

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: 6th September 2005

Time: 10.00 a.m. – 10.52 a.m.

Present: J E Reynolds, (Chairman in the absence of Councillor Walters)

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

Apologies: Councillor J K Walters M W McGuire and J M Tuck

Also in Attendance: Councillors P J Downes J L Huppert A C Kent and S J E King

41. MINUTES 12th JULY 2005

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 12th July 2005 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

42. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None made.

43. ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

No issues.

44. GOODHOUSEKEEPING LOAN PROCURE TO PAY

Cabinet received a report seeking approval for a Good Housekeeping Loan for the Procure to Pay section to provide for a programme of development work within the section.

The loan was required as the ambitious programme to support improved payment processes during the next three years exceeded their development capacity. The loan would enable the section to support improved payment processes, which were expected to lead to interest savings through improved procurement processes, including the streamlining of the number of contractors on tendering lists.

It was clarified that the loan of £528,000 was to be spread over 4 years, but that the repayments would be made over 5 years.

There were concerns by some Members in respect of the risks associated with any shortfall on interest savings, which could potentially effect the repayment of the loan. While it was noted that the Head of Financial Strategy and Operations

would be monitoring the position each year to ensure the loan could be repaid, and that there was provision to re-phase the work and costs if the risk materialised, Cabinet requested that should problems arise, they should receive an exception report before decisions were made regarding such action.

It was resolved:

- i) To approve the good housekeeping loan of £528k spread over 4 years to the Procure to Pay section with repayments to be made over five years.
- ii) That should there be any problems with repayment of the sums as set out in the report, there should an exception report back to Cabinet.

45. HILLS ROAD RAILWAY BRIDGE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

This report informed Cabinet of four costed schemes for the possible alteration to Hills Road railway bridge to improve safety and the flow of traffic over the bridge, and to provide improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

It was reported that Hills Road Bridge, while an important crossing point, currently did not have cycle lanes provided on the bridge. This had sometimes resulted in conflicts between cyclists and vehicles, leading to traffic delays and had also contributed to a high number of cyclist injuries over the years. In addition, the supporting beams under the pedestrian footpaths had been identified as not having the required load bearing capacity, should heavy vehicles accidentally stray onto them from the road.

As forthcoming developments in the area would increase pedestrian and cycle traffic, options for consultation had been brought forward to improve facilities on the bridges for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and to also either protect or strengthen the bridge beams under the footpaths. Details of the four options for consultation were set out, ranging from a minimum option costing £180,000 up to option 4 costing £4.57 million.

As any finalised scheme might be a number of years in the future, Members asked the officers to look at the feasibility of bringing forward an interim scheme in the short term, due to concerns regarding the imminent increase in traffic flows and the subsequent further risk of cyclist injuries.

It was resolved:

- i) To support the need for proposed improvements to Hills Road Bridge to help improve both the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and the flow of traffic crossing the bridge.
- ii) To ask the officers to look at the feasibility of bringing forward an interim scheme in the short term, as set out in option A of the

officers' report, to address concerns regarding increased traffic flows and the risk of further cyclist injuries.

- iii) To note the proposed programme for undertaking a stakeholders' workshop followed by a public consultation in the autumn on four costed options to provide improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

46. CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S SECOND LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT (LPSA)

Following on from the successful conclusion of negotiations with the Government at the end of July 2005, Cabinet now received a report providing the details of Cambridgeshire's second Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA).

It was reported that:

- This would now trigger the release of a pump-priming grant of £1,320,983. (wrongly set out as £1,302,983 in the report)
- The final Agreement covered 12 topic areas, 40 performance indicators and 49 individual stretch targets.
- Topics included:
 - Environment and community: footways, street cleanliness, road safety, bus patronage and reducing anti-social behaviour.
 - Health and Older People: smoking prevalence, reducing illegal drug use, independence for older people and underage sales of alcohol.
 - Children and Young People: attainment in English and Maths and the achievement of young and vulnerable children.

Cabinet was informed that if all 49 stretch targets were achieved by 2007, the County and its partners would receive maximum reward grants of £12,647,087. This level of achievement was ambitious, but a proportion of reward grant would be received upon the achievement of at least 60% of individual stretch targets. Individual performance against targets would be reported to Cabinet in the quarterly key performance indicators report. There was not expected to be any additional resource implications to that currently reported under paragraph 4.1 a) and b) of the Risk Management implications of the officer's report.

A Member again highlighted the fact that due to the delays by the Government in not signing off the agreement, which was backdated to the previous October, 9 months had been lost in implementation time.

It was noted that the LPSA would help the County Council develop Local Area Agreement (LAA) objectives and targets and provide the County and local partners with the opportunity to build upon the partnership working developed as part of the LPSA. A local partnership agreement covering the management of the LPSA was currently being negotiated, and was expected to be finalised either at the end of September or early October.

It was resolved:

- i) To note the detail of the final LPSA document.
- ii) To note that the quarterly performance reports on key performance indicators reported to Cabinet would monitor performance against the targets and keep Members updated on progress.
- iii) To note that a further report would be received by Cabinet following finalisation of a local partnership agreement.

47. BUDGET MONITORING 2005/06

Cabinet received a report summarising the financial results for revenue, capital and trading units to the end of July 2005, including details of the forecast outturn results. Some of the results reflected the difficulties associated in operating under tight financial constraints as one of the lowest funded county councils in the country.

Cabinet noted that the main area of overspend was in Children's Social Care services. It was explained that this resulted from the council's statutory responsibility to provide support where vulnerable children were identified. It was also noted that more children with disabilities had needed support than had been expected.

Cabinet expressed concerns regarding those services currently predicted to have overspends at the year-end outturn, including the continued predicted deficit for trading units. Concerns were also highlighted in relation to the current performance on debt recovery, which was below expectations, despite previous assurances. In response, it was confirmed that part of this was due to the County Council's "Re-shaping for Excellence" structural change programme and an acceptance that "due diligence" had not received the attention required in the early months of the new financial year.

It was reported that management action was underway in all services to bring the budget back into balance. However, it remained sensible to continue to report the overspend until the action had been successful. Specific plans for trading units were to be submitted during September, which would require the budgets to be balanced on an on-going basis.

It was resolved:

- i) To note the forecast outturn for the end of the year 2005-06.
- ii) To note that recovery plans would be finalised in September, both financial and operational, to remedy the

current position on those trading units still operating at a loss.

- iii) That action plans should be pursued in order to ensure all predicted outturn over-spends were addressed by the year-end.
- iv) That appropriate action should be taken to reduce the amount of debt outstanding for more than six months.

48. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR 2005/06

Cabinet received a report summarising the performance on the Council's "Top 30" key performance Indicators for the first quarter 2005/06, introducing the Local Public Service Agreement 2004/07 and providing an overview of the importance of the new Comprehensive performance Assessment (CPA) methodology.

As an update Cabinet was asked to note the following amendments to the report since publication of the agenda:

Para 3.7 Performance for BV 56 (items of care equipment delivered to users within 7 days) was actually better than stated with quarter 1's performance being provisionally 85.8%, with figures from Sensory Services still to be received. This change resulted in performance having already exceeded the 2005/06 target of 85%.

Appendix1 In relation to the above point, BV56's 1st quarter performance
Page 7 should be stated at 85.8% and on target.

Appendix 1 BV 99a (road casualties) performance should be shown as
improving not declining. This was because the 2004/05 figure
shown actually related to the calendar year 2003 as stipulated in
the official definition. Comparing quarter 1's result of 497 to the
2004 figure of 527 showed that performance had improved.

Para 3.1 To reflect the point immediately above, this should now read: "12
PIs have improved" and "3 PIs have worsened".

Appendix 2 Topic 1: BV 187 the definition should read: "Percentage of the
category 1, 1a and 2 footway network where structural
maintenance should be considered."

It was also reported that Appendix 1 BVPI 163 - "Adoptions from Local Authority care" was shown as being off target in the officers' report. It was clarified that the performance was only marginally off target at this stage of the

year. It was currently within acceptable tolerances and was not considered a significant risk. The figure reported was cumulative and would improve month on month as the year went on.

The lead Member for Learning congratulated teachers, parents and pupils for the continued improvement in the Education Best Value Performance indicators (PIs) Key Stage 2 English - pupils achieving level 4 or above (PI 41), Key Stage 2 Maths - the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above (BV PI 40) and the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grade A to C (PI 38).

Disappointment was expressed with the performance of the 1st quarter results for BV 54 "Number of Older People helped to live at home per 1000 population".

Additional information was requested in respect of the following points, with the information to be sent to Cabinet after the meeting:

- When would the results of the Child Protection Register Audit, mentioned in paragraph 3.3, be available?
- The changes made to the reporting arrangements regarding the number of violent offences against the person in Cambridgeshire (local performance Indicator)

It was resolved:

- i) To note current performance on the Council's "Top 30" Key Performance Indicators for the first quarter 2005/06 as revised at the meeting;
- ii) To note progress towards the second Local Public Service Agreement and the target areas;
- iii) To note the significance of performance management to the County Council's future CPA ratings

49. DELEGATIONS FROM CABINET TO CABINET MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Cabinet received a progress report on the actions taken/still outstanding in respect of matters delegated to individual Cabinet members or to officers acting on behalf of the Cabinet.

It was resolved:

- i) To note the progress on delegations to individual Cabinet Members and/or to officers previously authorised by Cabinet to make decisions/take actions on behalf of the Cabinet as set out in the officers' report.

- ii) To note the oral update in respect of the action required in item 9 that the finalised Corporate Procurement Strategy had now been agreed and signed off by the appropriate Cabinet portfolio holder.

50. CABINET DRAFT AGENDA 27th SEPTEMBER 2005

It was resolved to note the Cabinet Draft Agenda Plan for 27th September 2005 with the following amendments:

- A non key decision report on “Supplementary Planning Consultation Document on the Location and Design of Major Waste Management Facilities”
- Non Key Decision Northstowe Planning application
- Additionally Agenda Item 6 “Highways Services Contract – Approval of Tender List will be a Part 11 confidential report as it will contain sensitive information in relation to individual companies.

Chairman
27th September 2005