2020**
(Report CAB2503 refers)

The Head of Policy advised that the refresh had involved examining other strategies already adopted by the Council. The proposed Strategy would be consulted upon and comments invited.

During public participation, Mrs C Holloway (WinACC) emphasised the importance of reinstating carbon reduction as a key priority in the Strategy, as this enabled groups such as WinACC to secure additional grant funding towards carbon reduction measures.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Learney expressed concern about the lack of specific priorities within the Strategy, with the possible consequence of a lack of clarity as to the Council’s aims and direction.

The Chief Executive emphasised that carbon reduction measures were present throughout a number of Council Strategies, for example, the forthcoming Low Carbon Route Map. He considered that the Strategy did set out clear, stated priorities and the detail would be set out in further Plans.

The Chairman requested that responses to consultation, including comments outlined above, be made in writing.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the refreshed draft of the Winchester District Community Strategy 2010 – 2020 be approved, as attached as Appendix 1 to the Report, for consultation (as detailed at section 4 of the Report).

2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Policy, in consultation with the Leader, to make any minor amendments arising from Cabinet, prior to the consultation referred to above.

9. **PLANNING FRAMEWORKS: STANMORE AND WINNALL**

(Report CAB2489 refers)

The Chairman proposed an amendment whereby Recommendations 5 and 6 of the Report be replaced. This was agreed with the wording as set out in the new Resolution 5 below.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillors Scott and Pines addressed Cabinet and their comments are summarised below.

Councillor Scott welcomed the Report and thanked the Council Officers and community organisations involved in the work to date. He requested that the Council seek to provide new homes, as opposed to flats, within Stanmore. In addition, he requested that the possibility of providing match-funding to County Council monies for a pre-school in the community hub be investigated. He acknowledged that feedback from the consultation process had been mixed, but extensive media coverage had resulted in a large number of people becoming engaged in the process.

Councillor Pines highlighted that Winnall already had a community plan and another was in development for Highcliffe, so he was unsure of the worth of the further work proposed. He requested that future proposals for Winnall should include providing better transport links to the industrial estate areas.

The Assistant Director (Economy and Communities) highlighted that the Planning Framework was a spatial planning document which aimed to put

in place the required infrastructure for an area and would feed into the Local Plan Part 2. As such, it was different to community plans which focussed on operational activities.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the Stanmore Planning Framework be noted, and it be agreed that it should inform future decisions around community investment in the Stanmore neighbourhood.

2. That the Vision, set out in Paragraph 3.2 of the Report be endorsed, and partner organisations be encouraged to endorse as well.

3. That support for the delivery of the three high priority housing schemes identified in Paragraph 4.3 of the report be confirmed.

4. That the principles of the delivery programme set out in the Framework be commended, and the relevant Portfolio Holders be required to give it due regard in shaping Portfolio Plans in future years.

5. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director (Economy and Communities), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Built Environment, to determine the scope and methodology of a parallel Planning Framework for Winnall, reflecting the business needs in the area, and drawing on previous studies and lessons learnt in the scoping and conduct of the Stanmore Planning Framework. This would also involve consultation with the community and it might prove necessary to authorise at a later stage a more detailed framework of the Winnall area. The work will be subject to tender from qualified consultants.

10. **RIVER PARK LEISURE CENTRE – CONSIDERATION OF REPLACEMENT FACILITY**
(Report CAB2505 refers)

The Chairman reported that a briefing session for all Councillors on the proposals had recently be held and a public meeting was scheduled for 26 September 2013.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Hutchison addressed Cabinet. In summary, he emphasised that the Council must work in partnership with voluntary organisations in order to achieve the best result. He considered that in terms of sustainability, a new centre should aim to have a life-span of 60 to 100 years. The opportunity to create a District-heating system should be utilised. In addition, the Council should be more transparent

about land ownership issues affecting the proposals, particularly those related to Bar End. This information should be produced for the public meeting, which should be open to all residents of the District.

The Chairman confirmed that discussions were ongoing with the voluntary sector, together with other possible partners such as the University and the County Council. He had personally visited ten other leisure centres and consulted with seven Leaders of other local authorities who had taken recent decisions regarding their leisure centre provision.

The Corporate Director advised that the Garrison Ground playing fields area at Bar End was owned by Tesco and the Council had a short-term agreement with the company to occupy the land for the purposes of playing fields. Therefore, if the Council wished to use the land for any other purpose, it would have to obtain agreement from Tesco, which would inevitably have cost implications.

With regard to the District-heating suggestion, Councillor Humby reported that discussions were ongoing with the County Council.

During the public participation period, four people addressed Cabinet and their comments are summarised below.

Ms E Back (Winchester Fit for the Future) emphasised the importance of providing a high quality sports facility, with competition standard gym and sports facilities, including a 50 metre swimming pool. She considered Bar End was the preferable location as it would offer complementary facilities to those already there and generate new jobs for the area. She suggested parallel investments could be made in both North Walls and Bar End. Finally, she queried why the Savills report did not mention the former depot site at Bar End.

Mr G Shepherd (Winchester Penguins Swimming Club) reported that the Club had 900 members and the waiting list for the Club was currently oversubscribed by 200 people. He believed that the best option for all users was to provide a 50 metre pool and highlighted that modern pools could be designed in such a way as to allow flexibility of use.

Mr C Higgins expressed concern that the Bar End location was not being pursued as he believed that it was much preferable in terms of location and that land was available from Tesco or the County Council Museums site. He emphasised the potential for joint working with the University at Bar End and believed that the North Walls location would create additional parking/traffic issues within the Town centre.

Mr T Geddes also spoke in support of a new centre being located at Bar End as he believed it was more accessible and had the potential to transform that area of Winchester. He also agreed with previous contributors that a competition level facility be provided, including a 50 metre pool and it could be self-financing. He considered that the outcome

of the Savills report had been predetermined by the Council in favour of North Walls.

The Corporate Director confirmed that Savills had been asked to consider the suitability of both North Walls and Bar End and had concluded that the North Walls location was more suitable for a number of reasons, as set out in their study. He advised that the County Council had no intention of making the Museums site at Bar End available for redevelopment. In addition, the former depot site had not been considered as it was too small.

During discussion, Cabinet Members commented that a great deal of work and discussions with various partners had already been undertaken on proposals. This had resulted in the current Report and proposed way forward being recommended. However, the final decision would be taken by all Members at full Council.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the option of a replacement for the River Park Leisure Centre be pursued and identified as a financial priority for the Council.
2. That the initial core content of the proposed new facility be as set out in the Paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 of the Report (which might be subject to change as the project progresses).
3. That the Council continues to seek professional advice from DCL on the process of providing a new facility and consideration be given to appointing an External Advisor to help with this and to advise on the tendering process.
4. That, without prejudice to the Council's independent function as local planning authority, land adjacent to the existing leisure centre at North Walls be identified as the preferred location for the new facility.
5. That reports covering necessary advice relating to the feasibility and cost of constructing a new facility with the agreed core content at North Walls be commissioned by the Head of Estates and the findings reported to Cabinet as soon as possible.
6. That a budget allocation of up to £100,000 (from the Asset Management Plan) be approved for the initial technical reports.
7. That the Head of Estates advises Cabinet on the works that will be required to keep River Park Leisure Centre operational until a replacement building is ready.

8. That a final decision as to whether to progress the project be made by Cabinet and Council following receipt of the detailed reports.

11. **OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE**
(Report CAB2512 refers)

Cabinet requested that expected dates of completion be included within the action plan set out in Appendix 2 of the Report. The Chairman highlighted the significance of the proposed review of governance arrangements.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Learney welcomed the Council's decision to undertake a peer review and commented that the report had highlighted a number of positive results that already existed. For example, good working relationships between Members and Officers and a committed and dedicated staff. However, she flagged up the issues raised regarding failure to communicate priorities adequately, capacity issues and failure to look to the future with financial plans.

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

RESOLVED:

That the proposed response and actions resulting from the Peer Review be endorsed, as set out in Appendix 2 of the Report.

12. **FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DELIVERY OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS IN THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK**
(Report CAB2504 refers)

The Assistant Director (Built Environment) advised that the South Downs National Park Board would make a decision on these proposals at their meeting in November 2013.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to:

- (a) agree the extension of the existing arrangements for the delivery of a development management service on behalf of the South Downs National Park Authority, as set out in the Section 101 agreement dated 4 August 2011, for a further period of up to one year if necessary and;

- (b) enter into a new agreement for the delivery of development management services on behalf of the National Park Authority up to March 2017 subject to the Assistant Director Built Environment (in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Portfolio Holder Built Environment) being able to agree satisfactory funding and operational arrangements with the National Park Authority, and subject also to the inclusion of a notice period for termination of the service of 12 months.

13. **REVIEW OF LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME**
(Report CAB2509 refers)

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

RECOMMENDED (TO COUNCIL ON 8 JANUARY 2014):

THAT COUNCIL ADOPTS THE LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME PROPOSED IN REPORT CAB2509 AS FOLLOWS:

- A) BASE THE LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME FOR 2014/15 ON THE SCHEME ADOPTED FOR 2013/14;**
B) INCREASE COMPONENTS IN THE CTR CALCULATION IN LINE WITH THE INCREASES THE DWP & DCLG PROVIDE FOR IN THE HOUSING BENEFIT REGULATIONS 2006 (AS AMENDED) AND THE COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (PRESCRIBED REQUIREMENTS) REGULATIONS 2012 FOR 2014/15;
C) INCREASE INCOME DISREGARDS FOR WORKING AGE CLAIMANTS FURTHER SO THAT SINGLE CLAIMANTS HAVE THE FIRST £20.00 OF EARNED INCOME DISREGARDED AND OTHERS HAVE THE FIRST £50.00 OF EARNED INCOME DISREGARDED.

RESOLVED:

1. That officers be instructed to present a report direct to Council on 8 January 2014. The Council must approve the Scheme for 2014/15 by 31 January 2014. Officers to present:

- a) The updated detailed local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/15 for approval.

14. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**
(Report AUD57 refers)

Cabinet noted that Audit Committee had, at its meeting on 25 June 2013, supported the Policy for approval.

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

RESOLVED:

That the Risk Management Policy 2013 be approved.

15. **REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES: HENRY SMITH CHARITY (ST PETERS)**
(Report CAB2506 refers)

Cabinet noted that, following the publication of the Report, it had been clarified that the Council were entitled to two representatives on the above organisation, for a period of office of four years. In addition to Mrs Craig, the other Council representative was Councillor Pines.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That Mrs A Craig be appointed to the Henry Smith Charity (St Peters) for the period until September 2017.

2. That Councillor Pines be confirmed as the second representative on the organisation for the period until September 2017.

16. **MINUTES OF THE CABINET (HOUSING) COMMITTEE HELD 19 JUNE 2013**
(Report CAB2507 refers)

Cabinet considered the minutes of the Cabinet (Housing Delivery) Committee held 19 June 2013 and noted that the recommended minutes had been considered and approved by Council on 17 July 2013.

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

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Cabinet (Housing) Committee held 19 June 2013 be received (as attached as Appendix A to the Minutes).

17. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items, as set out in the Forward Plan for October 2013, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.40pm

Chairman