

**MINUTES OF: THE CABINET**

**Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 30th July 2008**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Wilkins, Chief Executive  
Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive  
Linda Fisher, Executive Director – Business  
Phil Seddon, Head of Financial Services  
Philip Mephram, Interim Environmental Health Manager  
Lorna Rouke, Principal Environmental Health Officer  
Stephen Stray, Planning Unit Manager  
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Officer**

**ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Aldred, Cheetham, Gledhill, Neal, Robertson,  
Sandiford, and Thorne  
3 members of the public  
2 members of the press**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Challinor.

**2. MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18th June 2008 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**3. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

The Leader of the Council reported that there were no urgent items of business.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr Balchin raised a question on behalf of the Rawtenstall Chamber of Commerce relating to the pedestrian crossing near Rawtenstall Market and he asked for the support of Rossendale Borough Councillors in lobbying Lancashire County Council (LCC) for action. As part of the question Mr Balchin raised the following points:

- The danger of accidents happening, particularly on market days.

- LCC had been approached but there were not enough accidents to warrant action.

In response to the question the Leader of the Council informed the meeting that the issue would be brought to the next Lancashire Local meeting. Lobbying was already being done and would continue, and a meeting had been set up with the Borough Council's Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods and representatives from Lancashire County Council.

In response to a question from a member of the public regarding housing and obtaining grant funding, the Leader of the Council informed the meeting that question would be dealt with as part of the Pennine Lancashire Development Company item.

A question was raised concerning whether Council representatives were required to show identification when carrying out visitations, with particular reference to Enforcement Officers wearing identification whilst carrying out their actions. In response the Chief Executive confirmed that all staff were provided with identification badges which should be worn and if members of the public were concerned they were able to phone the Council to confirm the identity of the person.

## **6. PENNINE LANCASHIRE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY**

Andrew Lightfoot and Steven Cochrane from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council delivered a presentation detailing the Pennine Lancashire Development Company (PLDC). As part of the presentation the following topics were covered:

- Multi Area Agreements - Policy Context
- What are Multi Area Agreements
- PLDC approach to the Multi Area Agreement
- Benefits of the PLDC
- Key messages/ next steps

In considering the PLDC, members of the public and Elected Members identified the following issues to which the Andrew Lightfoot and Steven Cochrane responded:

A number of questions were raised as summarised below:

- How the partnership would operate
- Running costs
- Funding
- Audit control
- Procurement opportunities
- Loans and liability matters
- Models in other Authorities

The Chief Executive explained that clarity was required in respect of the detailed arrangements. The Leader proposed that a further report be brought back to Cabinet outlining the detailed arrangements.

**Decision Made:**

1. That commitment be given to the formation and membership of the Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company.
2. That the Leader and Chief Executive be authorised to participate in a shadow Governing Body/Board of the Company in order to agree the final:
  - Members Agreement
  - Memorandum of Association
  - Articles of Association
3. That the Council take no further action on the Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company until detailed arrangements of the agreement are considered at a future Cabinet meeting.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Pennine Lancashire Development Company will make a significant contribution to economic development and regeneration of the wider area, supporting Rossendale's priorities and aspirations.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**7. INTERIM HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT**

The Planning Unit Manager presented the report of the Executive Director – Business detailing the Interim Housing Policy Statement. The policy was a revision to reflect recent government guidance regarding housing provision, regeneration priorities and the delivery of affordable housing.

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

- Not precluding any areas e.g. Crawshawbooth, Whitworth, Rising Bridge.
- Will provide guidelines and clarity.
- Will encourage more developers to look at affordable housing.
- Continuing to look at national trends and reviewing.

**Decision Made:**

To approve the Interim Housing Policy for Development Control purposes with immediate effect.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Housing Policy is an essential tool in ensuring planning applications are determined in accordance with national, regional and local policy. To not adopt the policy would undermine the Council's ability to manage the release of housing land in accordance with the requirements of the adopted and emerging development plan.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**8. ALIGNED ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources presented the report of the Head of Finance which detailed the Aligned Asset Management Plan.

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Plan had been prepared by Lancashire County Council (LCC) and Rossendale Borough Council to formalise their aligned asset management agenda. It would allow the two Councils to move forward in a clear strategic direction to better support the objectives of their respective corporate and service plans.

In considering the report, Members noted the following issue:

- Ensuring LCC deliver the detailed project if commissioned.

**Decision Made:**

That the contents of the Aligned Asset Management Plan be noted.

**Reason for Decision:**

Joint asset management solutions will support service improvement in a period of rapid change and financial constraint.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**9. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NOISE STRATEGY AND POLICY**

Councillor P. Steen, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, presented the report of the Executive Director - Business which detailed the Environmental Health Noise Strategy and Policy, including joint working arrangements and contact numbers.

In considering the report, Members discussed the following:

- Part of the regional consultation process.
- Better service funded on a joint basis.
- A review of the service.
- How people will be informed.

In response to questions from Members the Interim Manager for Environmental Health confirmed that:

- The policy would be reviewed once the government had completed their review in the latter part of 2008.
- The service would be publicised to householders in the next Rossendale Alive Newsletter and leaflets would also be available.

**Decision Made:**

That the Environmental Health Noise Strategy and Policy be adopted.

**Reason for Decision:**

Noise is a significant cause of neighbour nuisance throughout the Country. There are a number of ways that the Council's Environmental Health Service can prevent and abate nuisance. This Strategy outlines the main services available.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**10. MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources presented the report of the Executive Director – Business, which detailed the proposed Member Training and Development Strategy. The Portfolio Holder informed Members of the importance of personal development and that the Council was aiming to attain level 2 of the North West Charter.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources responded:

- Members diaries, committee membership and contact details.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the Member Training and Development Strategy for 2008/09 be approved.
2. To commit to achieving Level II of the North West Charter for Member Development when reviewed in 2009.

**Reason for Decision:**

The adoption of the Strategy will provide Members with an opportunity to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver the Council's corporate priorities for the benefit of the Borough.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**11. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources presented the response to the report of the Public Conveniences Task and Finish Group. He informed members that the main outcome of the questionnaires had been in relation to community provision, and as a result a four month pilot scheme was planned in Bacup.

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

- Review of costings.
- Review returned to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.
- Signage for community provision.
- Extension of pilot if successful.
- Reduction in length of time for pilot scheme.

In response to questions raised by Members the Leader of the Council confirmed that:

- Window stickers would be introduced for premises that were part of the community scheme.
- The results of the trial scheme would be brought back to Cabinet to review costs and for budget consultation.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the overview and scrutiny recommendations (1,2, 5 and 6 as set out in the report) be deferred and considered as part of the 2009/10 budget process.
2. That the Neighbourhood Environment Action Teams (NEATs) [supported by the Property Services Manager] be authorised to negotiate with appropriate Bacup businesses and government agency buildings with a view to implementing a Community Toilet Scheme for a 4 month trial period with any conclusions being reported back to Members as part of the Budget and Policy Framework for 2009/10.

3. That the NEATs (supported by the Property Services Manager) are authorised to investigate the logistics of opening the Bacup Market toilets to the public initially on market days and if feasible be authorised to do so.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Budget and Policy framework is the process by which members resolve the decision on further expenditure. To enable officers to investigate those suggested improvements to service provision where cost is deemed not to be significant.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**12. ROAD SAFETY TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

Councillor Graham, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods presented the response to the report of the Road Safety Task and Finish Group.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues:

- Lobbying LCC regarding road safety on the A671.
- Budget allocation in relation to unadopted roads.
- Climate issues affecting roads.

In response to questions from a member of the public relating to the consultation undertaken by the Task and Finish Group, the Leader of the Council requested that the questions be submitted in writing.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the Community Safety Manager as lead officer, be requested to develop a Road Safety Strategy for Rossendale in consultation with Elected Members and that key partners be invited, as required, to help develop the Strategy.
2. That the Strategy be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet for consideration.

**Reason for Decision:**

The development of a Road Safety Strategy contributes to the Council's Strategy in relation to Children and Young People and the Every Child Matters outcome of "Keeping Children Safe".

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

### **13. STRENGTHENING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS: AREA BASED GRANT**

The Chief Executive presented the Strengthening Our Neighbourhoods Report which detailed the Area Based Grant for the next three years.

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

- Importance of frontline services.
- Number of Community Engagement Workers.
- Start dates.
- Newsletter costs and distribution.
- Events and distribution of funding.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that a development session on Community Cohesion would be held on 13<sup>th</sup> August.

#### **Decision Made:**

That Full Council be recommended to approve the allocation of the Area Based Grant as set out in section 4 of the report.

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

The allocation of the Area Based Grant will support a strengthened and cohesive community in Rossendale, enable members to fulfil their role as community leaders and lead to improved outcomes for local people and their quality of life.

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

None.

### **14. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources presented the report of the Head of Finance which detailed the update on the General Fund estimates monitoring for 2008/09 and the Capital Programme and Treasury matters.

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

- Greenvale houses and ownership.
- Female workers pay.
- Diesel.
- Purchasing power and advantages of partnership working.

#### **Decision Made:**

1. That the contents of the report be noted.



2. That the funding of pension strain costs from the Change Management Reserve be approved.
3. That the funding for the impact of Job Evaluation from the Single Status Reserve 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.

**15. 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 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.

**16. PURCHASE LEASE RENTAL – LAND ADJACENT TO LANE HEAD LANE**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Finance which detailed the proposed commercial arrangements concerning the land adjacent to Lane Head Lane.

**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, and Keeping our Borough Clean and Green.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 9.00pm**

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CHAIR