

CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 7th June 2011 at Worksop Town Hall

Present: Councillor G A N Oxby (Chair),
Councillors J Evans, S A Greaves, J A Leigh, S May, D R Pressley and
A Rhodes.

Liaison Members: Councillors M W Quigley and S Toms.

Officers: D Armiger, S Brown, J Hamilton, M Hill, L Hull, D Hunter, M Ladyman,
N Taylor and R Theakstone.

Standards Members: None.

Also present: Councillor D Potts and G J Wynne – Scrutiny Select Panel.
Councillors B Barker, G Freeman, B Hopkinson, J Scott and
Mrs A Simpson.

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all Elected Members, officers, members of the public and press to the first Cabinet Meeting under the new Administration, particularly the newly appointed Cabinet Members.

2. QUESTION TIME - PUBLIC

Council Procedure Rules were suspended for fifteen minutes to allow questions from the public; however, there were no questions.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Burton and C Wanless.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5TH APRIL 2011

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th April 2011 be approved.

6. MINUTES FOR ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action and Implementation be received.

7. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes List be received.

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

8. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING – COUNCILLOR A RHODES

(a) Housing Options (Key Decision No 289)

Members' approval was sought for the commencement of an options appraisal into the possible future arrangements for the management of the Council's housing stock. A working party was proposed to carry out the options appraisal chaired by the Housing Portfolio Member. The findings of the appraisal will be reported back to the October 2011 Cabinet Meeting.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One – To agree to the commencement of an options appraisal for the management of the Council's housing stock. The appraisal will form a robust and transparent review of the future of Council owned social housing and will identify possible efficiencies and improvements in service.

Option Two – To agree not to commission an options appraisal and the status quo continues.

RESOLVED that:

1. A cross-party working group of Members, comprising three Labour Members, one Conservative Member and one Independent Member to be chaired by the Housing Portfolio Member, be established to co-ordinate and lead the options appraisal work.
2. The working group to report its findings back to the October 2011 Cabinet Meeting.

9. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – SUPPORT SERVICES – COUNCILLOR S MAY

(a) Safeguarding and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures (Key Decision No 288)

Members' approval was sought for the revised Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures, which was appended to the report for Cabinet and Liaison Members and deposited in the Members' Room.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Although Cabinet could decide not to approve the recommendations, the Council has a statutory responsibility in terms of the Children's Act 2004.

The risk of not having a robust safeguarding policy with clear processes, clarity around roles, responsibilities and training could have serious consequences for the Council. This could manifest itself both financially and in loss of organisational reputation. However, ultimately, despite these organisational risks, the Council would wish to do all it could to reduce the risk to individual children, young people and vulnerable adults.

RESOLVED that the revised Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures be approved.

Other Decisions

10. REFERRAL(S) FROM SELECT PANELS

- (a) Referral from Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 15th March 2011 – Minute No 155(b) - Review of Poverty Issues

The report which had been referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Cabinet's consideration and comment was presented by Councillor D Potts, accompanied by Councillor G J Wynne. The Panel Report was appended for Cabinet and Liaison Members and deposited in the Members' Room. The report outlined 11 recommendations, with a revised Recommendation 2, which had been circulated prior to the meeting:

"Recommendation 2 - Ensure the impact of District Council actions on poverty are considered and that this issue be integrated into our wider approach to Equalities."

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

This report had been prepared by the Select Panel reviewing the topic on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a view to making recommendations to Cabinet on the findings of the review.

Members could choose to refer back to the Panel if they feel that further consideration needs to be given to the recommendations.

RESOLVED that:

1. The recommendations of the Review of Poverty Issues be considered, including the revised Recommendation 2, taking strategic priorities and the budgetary framework into account, and referred back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
2. Thanks be recorded to Councillor D Potts for presenting the report, and also to the Scrutiny Officer for her support and excellent report, the witnesses for their evidence and the Members of the Panel for their support and commitment.

11. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE – COUNCILLOR G A N OXBY

- (a) Forward Plan – June to September 2011

Members were presented with the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the coming four months. A revised Plan had been circulated prior to the meeting which included Key Decision No 290.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The report is for noting.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan for the period June to September 2011 be approved.

(Councillor D Potts left the meeting at this point.)

12. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – COMMUNITY PROSPERITY – COUNCILLOR D R PRESSLEY

(a) Local Planning Application Validation Requirements.

Members' approval was sought for Bassetlaw District Council's Local Planning Validation Requirements, following consultation with interested parties in early 2011. The draft Validation Checklists were appended for Cabinet and Liaison Members and deposited in the Members' Room.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The Council has the option whether or not to revise the existing local validation requirements. However, based on recent changes and experience gained from using the existing document, this is an opportunity to ensure that the Council is able to provide up to date details of the information it requires in order to properly assess development proposals.

Furthermore, by updating these local requirements, the process of determining applications should be made more straightforward as there are likely to be less reasons to request additional information and therefore applications should be dealt with more efficiently.

On this basis, it is being recommended that the revised Local Validation Requirements be adopted for use through the development control process.

RESOLVED that the revised Bassetlaw District Council Local Planning Application Validation Requirements be adopted.

(b) Welbeck Colliery Regeneration

Members' approval was sought for officers to discuss potential redevelopment options relating to the site of the former Welbeck Colliery.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

At this stage initial discussions of options can be held by officers without any commitment on behalf of the Council. This approach will provide a useful opportunity to explore ways of dealing with the site and to bring forward a solution that is beneficial to all parties.

RESOLVED that:

1. The principle of the redevelopment of the Welbeck Colliery site for employment purposes be supported.
2. Officers be authorised to discuss the potential redevelopment options relating to the site of the former Welbeck Colliery and adjacent land with all interested parties. The aim of these discussions should be to seek a solution that secures the maximum economic, social and amenity benefit.
3. The outcome of the discussions be reported back to a future Cabinet Meeting.

13. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – FINANCE AND PROPERTY – COUNCILLOR J EVANS

(The following two items were wrongly listed under the Cabinet Member for Environment and Housing on the original list of Agenda Items.)

(a) Housing Revenue Account Self-Financing

Members were updated on the implications of 'Implementing Self-Financing for Council Housing' which was published by the Government in February 2011.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The Council is taking the appropriate advice from the Institute of Housing and Bassetlaw's Treasury Management advisors, and is also working with the District Auditor on this important topic.

This is not an optional matter as the Government has decided to implement the initiative. Members therefore need to be aware of this significant development which will impact on the Council in the next twelve months and shape the financing of the Housing Revenue Account for decades to come.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Council makes adequate preparations for self-financing the Housing Revenue Account.
2. Progress to date be noted and further updates be received as and when appropriate.

(b) Housing Capital Programme 2011/12 to 2015/16

Members were updated on the outcome of the bid for Decent Homes backlog funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Members' approval was also sought for a revised Housing Capital Programme for 2011/12 to 2015/16, which was appended to the report.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The report indicates that internal resources for capital investment are currently very limited. Further options will become available on the generation of additional capital receipts and Members have the opportunity to amend the proposed Capital Programme as they see fit. Other options are available through unsupported borrowing, although this would have a detrimental impact on the long-term sustainability of the Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA).

The Council and A1 Housing were initially set an important target to meet the Decent Homes standard for all stock by 2012/12. With the revised funding profile, this has effectively now been extended by the HCA to 2013/14. Whilst the supported borrowing and Major Repairs Allowance will meet the vast majority of the costs, the balance at the end of the programme (unknown at this stage) will have to be met from the new self-financing option and capital receipts.

RESOLVED that the revised Housing Capital Programme 2011/12 to 2015/16 of £33.999m, as shown in the appendix to the report, be approved and recommended to full Council on 29th June 2011.

(c) Corporate Procurement Policy and Strategy

Members' approval was sought for the updated Corporate Procurement Policy and Strategy, which was appended for Cabinet and Liaison Members and deposited in the Member's Room.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One – To retain the existing Procurement Strategy. The risk is that the Council will not address the emerging issues regarding sustainable procurement and delivering efficiencies and quality in all procurement activity.

Option Two – To accept and approve the updated Corporate Procurement Policy and Strategy.

RESOLVED that the updated Corporate Procurement Policy and Strategy be approved.

14. REPORTING MINUTES

(a) Council's Health and Safety Committee – 18th January 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council's Health and Safety Committee held on 18th January 2011 be received.

(b) I T and Access Sub-Committee – 17th February 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the I T and Access Sub-Committee held on 17th February 2011 be received.

(c) Bassetlaw Enterprise Board – 7th March 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Bassetlaw Enterprise Board held on 7th March 2011 be received.

15. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – COMMUNITY PROSPERITY - COUNCILLOR D R PRESSLEY

(a) Bassetlaw CCTV System Delivery Options (Key Decision No 290)

This item was taken under Agenda Item No 16 – Any Other Business which the Chairman considers to be Urgent, as a decision was needed to ensure that the surveillance monitoring continues.)

Members were updated on the management arrangements for the CCTV surveillance system in Bassetlaw.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Given the circumstances facing the Council, it is considered that the Council has no option but to take full responsibility for the delivery of CCTV systems within the District. The only alternative would have been for the system to cease operation from 31st May 2011.

Approval has already been given for the tendering exercise for the digital upgrade of the system.

RESOLVED that:

1. The arrangements in place for the Council to directly manage the monitoring of the CCTV system be approved.
2. Delegated authority for making all necessary arrangements for ensuring the ongoing operation of the Bassetlaw CCTV system is given to the Director of Community

Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community Engagement.

3. Thanks be recorded to Remploy for their professional and timely manner in continuing the surveillance monitoring.

16. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and after considering the public interest test as set out by the officer in the body of the report, Members agreed that the following items of business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 and, therefore, in accordance with Section 100A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting:

Agenda Item No 15(a) – Bassetlaw/Newark and Sherwood Revenues and Benefits Shared Business Plan - Paragraph 2

(The Chairman granted permission to those Elected Members present, who were not on Cabinet, to remain in the meeting.)

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

17. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – REVENUES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES – COUNCILLOR S MAY

- (a) Bassetlaw/Newark and Sherwood Revenues and Benefits Shared Business Plan (Key Decision No 287)

Members were updated on the proposals to enter into a shared services agreement with Newark and Sherwood District Council for the provision of Revenues and Benefits Services between the two authorities. The Business Case was appended for Cabinet and Liaison Members and deposited in the Members' Room.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The present proposals are discretionary and clearly Members can decide to adopt or reject the Business Plan proposals in their current format at this time, or to defer the decision in order that the shared services initiative process in this and potentially other areas of Council services can be further considered. Whilst this proposal and others can contribute to the savings required in future years and provide a basis for joint collaborative working, in this instance there are clearly significant issues, particularly around IT migration that need to be addressed which give rise to not insignificant upfront costs. As with any partnership, there are a range of issues not only to address but risks to consider. There is a potential for saving but only if all issues identified in the Business Plan can be dealt with successfully.

RESOLVED that the proposals to enter into a shared services agreement for the provision of a joint Revenues and Benefits service with Newark and Sherwood District Council be not pursued at this time.

Other Decisions

None.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

As there was no other business to be considered, the Chairman closed the meeting, after thanking officers and Cabinet Members for their input

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