

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: 27th February 2007

Time: 10.00 a.m. – 12.05 p.m.

Present: J K Walters (Chairman)

Councillors: S F Johnstone, V H Lucas, L W McGuire L J Oliver, D R Pegram, J A Powley and F H Yeulett.

Also in Attendance

Councillors: I Bates, P Downes, G Kenney, M Smith and J West

Apologies: Councillors J E Reynolds and J M Tuck

314. MINUTES 6th FEBRUARY 2007

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th February 2007 were approved as a correct record.

315. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Johnstone declared a personal interest in report 13 - Sackville House (Cambourne) Travel for Work Plan - as she had been approached to join the Board of the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership.

Councillor Pegram declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 11 - Consultation Response On Planning Application - Land Between Huntingdon Road And Histon Road Cambridge - as a member of the Anglian (Central) Regional Flood Defence Committee.

316. PETITIONS

a) Petition from Elton Church of England

A petition with 44 signatures has been received from parents at the above school expressing their concern that Sawtry Village College was not the named catchment secondary school for the primary school, as this was the preferred secondary school for many parents.

As the petition included less than 50 signatures, Cabinet noted that the points raised had been dealt with via a letter from the Education Officer (Admissions)

of which copies had been provided to Members of the Cabinet before the meeting.

b) Petition - request for a pedestrian/Cycle route on the Willingham to Rampton Road

A petition of 623 Signatures had been received (241 from Willingham residents representing 13% of the total population) all of whom supported adequate safety measures being implemented along the above stretch of road by means of a cycle / pedestrian route following 7 accidents in 6 years. The cause of the accidents was considered to be due to both to the increasing volume of vehicles using the road (including heavy goods vehicles) and the speed at which they travelled. Currently there was no separate provision for pedestrians/cyclists/horse riders and larger vehicles using the road, because of their size, transgressed onto the other side of the road.

At the invitation of the chairman, Helen Retallick the petition organiser spoke indicating that having used the Willingham to Rampton road as a driver, cyclist, pedestrian and horse-rider for over 10 years, she like others believed the road to be dangerous and that accidents were inevitable. In January she became one of the accident statistics, when her horse was in collision with a bus taking school children home from Cottenham Village College. She highlighted that as there was no provision for pedestrians or cyclists along the route and that as most children in Willingham attended the College, if they missed the bus they were expected to travel to school by whichever means necessary, including cycling or walking along this road.

It was highlighted that when the A14 was exceptionally busy or closed, the alternative route from Cambridge was via Histon, Cottenham, Rampton and Willingham thus causing excessive amounts of additional traffic "rat running" along what was a country road for those who wished to avoid using the A14 from Huntingdon/St Ives to Cambridge and vice versa. With Northstowe about to be built, local residents believed there would inevitably be an increase in the amount of traffic using the route, especially when there were problems on the A14. She also highlighted that the speed limit was 60mph, but there were sharp bends and blind corners, which she believed needed to be addressed or further accidents and fatalities would occur.

In answer to a question raised by a member, the spokesperson indicated that she had no preference between options for an alternative route being provided away from the road or by the side of the road, as long as any measures facilitated cyclists/pedestrians no longer having to travel on the road itself. She was able to confirm that there were no bridleway linkages that could be used as an alternative.

It was resolved:

To note that as there was no relevant officer's report included on the agenda, the officers would take the petition away and respond to the

lead petitioner directly in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services.

c) Petition of 62 signatures requesting that the Chairman of Hilton Parish Council should be able to speak to express their concerns at the environmental impact of the Highway's agency's current proposals for the upgrading of the A14 between Ellington and Fen Ditton.

The issues had been attached for information to the Cabinet report and therefore the request from the speaker Councillor Mrs Wright was that the County Council should look at how it could address the issues raised by Hilton Parish Council and other communities along the A14 corridor and press the Highways Agency to pay attention to the important concerns as set out in the further detail included in Appendix 1 to these minutes. (published on the Council website).

In reply, the Cabinet Lead Member for Transport and Delivery asked whether they were aware that details of their response would be included in the County Council's response. In reply, the Chairman said that he had seen the Cabinet papers some days in advance and was encouraged by the suggested response as set out in the officer's report.

d) Petition from Brampton Parish Council - requesting that their Chairman be allowed to speak in relation of A14 proposals

A petition of 61 signatures had been received requesting that the Chairman of Brampton Parish Council should be permitted to speak in relation to the A14 proposals. The Chairman, Mike Shellens spoke highlighting that as a result of the proposals, Brampton faced not only a tidal wave of traffic very close to it, but also a catastrophic increase in vehicles on local roads. Unless action was taken it was suggested that the multi-million pound cost of remedial action would fall on the County Council budget.

While accepting that the road would happen, residents had particular concerns regarding the impact on traffic flows in and around Brampton when the railway viaduct was removed and in respect of the railway roundabout for Brampton. This was highlighted from a quote in a statement by the Highways Agency document reading that "it is possible that traffic would move slower and there would be some delays". As this was the only access to a major employment centre, shopping centre and the station with current frequent tail-backs of over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, making this junction worse, would affect all those from Brampton, Buckden and the A14 Ellington corridor. It was suggested that as a result, extra delays on traffic leaving Huntingdon would further congest the ring road as well as having the knock on effect when the new A14 was blocked anywhere between Ellington and Fen Drayton. He indicated that the obvious alternative route for west and south bound traffic would become the old A14 and then Brampton. If access to the North was difficult, traffic would come through Brampton and turn north at Brampton Hut. The same logic also applied to traffic coming to/from St Ives if they did not wish to go East would be to come West.

The suggestion made was that consideration should be given to providing a link between the A14 and the A1198, one possible solution suggested being a half junction on the A1198 at Wood Green.

317. DECISIONS FOR COUNCIL

None.

CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

With the agreement of the Cabinet as there had been a number of petitions received in respect of the A14 Ellington To Fen Ditton Improvement report and as a number of local members had also expressed a wish to speak, the Chairman altered the agenda order to take the report as the next item on the agenda.

318. A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON IMPROVEMENT – RESPONSE TO FURTHER HIGHWAYS AGENCY CONSULTATION ELLINGTON TO FEN DRAYTON

Cabinet received a report on the further Public Consultation by the Highways Agency on the improvement of the A14 between Ellington and Fen Drayton as a result of an out of court settlement between them and the Offords' Action Group regarding inadequate initial consultation. The issue now for determination was the proposed off-line route between Ellington and Fen Drayton Junction, involving additional routing information as set out in the report. The County Council was therefore required to review whether in the light of this new information, the original decision to support the orange route should be amended.

In addition to the petitions already reported, Cabinet had also received representations from the following (the details are included at Appendix 1 to these minutes which are published on the website):

- Godmanchester Town Council who were in favour of the orange route.
- The local member for Buckden, Gransden and the Offords who provided comments supporting the brown route advocated by the A14 Action Group.

The local member for Brampton and Kimbolton who had requested to speak, commented that the route of the A1 to the east should follow the orange alignment but that the A1 and the A14 at Ellington should follow the brown route unless it could be demonstrated that another line produced less noise and air pollution for Brampton and that in respect of recommendation 4, that a non motorised user (NMU) crossing should be included for bridleway 19. He set out alternative proposals to widening the A1 along the western edge of Brampton, suggesting instead making the A14 section 6 lane and that the A14/A1 junction should be to the west of Brampton Hut. He also suggested that there should be a proposed link between the A14 and the A1198.

The local member for the Hemingfords and Fenstanton who had also requested

to speak referred to the need to upgrade to a dual carriageway the A428 from Caxton Common to the Black Cat roundabout, which was seen as essential for the long term prosperity of St Neots and the surrounding area. He also referred to the environmental impact of the proposals, highlighting the already poor air quality around Fenstanton and Huntingdon and the need for the County Council to be consulted by the Highways Agency on both the issues of dualling the A428 carriageway and in respect of proposed environmental remedial measures.

Cabinet members made the following comments:

- Expressing disappointment that the glossy consultation brochure provided to Cabinet members produced by the Highway Agency made no reference to the plans to take down the viaduct. Also disappointment from one member that the suggestion raised two years ago for a proposed additional junction between the A1 and the A14 had not been taken forward by the Highways Agency.
- Expressing serious concerns with regard to the environmental implications of the proposals, as well as the additional traffic problems highlighted by other speakers.
- The need to agree as a matter of urgency one route in order that it could go ahead as soon as possible to relieve the serious congestion and continued unacceptably high level of accidents on the A14.
- A request was made, which was agreed, to alter the wording on recommendation 3 to replace the word “adequate” to describe the environmental ameliorative measures provision required and replace it with the word “maximum”.

Cabinet in coming to their decision noted that:

- There was no support for any of the blue routes.
- There were likely to be major concerns about waste matters with the brown route.
- That there was general support for the orange route, but a concern about the impact on Brampton of the orange route to the west of the A1.
- Consultants for the Highways Agency having examined the alternative Brampton alignment had concluded that it was not practical, as it did not comply with technical requirements relating to necessary safety standards. The Agency also believed it could more than compensate for the noise difference with amelioration measures alongside the A1.

It was resolved to approve:

- i) That the County Council continues to fully support the Highways Agency's intention to improve the A14 and would urge the Agency to expedite its provision.
- ii) That with regard to the Further Consultation options for the length of the improvement from Ellington to Fen Drayton:

- Rejection of the blue variation 2 route on grounds of environmental disturbance, waste hazard and inadequate traffic capacity.
 - Rejection of the brown route on grounds of unknown environmental risk, and waste hazard risk and as it was also contrary to the County Council's adopted Waste Local Plan and emerging Minerals and Waste Development Documents.
 - Rejection of the blue route on environmental grounds because of proximity to Brampton, Godmanchester and Brampton Wood.
 - Whilst an improvement on the blue route, rejection of the blue route variation 1, on grounds of proximity to Godmanchester.
 - Support for the orange route subject to the alignment west of the A1 being designed to incur the minimum noise level in Brampton.
- iii) The need for the provision of the maximum possible environmental ameliorative measures for residents affected by the scheme.
- iv) The safeguarding and enhancement of Public Rights of Way (PROW) along and across the route. This should include provision for non-motorised users and appropriately located bridges.
- v) The need for full reimbursement by Government of any ongoing Council maintenance costs of de-trunked roads arising from the scheme.
- vi) Authorising the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive to make changes to the submission in the light of further information from the Highways Agency or requests from key partners.
- vii) That the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to agree with the District Councils and other key partners a joint statement of general support for the proposals.

319. CROYLANDS/LARKFIELD ELY

Cabinet received a report requesting agreement to declare the Croylands site as surplus, and to agree to its disposal and for the capital receipt to be reinvested to refurbish Larkfield Resource Centre, Ely to provide joint facilities.

While Cabinet supported the specific reasons in the report for ring-fencing the capital receipt and for it not to be returned to the single capital pot to be used

for corporate initiatives (the usual agreed practice), some Cabinet members were concerned by a perceived increase in such activity. Officers were therefore asked to review the capital receipts process to ensure it was still appropriate and to provide details of the number of ring-fenced receipts compared to those being returned to the single capital pot.

It was resolved:

- i) To declare the Croylands site as surplus, and to agree to its disposal and for the capital receipt in this particular case to be reinvested to refurbish Larkfield Resource Centre, Ely in order to provide joint facilities.
- ii) To agree to enter into a lease with the Mental Health Trust on terms to be agreed by the Director of Property and Asset Management.
- iii) That officers should review the County Council's capital receipts processes following concerns regarding the perceived increase in ringfencing capital receipts for specific projects.

320. OTHER PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

Cabinet received a report seeking decisions on the disposal of a number of land/properties.

Cabinet agreed with the reasons for disposing of the properties and land listed in recommendation 1 of the officer's report. However with regard to recommendation 2 in respect of the Enterprise Centre, Haggis Gap, Fulbourn, which referred to the sale at being at less than best consideration, having noted that there had been a number of improved offers, Cabinet considered that the County Council would now be receiving best value/best possible consideration in respect of the disposal of the centre. It was explained that this was as a result of Nene Housing Association having accepted the risk of obtaining planning permission for residential development and vacant possession. As a result, an agreed sale and a guaranteed receipt was being obtained 18 months earlier than would otherwise have been the case. Cabinet noted that disposal of the Centre was supported by both the parish council and the local member for Fulbourn.

It was resolved:

- 1. To declare surplus and dispose of land/properties at:
 - i) Willingham and Longstanton
 - ii) Chesterton Community College
 - iii) 131 Victoria Road, Cambridge and
 - iv) Ten houses used for staff recruitment purposes

2. To agree a sale of the Enterprise Centre, Haggis Gap, Fulbourn at best value to Nene Housing Association.

321. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES IN ST NEOTS – LOVE'S FARM HOUSING – PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION.

Cabinet received a report providing details on the results of the public consultation exercise held during September and October 2006. This had been undertaken as part of the statutory process to establish the likely response to the proposal to establish a primary school to serve the planned housing developments at Love's Farm, east of the railway line in St Neots.

Cabinet noted that while the two closest schools to the proposed new housing development currently had 90 surplus places between them, they would have insufficient capacity for the eventual new demand for places that would be generated from the new development. In addition, the youngest children would have the furthest to travel to school, given the relative distances between the Infant and Junior Schools and the planned development. All the schools consulted were generally supportive of the principle that a new school should be provided and as a result, officers sought approval to proceed with the publication of a statutory public notice.

One member requested that careful consideration should be given to ensuring safe access to the school, as the route to the school crossed a busy road and railway line.

It was resolved:

To confirm the Council's support for the publication of a statutory public notice detailing proposals to establish a 210-place Community Primary School to serve the planned housing developments at Love's Farm in St Neots.

322. GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME

Cabinet received a report informing it of the progress being made in relation to Cambridgeshire's Gender Equality Scheme which was required as part of new statutory requirements and was invited to comment on the draft Scheme attached to the report. Cabinet noted that good progress was being made to bring together all the requirements from various statutes into one easy to consult document.

As an example of the good progress being made, it was reported that the Women & Work Commission had listed the County Council as an exemplar employer for developing women into managerial roles and in addition, the County Council had received from Cambridgeshire Recruitment the best recruitment advert award for 2006/7 for the diversity recruitment campaign.

It was resolved to:

Approve the draft scheme and delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Equality and Diversity, Cllr Victor Lucas, the authority to approve the final Gender Equality Scheme prior to publication on 6th April 2007.

323. INTEGRATED HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT CENTRE

Cabinet received a progress report in respect of the development of a business case for an Integrated Highway Management Centre

One of the key ways of acquiring and managing information to ensure swift and efficient decision-making choices in respect of the transport network was through the use Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) technologies. The Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 had proposed bringing together the various independent systems operated by the Council into a single Integrated Highway Management Centre(IHMC). Cabinet noted that the different cost options/strategies for locating the IHMC were still being investigated. Approval was therefore sought to further develop the financial and operational options.

In answer to a question raised, it was confirmed that currently “Real Time” bus timetable information was confined to Cambridge City, but that it would be rolled out to other areas as part of the provision of the Guided Busway.

It was resolved:

- i) To note the progress made in relation to the development of a business case for an Integrated Highway Management Centre and
- ii) To support further development of a business case developing the financial and operational options for a possible Integrated Highway Management Centre

324. CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON PLANNING APPLICATION - LAND BETWEEN HUNTINGDON ROAD AND HISTON ROAD CAMBRIDGE

Cabinet received a report setting out the key issues arising from the consultation on the planning application for land between Huntingdon Road & Histon Road, Cambridge (known also as the NIAB Site)

The County Council was a statutory consultee in respect of planning applications and would be making representations to Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils regarding the proposed mixed-use development submitted by David Wilson Homes.

Cabinet members raised issues of concern in respect of the number of planning applications being brought to the Cabinet whereby developers were consistently failing to include required infrastructure provision as part of section 106 agreements, with particular reference being made to necessary additional education provision facilities, including secondary schools and children's centres.

In coming to their decision, Cabinet took into account points raised in submissions from:

- Councillor Jenkins who was concerned in respect of drainage/increased flood risk issues.
- Councillor White's comments that there was a case for the orbital route from Histon Road to the Huntingdon Road to go via the route of the existing footpath/farm road from Histon Road which joins up with Whitehouse lane at the Huntingdon road end.
- Concerns raised by a resident M.J. Rutter on the density of housing proposed. He did not believe that the existing infrastructure could cope with such a new development. (roads/schools/traffic impacts)
- Detailed comments tabled from the Cabinet member for Environment Waste and Business who was unable to attend the meeting on behalf of local residents set out as appendix 2 to these minutes published on the website.

It was resolved to:

- i) Approve the County Council's consultation response to the planning application for land between Huntingdon Road & Histon Road as set out in Appendix A to the officer's report.
- ii) Delegate to the Lead Member, Environment and Community Services in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, Environment and Community Services the authority to make any minor textual changes to the consultation response prior to submission taking into account the comments received at the Cabinet meeting especially in respect of concerns regarding potential drainage problems.

325. PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE DRAFT REVISION OF THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY (RSS) FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND

Cabinet received a report to enable it to consider the consultation from Government on the Proposed Changes to the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England. The Council supported the draft RSS for the East of England and for the most part the Government had agreed to the Plan as it affected Cambridgeshire. Other changes made by the Government were to be welcomed as they closely reflected the County Council's case presented at the Examination In Public (EiP). Key points included:

- Reinstatement of the Structure Plan's definition of the Cambridge Sub Region, including the four market towns outside of Cambridgeshire and
- Retention of the "sequential approach" for accommodating growth in the sub region [i.e. by focussing development first in Cambridge, then in turn urban extensions, Northstowe and market towns].

Nevertheless, the Government's Proposed Changes raised important concerns for the future of Cambridgeshire requiring strong objections to be made. The Draft RSS had set a challenging target of 68,100 new dwellings to be built for Cambridgeshire in the period up to 2021. Cabinet was informed that the Government now proposed to increase this by a further 7.8 % to 73,300 new dwellings. Concerns over deliverability generally were compounded by the need for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to now plan to exceed RSS housing levels to 2021. Targets were now to be treated as a "minimum" figure with no upper limit and no allowance permitted for windfall housing sites. It was also noted that LPAs were being required to plan to apply the same high growth rates up to 2031; even though growth levels for that period had not been determined or tested. Much of the additional growth identified in the Proposed Changes focussed on Cambridge.

Cabinet noted that there was no evidence that the extra 4,300 dwellings (29% above the draft RSS target for Cambridge City) could be delivered in the plan period. Cabinet considered that it was unrealistic to apply such untested levels of growth for the period beyond 2021 without first considering whether such levels of growth could be accommodated. There was also concern that while no review of the Green Belt was currently advocated, the Government was suggesting that a further review of the Cambridge Green Belt might be necessary as part of the forthcoming RSS review due to start later in the year. Similarly, references to Cambridge as a "Compact City" had been deleted and there were concerns regarding the dilution of the commitment to affordable housing.

The following issues were raised:

- The Cabinet member representing Willingham raised an issue brought to her attention by a parish councillor that there should be recognition in the text to the response to Chapter 10 RSS Policy WAT4 Flood Risk Management that Longstanton as well as Oakington was at risk of flooding. She also expressed strong opposition to any increase in the proposed size of Northstowe above 10,000 dwellings.
- The need to link to other infrastructure issues already discussed in respect of the A14 and the dualling of the A428.

It was resolved:

- To note the key points of the Proposed Changes to the RSS as set out in Appendix A and B to the officer's report.
- To approve the proposed consultation response to Government relating to the "Proposed Changes" to the RSS as set out in Appendix C to the officer's report.

- iii) To agree to the officers preparing an amendment regarding including reference to Longstanton also being at risk from flooding in the appropriate section of the response.

326. SACKVILLE HOUSE (CAMBOURNE) TRAVEL FOR WORK PLAN

Cabinet received a report seeking approval for the Sackville House (Cambourne) Travel for Work Plan.

Cabinet members commented/noted:

- Asking officers to look to increasing the use of information technology to reduce the need for members/officers to travel to venues for meetings e.g. through the use of video conferencing etc.
- That in answer to a question raised, there were more than 100 staff employed in Sackville House (the reference to a 100 being the number population referred to in the report as having been used for the travel survey results).

It was resolved:

To approve the Sackville House (Cambourne) Travel for Work Plan.

327. THE BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE PROJECT – APPROVING THE COUNTY COUNCIL’S STRATEGY FOR CHANGE PART 1

This report had been withdrawn as a revised updated version was to be presented to the recently agreed 30th March Cabinet meeting.

328. PROPOSED JOINT PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS – MAJOR GROWTH SITES AREAS

Cabinet received a report outlining details of the implications of the proposed new arrangements as provisionally accepted by the Minister for Communities and Local Government, for further joint working on the major development sites and in particular, the creation of:

- A member level Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee;
- Two officer level Growth Area Delivery Boards;
- Two joint development Control Committees;
- Revised joint working arrangements.

Cabinet noted that following the review of Cambridgeshire Horizons, officers from Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council and Horizons had developed proposals to address the concerns raised by the Minister which had now received her endorsement, subject to further work to clarify the necessary legal powers required to operate the joint arrangements. The results would therefore be the subject of a further report.

Cabinet noted that the essence of the joint working proposals would be the creation of a number of cross authority groups to drive the growth agenda forward through more efficient working practices and an increase in resource levels to support these. In the reply received on the initial proposals, the Minister had also indicated a willingness to consider a significant increase in revenue support for the strengthened delivery mechanism and development of a rolling fund to ensure the early provision of necessary infrastructure.

In answer to a question regarding local member involvement, it was reported that this would be achieved through the existing joint authority Member Reference Groups. It was noted that one had not been set up specifically to cover the Northstowe development, but that this was still under consideration.

It was resolved:

- i) To endorse the proposed new arrangements for planning of the major development sites; in particular, the creation of:
 - A member level Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee;
 - Two officer level Growth Area Delivery Boards;
 - Two joint development Control Committees;
 - The revised joint working arrangementsfor final approval by Full Council in May.
- ii) To delegate to the Lead Member for Environment and Community Services in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, Environment and Community Services the authority to revise and refine the proposals in consultation with Cambridgeshire Horizons and the local planning authorities for the relevant growth areas, before reporting the final arrangements to Cabinet in April and Full Council in May.

329. ADULT SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This report had been withdrawn as a revised updated version was to be presented to the 30th March new Cabinet meeting.

330. BUDGET MONITORING 2006/07

Cabinet received details of the latest Budget Monitoring report setting out details of:

- the revenue budget spend in departments,
- the Capital Programme spending and finance,
- Trading Units performance
- Payment and Debt Performance.

and the management action being taken to address any projected overspends to ensure that budgets were in balance by the end of the municipal year.

Cabinet noted that;

- There was a predicted £0.5m overspend at year end (excluding Self Managing institutions) representing only 0.18% of total turnover.
- Spending on services (excluding Self Managing institutions) was ahead of profile at the end of December by £5.8m and was primarily caused by pressures within Adult Support Services in the Office of Environment and Community Services for the reasons set out in the report. Details of the main variations were referred to as set out in the report.
- There would be an estimated total capital spend of £103.5m for 2006/07 and an outturn slippage of £9.1m when set against the revised budget. It was advocated that if a funding gap did occur at the financial year end, then Prudential Borrowing should be used to cover it with the full value of the borrowing being repaid upon the realisation of sufficient Capital Receipts within 2007/08. Officers considered that any potential revenue costs through the raising of Prudential Borrowing could be maintained through the debt repayment budget within 2007/08.
- The cumulative position for the prompt payment of invoices to the end of December continued to improve above target ('excellent' target banding had been set at 95%) at 96.9% (96.6% to November), with December performance reflecting the highest monthly figure to date at 98.9% (97.8% in November).
- The total amount of debt outstanding for more than 6 months had increased again at the end of December to £1.28m (£1.24m in November), against a target of £660k for 2006/07. Confidence remained that active management would resolve issues to reduce debt levels close to the cash target.
- Debt following secondary recovery action currently stood at 88%, which was slightly below the target performance level for the year (90% for 2006/07). The position for debt outstanding in the 4-6 month range has improved by £141k to £846k at the end of December. Overall, the medium term was forecasting an outturn position of £450k against the target level of £320k. Action was continuing to resolve the position but should Primary Care Trust (PCT) debts remain outstanding, then maturing debt, presently in the short term, would significantly affect the year-end position.
- Reserves were forecast to decrease by £3.9m (11.3%) during the current financial year.

Reference was made to the fact that the overspends in the detail of the report when added up were far greater than the headline figures, as the report did not detail all the compensatory savings that had been made. It was suggested that future reports should provide some reference to these savings in order to present a complete picture.

It was resolved:

To note the forecast outturn for the end of the year 2006-07, and the actions proposed and in hand to deliver financial balance.

331. TOP 30 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2006/07 AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER TO DECEMBER)

Cabinet received a report summarising performance on the Council's "Top 30" Key Performance Indicators for the third quarter 2006/07 (October to December 2006) and the latest performance in respect of the Local Public Service Agreement 2004-2007. Cabinet requested that:

- future reports should also provide figures against the progress on the LPSA targets.
- Officers look at the possibility of amending further within legal constraints/local schools agreement, the dates of school holidays in order to discourage unauthorised absences.
- The position of other authorities interpretation/measurement of the indicator BV 54 LPSA - Number of people aged 65+ should be included by means of a brief update report to Cabinet.

It was resolved to:

- i) Note current performance on the Council's Top 30 Key Performance Indicators for the third quarter 2006/07;
- ii) Note the progress towards the County Council's second Local Public Service Agreement.
- iii) Request that an update on progress should be provided against BV 54 LPSA - Number of people aged 65+ - to include details of the investigation carried out with other authorities on their interpretation/measurement of the indicator. *(Note this could be included in the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan report due to come forward to Cabinet on 30th March)*

332. DELEGATIONS FROM CABINET TO CABINET MEMBERS/OFFICERS

Cabinet received a report detailing the progress on delegations.

It was resolved:

To note the progress on delegations to individual Cabinet Members and/or to officers previously authorised by Cabinet to make decisions/take actions on its behalf.

333. CABINET DRAFT AGENDA PLAN 30TH MARCH AND 17TH APRIL 2007

Cabinet had been notified previously that there was a need to identify an additional Cabinet meeting in March to help deal with the very large agenda currently identified for the April meeting. It was confirmed that the Chairman had now agreed to holding an additional meeting on 30th March and that at least 5 reports would be going forward to this meeting.

It was resolved:

To note the agenda plans for the two meetings.

Chairman
30th March 2007