

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 5th March 2002

Time: 10.00 – 11.10

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor J K Walters (Chairman)

Councillors S F Johnstone, V Lucas, A K Melton,
S B Normington, L Oliver, D R Pegram, J A Powley
J E Reynolds and R Wilkinson

Also in Attendance: Councillors M Ballard, S Brinton, M Chapple, J A P Eddy,
A Kent, M Leeke and R Martlew

118. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th February were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

119. PETITION

The Cabinet received a petition from representatives of the Patacake Day Nursery, which related to the future use of the site of the former Sedley School. In accordance with the Council's petition's procedure, as this item did not relate to an item on the agenda, it stood referred to the Director of Resources who would discuss the matter with the Leader of the Council and respond to the petitioners.

120. CORPORATE PLAN 2002-06 AND POLICY FRAMEWORK 2002-03

The Cabinet considered Prospects 2002– 6 document, which comprised the Council's Corporate Plan and the Policy Framework Plan Statements.

The Corporate Plan described the Council's immediate and longer-term priorities, the standards of performance it aimed to achieve and the three-year financial plans. It had been produced following extensive consultation aimed at promoting debate and discussion and included strategic priorities, which reflected research into local public opinion. The document contained information on:

- A vision for quality of life in Cambridgeshire.
- The Council's core values – **P**artnership, **A**ccountability, **V**alue for money and **E**quity.
- Details of challenges and changes ahead and plans to manage the agenda of change.
- The financial base and the Government's new ideas for Council funding.

- Medium term service priorities, proposed use of resources available and plans for investing for the future.
- Improving services – reviewing, rewarding and measuring performance.

The Local Government Act 2000 stipulated a number of statutory policies and plans which collectively formed the 'Policy Framework', which set the context within which the Leader of the Council and Cabinet would take all decisions. The second part of the Prospects document comprised a Policy Framework Statements in relation to each of these documents, which distilled the key elements in an attempt to capture an overview of the strategies and plans that were at the heart of the Council's corporate policy.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse Prospects 2002-06 and **RECOMMEND** it to Council for approval.

121. COMMUNITY CARE PLAN

It was noted that consideration of this item would be deferred till the next meeting.

122. SUPPORTING PEOPLE STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered the draft Supporting People Strategy which set out how the Council and its partners would respond to the new Government Programme that covered the provision of supported housing and support to vulnerable people in their own homes, which was due to be introduced across the country from April 2003.

A draft Strategy had been produced by a Joint Member Group involving representatives of all relevant commissioning partners – the County Council, District Councils and the Probation Service. It set out how the vision of prevention, early intervention and promoting independence would be achieved. Key elements related to priorities for change designed to:

- Improve outcomes for users and carers.
- Promote equity, consistency and quality across the County.
- Better co-ordinate housing related support services and social care services.

The Cabinet agreed:

To approve the Supporting People Strategy and endorse it as a basis for further discussions with partner agencies.

123. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2002-05

The Cabinet considered the draft Children and Young People's Strategic Plan 2002-05 which aimed to ensure that all providers of services to these client groups focussed their activity on making a positive difference to the lives of vulnerable young children and families through well co-ordinated multi-agency planning and provided services that improved the health and well-being of these children.

It was noted that the key inter-agency objectives identified in the Plan related to:

- Promoting health and welfare and provision of safe and effective care.
- Providing support to vulnerable children and their families to prevent family breakdown.
- Promoting better life chances for vulnerable children through co-ordinated and integrated action.
- Ensuring access and enhancing inclusion.
- Involving users in planning services.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse the Children and Young People's Strategic Plan 2002-05 and **RECOMMEND** it to Council for approval.

124. YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN

The Cabinet considered the draft Youth Justice Plan which set out how the Youth Justice Service would prevent offending by children and young people. This included tackling offending behaviour and the risk factors associated with it.

It was noted that the Plan detailed how national performance measures and targets would be addressed. The key objectives reflected in it related to:

- The swift administration of justice so that every young person breaking the law has the matter resolved without delay.
- Confronting young offenders with the consequences of their offending.
- Interventions which tackle the particular factors that put a young person at risk of offending.
- Punishment proportionate to the seriousness of the crime.
- Reinforcing the responsibility of parents.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse the Youth Justice Plan and **RECOMMEND** it to Council for approval.

125. COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGIES

The Cabinet considered the draft Corporate Community Safety Strategy and individual district focussed Community Safety Strategies for the period 2002-05.

It was noted that the County Council has a statutory responsibility to address crime and disorder in partnership with district councils and to ensure that the reduction of crime and disorder was an intrinsic part of all its services. Community Safety Partnerships had been established for each district to prepare audits of crime and disorder, consult on the findings and publish a three-year strategy to address the key community safety issues. These strategies contained information on the key priorities for action, how they would be tackled, performance targets and proposed arrangements for monitoring and review. The Council had also prepared a Corporate Community Safety Strategy, which sets out the Council's commitment to reducing crime and disorder.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse the Local and Corporate Community Safety Strategies and **RECOMMEND** them to Council for approval.

126. CARE AND EDUCATION PLAN

The Cabinet considered the proposed Care and Education Implementation Plan 2002-03, which set out how early years education, and childcare places will be secured and maintained.

The Care and Education Plan for the period 2001-04 had already been approved by the Department of Education and Skills, but the Government required an annual submission of an implementation plan which set out the detailed activities, targets and resources required to contribute to the achievement of its aims and objectives. The allocation of certain resources, including the annual Childcare Grant was subject to annual approval of the Plan.

Key policy areas identified in the Plan included:

- Expanding the availability of free part time early education places for 3 year olds and childcare, including out of school childcare.
- Closing the gap in the availability of childcare between disadvantaged areas and others.
- To deliver coherent training, advice and information services that build capacity and strengthen the quality, choice and diversity of provision locally.

The Cabinet agreed:

- (i) To endorse the Care and Education Implementation Plan and **RECOMMEND** it to Council for approval, following which it be

submitted to the Department for Education and Skills with a financial statement amended to incorporate the additional resources identified.

- (ii) That the Director of Education, Libraries and Heritage be asked to prepare a covering letter setting out the County Council's commitment to care and education developments, highlighting planned activity, but setting out constraints on decision-making for the coming year which made it impossible to offer funding guarantees.
- (iii) That the Leader of the Council be invited to write to the Secretary of state setting this dilemma in the wider context of funding in Cambridgeshire and seeking her support for the Council's efforts to contribute to this national priority within the resources available.

127. CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEARNING PLAN

The Cabinet considered the draft Cambridgeshire Learning Plan, which defines the lifelong learning priorities for the County and brought together the principle action plans of all learning providers.

The aim of the Cambridgeshire Learning Partnership was to create a lifelong learning culture that would underpin personal achievement and growth, social and economic well-being, the development of skills and knowledge for all and a world class economy in the Cambridgeshire Sub Region. The Cambridgeshire Learning Plan identified priority areas where action would be taken to build and sustain a lifelong learning culture. Key policy areas included:

- Access to learning.
- Basic skills.
- Young people's participation.
- Information, advice and guidance.
- Skills for the future and workforce development.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse the Cambridgeshire Learning Plan and **RECOMMEND** it to Council for approval.

128. ADULT LEARNING PLAN

The Cabinet considered the draft Adult Learning Plan which was designed to secure funding and resources from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

It was noted that funding for Adult Education was previously contained within the Standard Spending Assessment but had recently become the responsibility of the LSC. The Plan provided a means of explaining to the LSC the context within which the County Council worked. The LSC had

guaranteed that Cambridgeshire would receive a comparable sum to that which the Local Education Authority spent on its Adult Education programme in 1999 – 2000 subject to the submission of a suitable Plan.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse the Adult Learning Plan and **RECOMMEND** it to Council for approval.

129. CULTURE STRATEGY

The Cabinet considered the Cultural Strategy for Cambridgeshire, which had been prepared jointly with district Councils. It aimed to bring together all the agencies, statutory and voluntary, that could play a role in the development of cultural opportunities and to emphasise the role that culture had in assisting those agencies to achieve their own aims.

It was noted that the underlying aim of the Plan was to create a county where culture was recognised as a central part of individual and social life, where people lead rich, diverse and fulfilling lives, with a strong sense of community and a healthy lifestyle, making wide use of good quality, accessible cultural services and facilities.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse the Culture Strategy and **RECOMMEND** it to Council for approval.

130. PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN NORTH WISBECH

The Cabinet considered proposed changes to primary educational provision in North Wisbech involving the closure of St Augustine's Church of England Controlled Infant and Gordon Fendick Junior Schools in Wisbech and the opening of a new all through Church of England Controlled primary school on the site of the existing schools.

It was noted that an extensive consultation exercise had taken place and that the proposals were supported by the governing bodies of both schools.

The Cabinet agreed to approve:

- (i) The proposal to amalgamate St Augustine's Infant and Gordon Fendick Junior Schools, Wisbech with effect from 1st September 2003.
- (ii) The proposal that the Church of England Diocese of East Anglia be asked to act as promoter in respect of the establishment of a new Church of England Controlled primary School with effect from 1st September 2003 to operate in place of the existing two schools.

- (iii) The preparation of complimentary public notices, one from the Authority proposing the closure of St Augustine's Infant and Gordon Fendick Junior Schools, Wisbech with effect from 31st August 2003, the other from the Church of England Diocese of East Anglia proposing the establishment of a new Church of England Controlled primary School with effect from 1st September 2003, for publication at the end of March 2003.

131. A142 BLOCK FEN JUNCTION

The Cabinet considered plans to secure a roundabout on the A142 that would overcome concerns about speeding traffic and road safety.

It was noted that a large area of land off Block Fen Drove, Mepal had been allocated for the future supply of aggregates to meet the needs of the construction industry. Three mineral companies had submitted separate planning applications for mineral developments, all of which had one point of access onto the A142. In order to address concerns about the need for highway improvements discussions had taken place with the developers that had resulted in them agreeing to share the cost of a new roundabout subject to it being provided in a timescale that did not hinder the proposed mineral development.

The Cabinet agreed to:

- (i) Adopt provision of a roundabout at the A142/Block Fen Drove junction as a County Council scheme.
- (ii) Authorise the scheme to be progressed to implementation subject to a legal agreement with Cambridgeshire Aggregates, Lafarge and Hanson Aggregates that secures the full cost of the scheme less a £20,000 contribution by the County Council.

132. CAMBRIDGE HIGHWAYS AGENCY AGREEMENT

The Cabinet considered proposals to introduce a revised Highways Agency Agreement, which aimed to encourage greater clarity of ownership, particularly in responding to the public, through a clear statement of responsibility and through changing the payment mechanism.

The Cabinet agreed to:

Approve the introduction of a revised Agency Agreement from 1st April 2002 for a period of three years.

133. PLANNING GREEN PAPER

The Cabinet considered a proposed response to the Planning Green Paper and associated documents that had been prepared in consultation with the Strategic Planning SDG.

The Cabinet agreed:

That the Lead Member for Strategic Planning be authorised to finalise the response following further consultation with other Cabinet Members.

134. CABINET OUTLINE AGENDA

The Cabinet noted the outline agenda for the meeting scheduled to take place on 9th April 2002.

Chairman