

**CABINET**

**18 November 2003**

Attendance:

Councillors:

Campbell (Chairman) (P)

Beveridge (P)

Cook (P)

Evans (P)

Hiscock (P)

Learney (P)

Nelmes (P)

Wagner

Others in Attendance and Speaking

Councillors Bennetts, Mitchell and Porter

Others in Attendance and not Speaking

Councillors Bidgood, Davies and Pearson

TACT Representatives:

Mr A Rickman and Mr C Gilbert - Wood

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699. **LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources announced that the Council had been nominated for a national award for its National Land and Property Gazetteer, and would hear in early December the category of award that it would receive. Cabinet passed its congratulations to all Officers involved in this corporate project.

700. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2003 be approved and adopted (less exempt appendix).

701. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked/statements made.

702. **OFFICE ACCOMMODATION FEASIBILITY REPORT (LESS EXEMPT APPENDIX)**  
(Report CAB753 refers)

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr P Stansall representing Tectus, the consultants employed by the City Council to undertake a feasibility study to improve the City Council's office accommodation.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources provided background to the consultant's report, which had been commissioned following consideration of the Office Accommodation Scoping Report and the Organisational Infrastructure Best Value Review.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr Stansall informed Cabinet of the research that Tectus had carried out and the criterion it had taken into consideration in reaching its conclusions.

In response to Members' questions, Mr Stansall explained a number of fundamental principles of the study:

- An option not to take action with regard to office accommodation would still incur the Council in substantial costs, for example, to provide disabled access, but there would be no return on this capital investment in existing buildings.
- It was appropriate to take action at this time as the present stock was becoming run down, leading to the need for capital investment and an increase in maintenance costs.
- The necessity for a central location was a decision that required consideration. Middle Brook Street had been chosen for illustrative purposes but there may be other sites available. The necessity for the general public to travel to reach an out of town location was an important consideration. The City Council's presence in a central location should also be judged by the functions it provided to its local community, and also for its symbolic value.
- In terms of benefit for local Council Tax payers, this was again something that should be kept in mind and any benefit or disbenefits should be measurable.

The Director of Development Services added that, following a series of seminars held for Councillors in the week prior to Cabinet, a number of Members had expressed a view that an out of town location was worthy of consideration. However, he commented that under present planning policies, approval for such a scheme was unlikely. It had also been commented that there should be greater use of park and ride when discussing car parking arrangements. There was general support that operation from eight separate office sites as at present was not feasible in the long term.

The Chief Executive commented that the quality of the working environment provided for staff was not good, and the long term continuation of this arrangement would have an impact on the effective delivery of services. Initiatives, such as customer care and providing improved points of customer contact would be better achieved by the provision of new office accommodation. Possible incorporation of service partners within the same building would provide an enhanced public community service and would be explored.

Cabinet also discussed whether a new Council Chamber should be included with any new office accommodation. It was noted that there were options to improve the provision of facilities at the Guildhall, Winchester, if the capital investment in providing a Council Chamber was re-directed to providing improved space within the Guildhall. This might include a new Council Chamber which would have wider public access, including the provision of disabled access, or more flexible meeting rooms. There was also the possibility of sharing a Council Chamber facility with Hampshire County Council. These options, including the financial impact for the City Council not using the Guildhall for its present Council meeting arrangements, should be given further consideration by the Council Officers and its consultant.

Cabinet, at this stage, also decided that it did not wish to rule out other options for location rather than Middle Brook Street at this moment, and recommendation 2 of the report was amended to reflect this.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the need for improved office accommodation is recognised.
2. That the office accommodation project should proceed on the basis of re-locating to a new site in Winchester with or without a Council Chamber.
3. That a decision on the site of a new office be part of the study noting that the report concludes that a city centre location is possible but that account needs to be taken of the forthcoming car parking review.
4. That the project assumes the disposal of the four existing office sites including the Colebrook Street car park.
5. That the project proceeds to the next stage of developing a technical feasibility study which maximises the development potential of any site, including housing uses, if appropriate.
6. That the feasibility study should include options that minimise the use of capital by adjusting the number of work spaces and ensuring the site is fully developed, including the possibility of sharing facilities with other partners.
7. That draft Planning Briefs are prepared for the City Offices/Colebrook Street car park, Avalon House, Abbey Mill and Hyde sites for redevelopment/reuse for residential or other purposes.

703. **PROPOSED WAITING RESTRICTIONS, STOCKBRIDGE ROAD, WINCHESTER**  
(Report CAB756 refers)

Under Council Procedure Rule 35, the Chairman stated that Councillors Bennetts, Mitchell and Porter had requested to speak under this item.

Councillor Mitchell requested that the present parking with no time limit allocation to the front of The Firs on Stockbridge Road should remain and should not be subject to waiting restrictions, as proposed. He stated that this area of parking was useful and was well used. He added that his objections to the Traffic Regulation Order had not been reflected in the Officer's report.

Councillor Bennetts stated that Stockbridge Road was the subject of fast traffic and that good visibility splays were required to allow access to the new development at The Firs. He accepted the problems with parking, but the visibility splays were required in both directions. Councillor Porter stated that Cabinet was now aware of the arguments both for and against the restriction, and she had no comment to add.

The Director of Development Services explained that the Order was necessary to comply with planning permission conditions for the redevelopment of The Firs in order that the necessary visibility splays to allow development could be achieved.

After considering the arguments both for and against the proposed revision of the Traffic Regulation Order in Stockbridge Road, Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed revision to the Traffic Regulation Order in Stockbridge Road, Winchester be approved such that the existing 'Unlimited parking' be replaced by 'No waiting at any time' restrictions as set out in Appendices A, B & C.

704. **COMBINED EUROPEAN AND LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTIONS 2004 – CONSEQUENTIAL CHANGES**  
(Report CAB757 refers)

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

RESOLVED:

That the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister be informed that the City Council has no comments on the consequential arrangements for amending terms of office in connection with the European Parliament and Local Authority Elections on 10 June 2004.

705. **PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2004/05**  
(Report CAB743 refers)

The City Secretary and Solicitor circulated at the meeting an updated timetable of meetings for 2004/05.

Different to the previously published report, the meeting of the Housing Performance Improvement Committee originally scheduled for Monday, 25 October 2004, had now been moved to Tuesday, 9 November 2004. Consequently, the meeting of the Central Services Performance Improvement Committee scheduled for Tuesday, 26 October had now been moved to Monday, 25 October 2004. The meeting of the Licensing and Regulation Committee scheduled for Tuesday, 9 November 2004 had now been moved to Tuesday, 16 November 2004 and the meeting of the same Committee scheduled for Thursday, 2 December 2004 had now been moved to Tuesday 14 December 2004.

Due to a Guildhall booking now being confirmed for 28 and 29 April 2004, the meetings of Planning Development Control scheduled for 21 and 22 April 2004 would now remain on those dates. In addition, the Cabinet meeting originally set for 21 April 2004 had been moved to Tuesday, 20 April 2004 to avoid Members of both bodies having to attend both meetings in one day.

Following a point raised by a Member, the City Secretary and Solicitor stated that he would check with the Mayor the date scheduled for the Retiring Mayor's Dinner on 18 June 2004.

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

RESOLVED:

That subject to the date of the Retiring Mayor's Dinner being confirmed and to the above amendments, the timetable of meetings for 2004/05 be approved.

706. **MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY, ARTS AND SOCIAL PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 20 OCTOBER 2003**  
(Report CAB742 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Community Services Department Budget 2004/05 would be addressed as part of the main budget report on 17 December 2003 following further consideration by the Performance Improvement Committee.

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

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Community, Arts and Social Performance Improvement Committee held on 20 October 2003 be noted.

707. **MINUTES OF THE HEALTH PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 21 OCTOBER 2003**  
(Report CAB742 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Environmental Health General Fund Budget 2004/2005 would be addressed as part of the main budget report on 17 December 2003 following further consideration by the Performance Improvement Committee.

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

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Health Performance Improvement Committee held on 21 October 2003 be noted.

708. **MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ACCESS PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 22 OCTOBER 2003**  
(Report CAB751 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Review of Concessionary Travel Concessions and Development Services Department Budget 2004/2005 would be addressed as part of the main budget report on 17 December 2003 following further consideration by the Performance Improvement Committee.

It was noted that the request to ring fence transport-related activities was presently being considered by the Officers and would also be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet as part of the budget process.

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

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Access Performance Improvement Committee held on 22 October 2003 be noted.

709. **MINUTES OF THE HOUSING PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 27 OCTOBER 2003**  
(Report CAB745 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Housing General Fund Budget 2004/2005 would be addressed as part of the main budget report on 17 December 2003 following further consideration by the Performance Improvement Committee.

In respect of the Homelessness Strategy, Cabinet agreed that the Portfolio Holder for Housing should report either in person or via a report on the progress of the Strategy to the Housing Performance Improvement Committee at six month intervals.

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

RESOLVED:

That subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the Housing Performance Improvement Committee held on 27 October 2003 be noted.

710. **MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 28 OCTOBER 2003 (LESS EXEMPT ITEMS)**  
(Report CAB752 refers)

Cabinet noted that the various budget items would be addressed as part of the main budget report on 17 December 2003 following further consideration by the Performance Improvement Committee.

In respect of the item for River Park Leisure Centre in the 2003 Asset Management Plan, it was reported that the Principal Scrutiny Committee had not exercised its power of call-in. Cabinet supported the bringing forward of £29,000 of expenditure from the 2004/05 Capital Programme in order that works could be undertaken in the Christmas 2003 shut-down period at the Centre.

In addition, under the 2003 Asset Management Plan item, the approval of a supplementary estimate of £110,000 for basement works at Avalon House was deferred for a further report on the detail .

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

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the amendments above, the minutes of the Central Services Performance Improvement Committee held on 28 October 2003 be noted (less exempt items).

711. **EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEES RELATING TO 'IMPLEMENTATION OF PPG3 WITHIN THE WINCHESTER DISTRICT'**  
(Report CAB749 refers)

The Chairman noted that this item had not been notified for inclusion on the agenda within the statutory deadline.

The Chairman agreed to accept the item onto the agenda as a matter requiring urgent consideration because of the need to receive important information on whether the Council should be more actively involved in developing design statements and other types of supplementary planning guidance to help define and protect the character of certain areas.

Following an introduction of the issues considered by the Winchester District Local Plan Committee and the Principal Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet supported the principle that the Council should be more actively involved in developing design statements and other types of supplementary planning guidance to help define and protect the character of certain areas (as discussed in paragraphs 3.41 – 3.43 of Report WDLP32).

Cabinet noted that a budget growth bid of £25,000 would be submitted for this purpose for inclusion within the report on setting the Council's revenue and capital budgets to be considered on 17 December 2003. This could be considered along with other budget bids.

The Director of Development Services commented that the most appropriate time to undertake a development brief by means of a neighbourhood design statement would be at the pre-application stage when a developer had expressed an initial interest in progressing a scheme. The design statement should be general, to cover a wider area than the application site itself, leading to an improved development. It was also noted that it might prove more difficult to achieve such statements in the town area of Winchester where there was not quite the same cohesion of interested groups to carry out the work to produce a design statement, as there were in the Parished areas.

It was also noted that the other items covered in the extracts relating to the Local Plan Review would come back to Cabinet when they had been further discussed by the Winchester District Local Plan Committee.

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

**RESOLVED:**

1. That Cabinet supports the principle that the Council should be more actively involved in developing design statements and other types of supplementary planning guidance to help define and protect the character of certain areas (as discussed in paragraphs 3.41 to 3.43 of Report WDLP32, and that a growth bid of £25,000 to cover appropriate funding and staff resources be made for consideration, along with other growth bids as part of the Council's revenue and capital budget process on 17 December 2003.

2. That consideration of the other items recommended to Cabinet for consideration be deferred following further consideration by the Winchester District Local Plan Committee at its meeting to be held on 20 November 2003.

**712. FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET**

Cabinet noted that the reports relating to the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and Housing Strategy scheduled for 3 December 2003 would now be considered at a future meeting of Cabinet. It was necessary to defer these items as a proposed meeting to discuss content with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had not taken place as scheduled.

**713. EXEMPT BUSINESS**

**RESOLVED:**

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.





	Performance Improvement Committee:	)	Schedule 12A refers).
	- Commercial Property	)	
	Arrears and Voids	)	
720	Restructuring of the Chief Executive's Unit	)	Information relating to a particular employee, former
721	Health and Housing Department – Senior Management Review	)	employee or applicant to become an employee of, or a particular office-holder, former office-holder or applicant to become an office-holder under the authority. (Para 1 to Schedule 12A refers).
718 & 722	Exempt Minutes of the Central Services Performance Improvement Committee:	)	Information relating to any particular applicant for, or recipient or former recipient of, any financial assistance provided by the authority. (Para 5 to Schedule 12A refers).
	- Finance Department: Performance Monitoring (Exempt Appendix)	)	

714. **EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 5 NOVEMBER 2003**

Cabinet considered the exempt minutes relating to office cleaning contract and the final report on Satman.

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes from the meeting held on 5 November 2003 be approved and adopted.

715. **OFFICE ACCOMMODATION FEASIBILITY REPORT – EXEMPT APPENDIX**  
(Report CAB753 refers)

Cabinet considered the above report, which set out proposals with regard to the appointment of consultants to co-ordinate the technical feasibility study for the provision of improved office accommodation for the City Council (detail in exempt minute).

716. **RESTRUCTURING OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT**  
(Report PER64 refers)

Cabinet considered the above report, which set out proposals with regard to restructuring of the Chief Executive's Unit (detail in exempt minute).

The City Secretary and Solicitor declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and left the meeting during its consideration.

717. **HEALTH AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT – SENIOR MANAGEMENT REVIEW**  
(Report PER65 refers)

Cabinet considered the above report, which set out proposals with regard to the Senior Management Review of the Health and Housing Department (detail in exempt minute).

718. **EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL SERVICES PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 28 OCTOBER 2003**  
(Report CAB752 refers)

Cabinet considered the above report, which set out proposals with regard to Finance Department Performance monitoring and an individual debt to the City Council (detail in exempt minute).

The meeting commenced at 9.00am and concluded at 11.15am

