

**MINUTES OF: THE CABINET**

**Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Wilkins, Chief Executive  
Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive  
George Graham, Executive Director of Resources  
Phil Seddon, Head of Finance  
Andrew Buckle, Head of Customer Services and E-Government  
Bill Lawley, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager  
Heather Moore, Committee and Member Services Manager**

**ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Aldred, Durkin, Lamb, Morris, Neal, Nuttall,  
Pilling, Robertson and Wilson  
2 Representatives from the Press**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies to report.

**2. MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**3. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

The Leader of the Council reported that the item on the Rossendale Interim Housing Policy Statement had been withdrawn from the Agenda at the request of the Portfolio Holder and the matter would be considered at the next Full Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

He further reported that there were no urgent items to report.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions were raised under this item.

**6. LOCALITY PLAN**

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Chief Executive which outlined a proposed Locality Plan which had been jointly developed by officers of the Borough and County Councils as part of the development of enhanced two tier working in Lancashire.

Councillor Ruddick reported that the Locality Plan was a pilot for the whole authority and further work was continuing on other elements of the enhanced two tier project. The Executive Director of Resources would devote a certain amount of time in taking the work forward on behalf of all the authorities in the County.

It was noted that the Locality Plan had been considered by the Policy Scrutiny Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 and the Committee welcomed the approach to enhanced two tier working and endorsed the development of the Plan.

In response to a question about grass cutting, it was confirmed that this was included in the Locality Plan and discussions were ongoing to increase the efficiency of the service.

In response to a question about additional extra care housing, it was reported that the financial viability of other sites may be considered once Brookville Court in Whitworth had been redeveloped.

**Decision Made:**

That the Locality Plan be endorsed.

**Reason for Decision:**

It is important that improvements are made to the way in which the two tier system works for local people. The Locality Plan will be a means of developing the relationship between the two Councils.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**7. ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

Councillor Challinor, the Portfolio Holder for Regenerating and Promoting Rossendale, presented the report of the Head of Regeneration which outlined a proposed procedure and timescales for producing an Economic Strategy together with a number of options for the scope of the Strategy.

The Chief Executive reported on an economic study which was being undertaken across East Lancashire which would help and contribute to transforming Pennine Lancashire.

**Decision Made:**

That the principle of developing an Economic Strategy be endorsed.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Economic Strategy will focus on those factors that directly impact on the economic performance of the Borough whilst being sufficiently broad to encompass building on the areas economic strengths in addition to addressing any weaknesses.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

To develop a Regeneration Strategy which could duplicate other strategies previously adopted by the Council.

To develop an Economic Regeneration Strategy which could be too narrowly focused.

**8. CONSULTATION ON THE FORMULA FOR DISTRIBUTING CONCESSIONARY FARES SPECIAL GRANT**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council, presented the report of the Executive Director of Resources which detailed a proposed response to a consultation exercise being conducted by the Department for Transport on the formulae for the distribution of a Concessionary Fares Special Grant form 2007/08.

Councillor Essex reported that the proposals produced by the Department for Transport to some extent clarified matters however they did not reduce the overall risks to the Council's ability to manage its finances nor did they reduce the need for the Council to maintain specific reserves to manage those risks to the maintenance of financial stability.

**Decision Made:**

That the consultation response be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

It is important that the Council take advantage of the opportunity to influence the distribution of resources for concessionary fares.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**9. REPORT OF THE LITTER BINS TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

Councillor Driver, Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale, reported on the review of the Litter Bins Task and Finish Group.

Councillor Driver reported that she had attended a number of meetings of the Group to answer questions and to help them formulate their report.

Councillor Driver highlighted that one option which had been investigated was the use of dual recycle bins. This option would encounter operational difficulties when emptying these types of bins at the moment as they are smaller in capacity and would require increased emptying and there is no capacity for segregating waste before tipping. It was reported that a review of resources for emptying bins was being undertaken and it was hoped that dual bins could be introduced in the future.

Councillor Neal, Chair of the Task and Finish Group referred to the background information detailed within the report and he highlighted the work which had been undertaken by the Group.

### **Decisions Made:**

1. That the report of the Task and Finish Group be noted.
2. That design option two, Glasdon Topsy Jubilee, as set out in the report be approved.
3. That the allocated budget of £20,000 be used to renew defective bins highlighted on the litter bins survey over the next year.
4. That a programme of replacing and re-siting bins be developed throughout the Borough. All bins removed will, where possible, be refurbished and used elsewhere in the Borough where required.
5. That where possible the sponsorship of litter bins be explored, particularly in areas where businesses are causing litter problems.
6. That the NEAT Team make contact with local businesses to encourage them to promote anti littering messages and to reduce packaging, in addition to promoting the adoption of voluntary codes of practice that may assist them to maintain a cleaner and greener environment.
7. That bins be installed using the criteria outlined before and in consultation with Members, Operational Staff and the Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale.
8. That the Executive Director of Regulatory Services be requested to consider recommending the attachment of conditions to applications submitted by businesses that might generate litter, particularly the provision of a litter bin.
9. That dog bins be phased out on highways and only provided in parks or on open spaces; dog bins in need of repair be replaced by litter bins that serve a dual purpose; bins be clearly marked with 'dog waste permitted' to raise awareness.

10. That dual litter recycle bins not be implemented or pursued at this moment in time.
11. That pole mounted bins be provided only in areas where it is not possible to site free standing bins, for example, on narrow footpaths.
12. That the type of bins to be provided in conservation areas be subject to consultation with the Conservation Officer and the Portfolio Holder for a Clean and Green Rossendale.

**Reason for Decisions:**

The street scene will be improved through the standardisation of litter bins throughout the Borough.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**10. GRANTING OF LEASE FOR WHITWORTH LEISURE CENTRE AND CIVIC HALL BELOW MARKET VALUE**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Finance which outlined proposals to lease both Whitworth Leisure Hall and Whitworth Civic Hall below market rate.

The Head of Finance reported that the Council was ready to finalise two separate leases with the Community Leisure Association of Whitworth (CLAW) for the Whitworth Civic Hall and the Whitworth Leisure Centre for a period of seven years commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007.

**Decision Made:**

That the Community Leisure Association of Whitworth (CLAW) be granted a seven year lease on the Whitworth Civic Hall and the Whitworth Leisure Centre at an annual rent of £1.00 for each building and on the same terms and conditions as the previous leases.

**Reason for Decision:**

Whitworth Civic Hall and Whitworth Leisure Centre are community assets. The direct cash benefit in terms of stamp duty together with the wider benefits to the community secured by the management of these two facilities by CLAW outweigh the theoretical lost income by some margin.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**11. IMPLEMENTING THE TOURISM MARKETING ACTION PLAN**

Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regenerating and Promoting Rossendale, presented the report of the Head of Regeneration which provided an update on the implementation of the Borough's Tourism Marketing Action Plan.

Councillor Challinor reminded the meeting that in September 2006 the Cabinet agreed to a consultancy approach to delivering actions linked to promoting the Borough and improving visitor information. Brighter Business Solutions were appointed and have delivered and achieved a number of notable successes.

Councillor Challinor further reported that the Council had worked with the Tourism Steering Group of the Local Strategic Partnership to consider progress to date and to develop an appropriate work programme over the next six months to include supporting successful events, producing an updated visitor guide and raising the profile of the Borough through building the relationship with local, regional and national media to promote the Borough as a tourism and visitor destination.

Councillor Challinor informed the Cabinet that to support the delivery of the work it was proposed to allocate £10,000 in both the current year and the next year to support actions that will help deliver the Council's corporate priority of 'Promoting Rossendale as a Cracking Place to Live and Visit'. The allocation would be met from resources that the Council had received through Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (LABGIS).

#### **Decisions Made:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That £10,000 per annum be allocated in the current and next financial year, from the Borough Council's LABGIS allocation, to support the promotion and marketing of the Borough and that delegated authority for allocating this resource be granted to the Head of Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regenerating and Promoting Rossendale.
3. That Councillor Peter Steen be appointed Member Champion for Tourism to work with the Regeneration Team and the Tourism Steering Group towards improving the Borough's tourism and visitor offer.

#### **Reason for Decisions:**

Promoting Rossendale continues to be a key priority for the Council and of the wider Rossendale partnership. The continued review of the work plan should ensure that it remains both dynamic and relevant.

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

None.

## **12. REVENUE, BENEFITS AND CUSTOMER CONTACT PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

Councillor Tickner, Portfolio Holder for Quality Services for Customers, presented the report of the Head of Customer Services and E-government which provided an update on the performance of Capita in the delivery of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Contact.

Councillor Tickner informed the Cabinet of the major improvements over the last 12 months together with the completion of a number of projects during that period. She highlighted that work was starting on the implementation of the “Right First Time Programme” which would further improve the service.

**Decision Made:**

That the improvement in performance of these services as set out in the report be noted and the work of the Service Assurance Team in striving for continuous improvement be endorsed.

**Reason for Decision:**

Monitoring of performance is key to ensuring that improvements continue to be made.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**13. FINANCIAL MONITORING**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council presented the report of the Head of Financial Services which provided an update on the General Fund estimates for 2007/08, the Capital Programme and Treasury matters.

Councillor Essex reported that an opportunity had arisen to reduce the annual cost of Information Communication Technology (ICT) contracts by using capital receipts, earmarked from the stock transfer to support the ICT strategy, to buy out the lease element of existing contracts.

Councillor Essex informed the Cabinet that revenue was on track and he outlined the variances as detailed in the report. He informed the Cabinet that there were no changes to report in respect of reserves.

Councillor Essex further reported that there was a current favourable variance on capital financing which had been generated due to interest rates being above budget assumptions.

**Decisions Made:**

1. That the report be noted.

2. That the revision to the Capital Programme as set out in 4.1.6 of the report be approved.

**Reason for Decisions:**

Strong financial management ensures the effective management of the Council's resources which enables the provision of value for money services.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 7.52pm**