

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 13th February 2002

Time: 10.00 – 10.45

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, and R Wilkinson

Also in Attendance

Councillor M L Leeke

Apologies: Councillor J E Reynolds

110. MINUTES – 29TH JANUARY 2002

The Cabinet agreed:

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 29th January 2002 as a correct record and that they be duly signed by the Chairman.

111. REFERRAL FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Cabinet noted that there had been no items referred back from Scrutiny Committees.

112. ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Cabinet considered the proposed new Cambridgeshire County Council Environment Strategy and Action Plan that would replace Environment 2000: A Strategy for Action, produced in November 1997.

The Council's role in relation to the environment was wide-ranging, including:

- Direct environmental impacts.
- Indirect impacts through policies and programmes across all services.
- Provision of specific environmental services.
- Community leadership role.

The Strategy had taken account of the changing policy and organisational context and reflected the findings of the Best Value Review of the Environment Programme that had concluded that there was a need for there to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) actions and targets. Key features of the new Strategy were:

- Separation of the strategic objectives from the Action Plan and inclusion of outcome indicators and targets.
- Detailed Action Plan with responsibilities and timescales for each task.
- Emphasis on new actions which supplement those in other actions or which are part of the ongoing day to day work of the Council.
- A simplified structure with very concise.
- A strong focus on climate change.

Cabinet noted a number of schemes that had been designed to take account of environmental initiatives, including the Cromwell Park School in Huntingdon. It was suggested that in the light of the ground breaking initiatives being adopted, when the school opens these should be wide publicity focussed on the national media.

In discussing the Strategy the need for Cabinet to lead by example was stressed. This included minimising the amount of paper distributed, use of recycled paper and saving energy in meetings. It was confirmed that every effort would be made to minimise the circulation of the numerous Plans and Strategies to be considered at the next Cabinet meeting.

The Cabinet agreed:

To approve the proposed Environment Strategy and Action Plan.

113. GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER AGENCIES

(a) Social Services

The Cabinet considered the proposed allocation of the 2002/03 Social Services budget for grants to voluntary organisations, which totalled £837,752.

The Vulnerable Adults and Children in Need Service Development Groups (SDGs) had considered applications and had assessed them against the criteria agreed by Cabinet in June 2001. As in previous years it was proposed to hold a small Emergency and rescue Fund, which would be used to assist any organisation, which found itself in difficulty during the year. A Training Fund would also be held to assist organisations with the costs of training their staff and volunteers.

The Cabinet agreed:

To approve the allocation of grant aid as set out in Appendix 1 to the signed copy of the minutes.

(b) Community and Economic Development

The Cabinet considered the proposed allocation of the 2002/03 Community and Economic Development budget for grants to voluntary organisations, which totalled £506,972. This included resources primarily in support of the SRB programmes in Wisbech and Oxmoor, Health for Cambridgeshire and other community programmes.

The Community and Economic Development SDG had considered applications and had assessed them against the agreed eligibility criteria.

The Cabinet agreed:

To approve the allocation of grant aid as set out in Appendix 2 to the signed copy of the minutes.

(c) Community Education

The Cabinet considered the proposed allocation of the 2002/03 Community Education budget for grants to voluntary organisations, which totalled £170,210.

The Lifelong Learning SDG had considered the applications and had assessed them against the agreed eligibility criteria. It was asked that in future years information presented to Cabinet include reference to the geographical area, as the Social Services grant information had done.

The Cabinet agreed:

To approve the allocation of grant aid as set out in Appendix 3 to the signed copy of the minutes.

114. PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN HUNTINGDON

The Cabinet considered proposed changes to the provision of primary education in Huntingdon, involving the proposed closure of the Thongsley Infants and Junior Schools with effect from 31st August 2002 and the opening of a new all-through primary school on the site of the existing schools.

The Cabinet agreed:

To approve the publication of the statutory public notice proposing the closure of Thongsley Infants and Junior Schools in Huntingdon, with effect from 31 August 2002.

115. CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONTACT CENTRE ACCOMMODATION

The Cabinet considered the acquisition of premises to accommodate the proposed Cambridgeshire Contact Centre.

Following Cabinet approval for the establishment of a Contact Centre and the associated procurement process, an extensive search of all available property had been undertaken. The Senior Management Team had evaluated the options against an agreed set of criteria and had identified a preferred site at the Compass Point Business Centre in St Ives.

It was stressed that as part of the proposed development a Green Travel Plan should be drawn up and that the premises should aim towards leading edge and best practice in terms of environmental issues.

The Cabinet agreed:

That, subject to the County Council agreeing to include provision for the scheme in the 2002-03 capital and revenue budgets, approval be given to the acquisition of the property at Compass Point, St Ives, for the purpose of establishing in the Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre. This is to be achieved in accordance with the indicative costings set out in the Director's report and subject to final detailed terms being negotiated and agreed by the Assistant Director (Property and Procurement).

116. HILTON WEIGHT LIMIT

The Cabinet considered a request from the Huntingdon Area Joint Committee to review the policy and establish criteria for the making of Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) bans.

The former Environment and Transport Committee approved the current policy for controlling HCVs in October 1998 following an assessment of the effects of HCVs along the A14 corridor. In the light of the agreed policy a 7.5 tonne weight limit along the B1040 through Hilton was advertised, but as a result of opposition from operators and support from the local community, this had been referred to a Public Inquiry in March 2000. The Inspector determined that a complete prohibition was not justified, but recommended a night time ban. The agreed policy had been revised in October 2000, to take account of the issues raised at the Inquiry.

In April 2001, a further review of the Policy was undertaken following a requested from Councillor Bates that the night time ban be extended to a 24 hour ban. This option had been considered in the light of a full report on usage of the B1040, which concluded that despite the understandable concerns of the residents, there had been no significant change in circumstances to warrant any change. Despite this the Huntingdon Area Joint Committee had asked the County Council to review its policy.

The Cabinet agreed:

To endorse the existing policy for the making of HCV bans and to take no further action in pursuing an extension of the existing HCV night time ban in Hilton and to advise the Hunts Area Joint Committee accordingly.

117. CABINET OUTLINE AGENDA – 5TH MARCH 2002

The Cabinet noted:

The outline agenda for its meeting on 5th March 2002.

Chairman