

**MINUTES OF: THE CABINET**

**Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

**PRESENT: Councillor Ruddick (in the Chair)  
Councillors Challinor, Driver, Essex, Graham and Tickner**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Wilkins, Chief Executive  
George Graham, Executive Director of Resources  
Phil Seddon, Head of Financial Services  
Carole Todd, Head of Street Scene and Liveability  
Bill Lawley, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager  
Heather Moore, Committee and Member Services Manager  
Philip Mepham, Interim Environmental Health Manager  
Andrea Guthrie, Technical Officer Healthy Workplace**

**ALSO PRESENT: Councillors A. Barnes, Lamb, Robertson and Sandiford  
2 Members of the Public  
2 Representatives from the Press**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence to record.

**2. MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2007 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**3. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

The Leader of the Council reported that since the last meeting of the Cabinet three decisions had been taken under Rule 16 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules as detailed below:

1. The fees schedule set under the Gambling Act were approved
2. A Grampian condition was included in Application 2005/617 relating to New Hall Hey, Rawtenstall.
3. Bacup Town Centre was nominated as the Council's preferred location for the Pennine Lancashire Towns Squared Project

The Leader of the Council reported that full details of the decisions were available on the Council's website and would be included in a report to the next meeting of Full Council.

#### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made.

#### **5. ALLOCATION AND DEFINITION OF PORTFOLIOS**

The Leader of the Council presented his proposals in relation to the allocation and definition of Cabinet Portfolios as detailed below.

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>
Councillor D Ruddick	Leader
Councillor W Challinor	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Regenerating and Promoting Rossendale
Councillor J Driver	Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale
Councillor B Essex	Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council
Councillor J Graham	Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing
Councillor A Tickner	Portfolio Holder for Quality Services to Customers

#### **Decision Made:**

That the proposals of the Leader in relation to the allocation and definitions of portfolios be noted.

#### **Reason for Decision:**

The proposed allocation of portfolios ensures that the Cabinet is able to give the organisation clear leadership on the delivery of the corporate priorities.

#### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

#### **6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Two questions were raised during Public Question Time as summarised below.

In response to a question relating to refuse collection arrangements, the Leader of the Council reported that there were no plans for weekly collections. He highlighted that the current system had been in place for a number of years and was working well in Rossendale.

In response to a question about the timing of traffic lights on St Mary's Way, Rawtenstall, the Leader of the Council reported that he would raise this matter at the next Transport and Highways Group of the Local Strategic Partnership.

## **7. REFUSE AND RECYCLING POLICY**

The Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale presented the report of the Head of Street Scene and Liveability which outlined proposals to develop new policies and procedures for refuse and recycling services in Rossendale.

The Portfolio Holder reported on proposals relating to side waste and she highlighted that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs were recommending the use of enforcement to ensure that side waste was not left out for collection.

In response to a question from Councillor A Barnes about the outturn figure in the report, the Head of Street Scene and Liveability agreed that the figure within the Corporate Plan would be amended to reflect the current position.

### **Decision Made:**

1. That the policies be approved in principle and responsibility for changes be delegated to the Head of Street Scene and Liveability in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale.
2. That a Working Group of Elected Members (political composition 2:1) and Officers be established to develop a communications plan for implementation and an evaluation mechanism for future reporting.

### **Reason for Decision:**

The Council needs to ensure that it can meet statutory targets for recycling and waste minimisation in accordance with agreements with Lancashire County Council and the Government Waste Strategy.

### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

## **8. A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ACHIEVING VALUE FOR MONEY IN SERVICE DELIVERY**

The Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council presented the report of the Executive Director of Resources which outlined proposals for the adoption of a strategic approach to the delivery of value for money in service delivery.

The Portfolio Holder outlined the key features of the approach including taking steps to improve awareness across the organisation, the use of business process transformation techniques to fundamentally reshape the way we do business, a

more structured approach to benchmarking and learning from the best and a proactive approach to collaboration in order to both improve services and deliver cost efficiency.

**Decision Made:**

That the Strategy be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Council needs to demonstrate and deliver upon its commitment to value for money in service delivery across the whole organisation rather than solely within individual services and the Strategy provides a mechanism for achieving this.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**9. OPEN SPACES STRATEGY**

The Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale presented the report of the Head of Street Scene and Liveability which outlined the draft Open Spaces Strategy together with the key findings, priorities and future directions.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Strategy would aim to ensure that all open spaces met the needs of the community and the action plan detailed within the Strategy would be further developed at neighbourhood level in consultation with members and residents.

The Portfolio Holder referred to some of the key findings within particular areas of the Borough.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the draft Open Spaces Strategy be approved as a way forward for improving open space provision with the Borough.
2. That Officers be requested to produce a delivery plan in line with programme management techniques.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Strategy will provide a structured approach to providing good quality open spaces throughout the Borough based on need and priorities.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**10. THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN (INCORPORATING THE BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN)**

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Chief Executive which outlined the Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan.

The Leader of the Council reported on proposals to adopt a new structure to clearly demonstrate to all of the Council's stakeholders, the areas in which it intends to direct its time, effort and resources to achieve the Council's priorities.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee reported that the Head of Policy and Performance had attended the last meeting of the Committee outlining the Corporate Plan. Members of the Committee agreed that the Plan should be circulated to all Members and it was noted that no further comments had been submitted to the Head of Service.

In response to a request for a summary document to be made available, the Chief Executive agreed that this would be undertaken.

**Decision Made:**

That the proposed format and structure of the Council's Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan be agreed.

That the Council's Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan be submitted to the Full Council for approval.

**Reason for Decision:**

The new structure will enable the Council to clearly manage and monitor the performance it is making in achieving its priorities.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**11. SMOKEFREE ENFORCEMENT PROTOCOL**

The Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale presented the report of the Head of Street Scene and Liveability which outlined the proposed enforcement protocol in relation to requirements under the Health Act 2006 on Smokefree indoor environments.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the protocol would assist individuals and organisations to understand their responsibilities under the legislation and to ensure that a consistent enforcement approach was adopted.

In response to a suggestion from a Member regarding whether a survey could be undertaken to establish if there had been an increase in cigarette end litter, the Head of Street Scene and Liveability agreed to take this forward.

**Decision Made:**

That the Enforcement Protocol be adopted.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Protocol sets out a consistent approach by which the Smokefree Legislation will be enforced in Rossendale.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**12. 2006/07 FINANCIAL OUTTURN**

The Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council presented the report of the Head of Financial Services which provided an update on the General Fund outturn for 2006/07, the Capital Programme and Treasury matters.

The Portfolio Holder reported the recommendations of the Capital Steering Group relating to additional capital resources either as part of strategic measures to maximise revenue resources or to meet spending needs identified since the Capital Starts Programme was set.

The Portfolio Holder further outlined the revenue position which anticipated a full year favourable variance of £171k.

The Portfolio Holder reported on implications for the 2007/08 Revenue Budget including concessionary travel volume increases.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the final revenue adjustments be agreed, creating an in year surplus of £171k.
3. That the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2006/07 as set out in 4.5.4 of the report and Appendix 6 be agreed.
4. That Full Council be recommended to approve the capital expenditure requests as outlined in 4.1.7 of the report.
5. That Full Council be recommended to approve the movement in reserves (i.e. General Reserve, Housing Revenue Account, Revenue Volatility Reserve,

Change Management Reserve and Economic Regeneration Reserve) as outlined in 4.4 of the report.

6. That Full Council be recommended to approve the Reserves Policy Statement, set out in the Annual Treasury Report.
7. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Financial Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council to make further amendments, that are in the best interests of the Council, to the various reserves prior to final approval by the Accounts Committee.

**Reason for Decision:**

The decisions ensure that that there is effective and strong financial management of the Council's resources to enable the provision of value for money services.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**13. NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT**

The Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale presented the report of the Head of Street Scene and Liveability which outlined a proposed approach to Neighbourhood Management in Rossendale.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the approach would strengthen the Community Leadership role of the Council and focus on improving the quality of services to the community in developing a more local, integrated approach to delivery in key service areas.

**Decision Made:**

That the proposals for the development of a Neighbourhood Management approach to service delivery be noted and that after a period of consultation a detailed implementation report be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration.

**Reason for Decision:**

The proposals encourage neighbourhood engagement and set out a model for the further development of locally based, integrated and responsive services.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

## 14. STRENGTHENING AREA FORA

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing presented the report of the Head of Planning, Legal and Democratic Services which outlined proposals to strengthen the role of Area Fora to bring local decision making closer to communities.

The Portfolio Holder reported on proposals to re-brand Area Fora to Neighbourhood Fora which would provide closer links to the Neighbourhood Plans which were being developed.

The meeting discussed membership of the Fora and Working Groups and the principle of appointing community representatives. It was noted that not all community groups were members of the Community Network and therefore selection onto the Fora may prove difficult.

The Committee and Member Services Manager informed the meeting that she was currently developing guidance on how to submit grant applications and that in order to attract applications the process should be simple and accountable.

### **Decision Made:**

That Area Fora be re-branded as Neighbourhood Fora.

That the allocation of budget for each Neighbourhood Fora be agreed as set out below.

Bacup	£4,320
Haslingden, Edenfield, and Helmshore	£6,220
Rawtenstall	£7,260
Whitworth	£2,200

That Full Council be recommended to amend the Constitution to grant delegated authority to the Neighbourhood Fora to determine bids received, and to accommodate the proposals relating to the membership of the Fora.

That the Membership of the Fora be agreed as follows:

All Elected Members for the Wards covered in the Fora  
One County Councillor per Fora  
One Whitworth Town Councillor to serve on Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum  
One Police Representative

### **Reason for Decision:**

The proposals will strengthen the role of Neighbourhood Fora and will play a key part in supported Elected Members in their Community Leadership role.

### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**



To appoint community groups that are Members of the Community Network onto the Fora and Working Groups.

**15. EAST LANCASHIRE LEADERS' AND CHIEF EXECUTIVES' GROUP (ELLCHEX)**

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Chief Executive which provided information on the role of the East Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives Group (ELLCHEX) together with progress to date.

The Chief Executive reported that the main focus of the Group was to deliver the Pennine Lancashire Transformational Agenda which included a range of projects from establishing a University, improving rail links to Manchester and developing high profile visitor attractions.

In response to a question from Councillor Sandiford regarding localising health scrutiny, the Chief Executive reported that health scrutiny was a statutory function, however agreed that the principle of scrutiny of health on an East Lancashire footprint would be a sensible development.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the remit and progress of the East Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives' Group be noted.
2. That approval be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to explore the feasibility in relation to the establishment of a City Development Company and Multi-Area Agreement for Pennine Lancashire.

**Reason for Decision:**

The aim of the Transformational Agenda is for Pennine Lancashire to become an area with a vibrant economy and higher quality of life for residents.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**16. WRITE OFF OUTDATED HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS**

The Portfolio Holder for Quality Services to Customers presented the report of the Head of Customer Services and E-Government which outlined proposals to write off outdated debts from the Housing Benefit Sundry Debtor Account.

The Portfolio Holder reported that amounts were above the delegated limit of £2000 and all existing recovery processes had been exhausted. She highlighted that a record of all debts written off was maintained in the event that there was an opportunity for future collection.

**Decision Made:**

That the write off of £47, 223.16 in relation to Housing Benefit Overpayments be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

It is prudent practice to clear any debts from the ledgers which are deemed irrecoverable before the financial year end.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**Decision Made and Reason for Decision:**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person as defined in Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

**18. LAND AT MASSEYCROFT, WHITWORTH**

The Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council presented the report of the Executive Director of Resources relating to Land at Masseycroft, Whitworth.

The Executive Director of Resources as Corporate Property Officer amended the name of the proposed purchaser, as a result of changes within the purchasing company.

**Decision Made:**

That the recommendations as set out in the report be agreed.

**Reason for Decision:**

The decision accords with the Council's Corporate Priorities.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**19. LAND AT COWM PARK WAY SOUTH, WHITWORTH**

The Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council presented the report of the Executive Director of Resources and Head of Economic Regeneration and Strategic Housing relating to Land at Cowm Park Way South, Whitworth.

**Decision Made:**

That the recommendations as set out in the report be agreed.

**Reason for Decision:**

The decision accords with the Council's Corporate Priorities.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**20. BALTIC BRIDGE REGENERATION PROJECT, WATERFOOT**

The Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council presented the report of the Executive Director of Resources relating to the Baltic Bridge Regeneration Project, Waterfoot.

**Decision Made:**

That the recommendations as set out in the report be agreed.

**Reason for Decision:**

The decision accords with the Council's Corporate Priorities.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.50pm)**