

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 18th June 2008

**PRESENT: Councillor Swain (in the Chair)
Councillors Challinor, Essex, Graham, and Smith**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Wilkins, Chief Executive
George Graham, Executive Director of Resources
Bill Lawley, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Officer
Adrian Harding, Principal Planning Officer**

**ALSO PRESENT: Councillors A. Barnes, Cheetham, Evans, Farrington,
Gledhill, Lamb, Nuttall, C.Pilling, J.Pilling, Robertson,
Sandiford, Stansfield and Thorne
1 member of the public
1 member of the press**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor P.Steen.

2. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19th March 2008 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

The Leader of the Council reported that there was one urgent decision to report that had been taken under Rule 12 of the Cabinet Procedure Rules. The decision related to a joint committee arrangement to operate the parking and traffic offence adjudication service. At the Annual Meeting of the Council, Councillor Challinor was appointed as the Council's representative to serve on the joint committee. The matter would be reported to the next meeting of the Full Council.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Cabinet were asked to consider whether they had an interest in any matters to be discussed at the meeting and the following interest was declared:

Councillor Swain declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute Number 14, by virtue of his membership of Rossendale Rugby Club.

5. ALLOCATION AND DEFINITION OF PORTFOLIOS

The Leader of the Council reported on his decision in relation to the allocation and definition of Cabinet portfolios.

In considering the report a Member requested more in depth details concerning each Portfolio Holder to which the Leader of the Council responded.

Decision Made:

That the proposals of the Leader in relation to the allocation and definition of portfolios be agreed.

Reason for Decision:

It is important 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

In response to a question from a member of the public regarding the format of reports, the Leader of the Council informed the meeting that he was looking at new ways to engage with members of the public and communities. He was also looking at the role of the Neighbourhood Forums in engaging with members of the public.

7. CORPORATE PLAN

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Head of Policy and Performance Management detailing the Council's Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan (incorporating the Best Value Performance Plan) identified where the Council intended to direct its attention and resources in order to achieve its stated priorities.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive responded:

- Number of hours training for each Member
- Identifying potential areas for regeneration
- Signage for "Halo"
- Delivery of Regeneration Projects
- Bus Station
- Promoting Neighbourhood Forums
- Image of gateways to towns
- Funding for Rossendale in Bloom

- Tackling health issues
- Changes in staffing and notification of changes

Decision Made:

The Cabinet agreed the proposed format and structure of the Council's Corporate Plan and delegated any further changes to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council prior to submission to Full Council.

Reason for Decision:

The adoption of the new Corporate Plan will clearly demonstrate to all the Council's stakeholders, the areas in which it intends to direct its time, effort and resources to achieve the Council's priorities.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

8. CHARTER BETWEEN ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL, LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, AND WHITWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources presented the report of the Executive Director of Regulatory Services which detailed the proposed three way charter between Rossendale Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and Whitworth Town Council.

The Portfolio Holder informed Members that the Charter would provide a framework for delivering better services by clarifying roles and responsibilities.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issue to which the Portfolio Holder responded:

- Timescales for Phase 2

Decision Made:

That the Cabinet supports the development of the Charter between Rossendale Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and Whitworth Town Council.

Reason for Decision:

The development of a Charter across all three tiers of local government will formalise the improved working relationship between the three Councils and set the framework for further development.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

9. ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Leisure, presented the report of the Acting Head of Regeneration which outlined the proposal to adopt the Economic Strategy as a key Council policy.

In considering the report, Members discussed the following:

- Clarification on Rossendale's visitor economy figure on page 6 of the report
- Delivery of the Strategy
- Partnerships with businesses
- Transport infrastructure including connecting rail network
- New bus terminal and a tourism centre
- Weekly street markets
- Forming partnerships with surrounding areas to become an Area of Outstanding Beauty
- Tourism
- Effects and impact of congestion charges in Greater Manchester and lobbying through MPs to keep up the profile for Rossendale
- Promoting business investment in Rossendale
- Information on what businesses are looking for in the area and data on types of businesses setting up in Rossendale

In response to the above, the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive confirmed that:

- Clarification would be sought on the visitor economy figure (page 6)
- Work would be undertaken with neighbourhoods and partnerships such as Pennine Lancashire
- Lobbying would be undertaken in respect of issues arising from the Greater Manchester congestion charges
- The scope in Rossendale for small business development
- Discussions with Bury had taken place concerning extending the Metro Link

Decision Made:

That the Economic Strategy be adopted.

Reason for Decision:

The decision contributes to the Council's priority of delivering regeneration across the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

10. ADOPTION OF HOUSEHOLDER EXTENSION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (part of the Local Development Framework)

Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Leisure, presented the report of the Executive Director of Regulatory Services which proposed the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document for Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties.

Councillor Challinor informed Members that all proposals would be considered on their individual merit.

In considering the report, Members discussed the following:

- Will provide clarity for customers of the Development Control Service
- Availability to members of the public

Decision Made:

That the Supplementary Planning Document on Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties be approved for adoption with immediate effect.

Reason for Decision:

The adoption of this document will improve the level of service and understanding available to applicants with regard to residential alterations and extensions.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

11. DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

Councillor Smith, Portfolio Holder for Customer Services presented the report of the Head of Customer Services and ICT, which detailed the proposed award of Discretionary Relief against National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) to various charitable organisations.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Leader of the Council responded:

- Impact on Rossendale concerning the change in charging for business tax

Decision Made:

To award discretionary rate relief as outlined in appendix 1 of the report.

Reason for Decision:

The decision contributes to the Council's priority of delivering quality services to customers.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

12. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources presented the report of the Head of Finance which detailed the General Fund estimates and final outturn for 2007/08, the Capital Programme and Treasury matters.

Councillor Essex reported that Rossendale Borough Council had spent what it had budgeted for and had a 1% under spend for 2007/08.

Decision Made:

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the final use and allocations of reserves, as set out in the report be approved.

Reason for Decision:

The decision contributes to the Council's priority of being a Well Managed Council.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve disclosure of exempt information relating to both an individual and to the financial or business affairs of any particular person as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

- N.B. The Leader of the Council vacated the meeting prior to consideration of Minute Number 14 (Marl Pits Sports Village) and Councillor Challinor took the Chair for this item. The Principal Planning Officer vacated the meeting prior to consideration of the following items of business.

14. MARL PITS SPORTS VILLAGE

The Cabinet considered the joint report of the Chief Executive and Head of Finance which detailed the proposed commercial arrangements concerning Marl Pits Leisure Village.

Decision Made:

That recommendations a),b) and c) as set out in the report be agreed and that recommendation d) and e) be agreed subject to the amendments made as follows:

d) All of recommendation d in addition to “Subject to a further report to Cabinet”

e) Add to the start of recommendation e “To request officers submit a further report on the nature...”

Reason for Decision:

The decision contributes to the Council’s priorities of being a well managed council, improving health and well being across the Borough, delivering quality services to customers, promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit and delivering regeneration across the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

15. DISPOSAL OF VEHICLE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP AT HENRIETTA STREET, BACUP

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Resources which detailed the proposed disposal of land at Henrietta Street, Bacup.

Decision Made:

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

Reason for Decision:

The decision contributes to the Council’s priorities of being a well managed council, keeping our Borough clean and green, improving health and well being across the Borough, delivering quality services to customers and delivering regeneration across the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

16. LONG TERM ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Finance which detailed long term accommodation options.

Decision Made:

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

Reason for Decision:

The decision contributes to the Council's priorities of being a well managed council, delivering quality services to customers and delivering regeneration across the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 9.15pm

CHAIR