

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 10th September 2008

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

**IN ATTENDANCE: Carolyn Wilkins, Chief Executive
Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive
Linda Fisher, Executive Director – Business
Andrew Buckle, Head of Customer Services and ICT
Philip Mephram, Environmental Health Manager
Hayley Robinson-Mitchell, Environmental Health Officer
Steve Jackson, Head of Regeneration
Janice Crawford, Finance Manager
Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Officer**

**ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Aldred, A.Barnes, Crawforth, Farrington,
Gledhill, Lamb, Morris, Robertson, Sandiford, and Wilson
Melanie Catleugh, Consultant in Public Health
Peter Jordan, Director for Sustainable Communities
5 members of the public
2 members of the press**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were submitted.

2. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 30th July 2008 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

The Leader of the Council reported that there were two urgent items of business.

The first item was an urgent Cabinet decision that was taken under rule 12 of the Cabinet procedure rules in the Constitution. The decision was taken on the 1st September and related to an amendment to the Interim Housing Policy Statement. The reason for urgency was to provide clarity on the boundaries in the plans, and the decision would also be reported to the next Full Council.

The second item was an urgent report on Rossendale Urban Woodlands. The reason for urgency was owing to funding deadlines and the report would be taken following the Fluoridation presentation.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members of the public raised questions and points as summarised below:

- Will representations against fluoridation be heard prior to any decisions being made?
- How will public consultation be undertaken?
- There should be stakeholder engagement before going to the next stage.

The Leader of the Council clarified that the PCT were not currently consulting on fluoridation. They were engaging with key stakeholders, such as the Council to advise on the process being followed under the North West Strategic Health Authority. He pointed out that the presentation at the meeting was not to debate the issue from either a pro or anti fluoridation position. Consultation would be done at a later stage and the Council would fully debate the matter and engage with the public.

The Cabinet agreed that representatives that were against water fluoridation could come to the next meeting to do a presentation for Cabinet Members.

6. FLUORIDATION - PRESENTATION

Melanie Catleugh, Consultant in Public Health delivered a presentation to provide an update and seek stakeholder views on the proposed consultations on fluoridation. As part of the presentation the following topics were covered:

- Overview – dental health needs
- Dental Caries and how they develop
- The North West Perspective
- National Targets
- Methods of tackling caries
- Legislation
- North West Fluoridation Evaluation Group
- Proposed schemes
- Stakeholder views

In considering the presentation, Members identified the following issues to which the Consultant in Public Health responded:

- Investing in better oral hygiene solutions
- Estimated costs of consultations
- Previous consultations
- Access to NHS dentists
- Correlation between dental hygiene and economic status
- Timescales for stakeholder engagement
- Work on different schemes as part of the consultation
- Overlap in water supply
- Involvement of other Lancashire Leaders and Authorities
- Responsibility for own health

The Leader of the Council thanked the representative from the East Lancashire Primary Care Trust for her attendance.

The Leader of the Council informed the meeting that the Council's current approach was that there was no fluoridisation of the Borough's public water supplies, and the Council recognises that improving the dental health within Rossendale is important.

The Primary Care Trust were requested to also consider other methods and solutions for improving dental health, such as health education.

7. ROSSENDALE URBAN WOODLANDS

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services presented the Rossendale Urban Woodlands Report. The report sought approval to develop a community based management plan for Rossendale woodlands between Hareholme and Waterfoot. The Pennine Countryside Agency was looking to apply for Lottery Funding in addition to attracting further project funding from other sources.

The meeting welcomed Peter Jordan, Director for Sustainable Communities, Groundwork Pennine Lancashire.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Director for Sustainable Communities responded:

- Funding time limits
- Information disseminated to other community groups
- Use of Woodlands
- Similar schemes
- Selection process
- Preservation and restoration of sites

Decision Made:

1. That support be given to the development of a Community Based management plan and bid to “Access to Nature” and commit development funding of £7,734 from existing budgets.
2. That the Cabinet approves the development of sites in order to provide a community based management plan for Rossendale woodlands between the area of Hareholme and Waterfoot.

Reason for Decision:

The development of a Community Based Management plan will enable the Council and its partners to secure significant funding.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

8. PENNINE LANCASHIRE MULTI-AREA AGREEMENT

The Leader of the Council presented the report of the Chief Executive which detailed the Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement. The Leader of the Council informed the meeting that the Government was now only dealing with larger bodies for funding. Forming strong partnership arrangements with other authorities would enable the Pennine Lancashire Economic Development Company to bid for, and access funding, for example, for improved transport and IT infrastructure.

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

- Opportunity to work with other authorities
- Improved communications
- Enhancing rural aspects for economic development
- Document terminology
- Clarity on Government arrangements for activity
- Updates to Council
- Role of Overview and Scrutiny

Decision Made:

That the Pennine Lancashire Multi-Area Agreement be approved in principle and authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to consider and agree amendments to the document prior to final signing.

Reason for Decision:

The Multi-Area Agreement for Pennine Lancashire provides a mechanism to strengthen delivery on the shared agenda for economic regeneration which is being developed across the area.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

9. ROSSENDALE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration presented the report of the Head of Regeneration, which detailed the Rossendale Sustainable Economic Development Programme, and further development of projects.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Head of Regeneration responded:

- Timescales for funding
- Planning performance
- North West Development Agency Funding
- Vocational Training
- Rawtenstall Town Centre Development

Decision Made:

1. That the progress on the development of the Rossendale Sustainable Economic Development Programme be noted.
2. That approval be given to further development of the projects within the Rossendale Sustainable Economic Development Programme as detailed in the report.

Reason for Decision:

The programme provides a real opportunity to regenerate key economic sites across the Borough. As delivery of the programme progresses it is hoped that the regeneration of these key sites will act as a catalyst to attract and secure funding from the private sector and other public sector agencies.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

10. OPEN SPACE AND PLAY EQUIPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration presented the report of the Executive Director – Business, which detailed the Open Space and Play Equipment Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Portfolio Holder informed Members that the document had been produced with the involvement of stakeholders, and positive feedback had been received as it informs developers of exactly what is expected when they submit an application.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Executive Director – Business responded:

- Formula used to calculate contribution
- On site provision
- Clarity on reduced contribution on 1 / 2 bed apartments
- Review and frequency
- Maintenance of play areas
- Other Local Development Framework policies
- Bonds for developers

Decision Made:

1. That the Open Space and Play Equipment Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be adopted and applied to all new planning applications received after the 10th September 2008.
2. To delegate the following matters to the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and the Executive Director – Business:
 - Clarification concerning reduced contributions for 1 / 2 bed apartments and if it also relates to 1 / 2 bed houses
 - Clarification on the administrative charge for drafting Section 106 Agreements on page 35 of the SPD

Reason for Decision:

The Open Space and Play Equipment Contributions SPD provides the Council with a policy document which has significant weight with which to seek contributions from developers for open space and play equipment.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

11. HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

Councillor Graham, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. She informed members that the purpose of the report was to present a draft of the Strategy so that it could be published for wider consultation.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder and Deputy Chief Executive responded:

- Discussion and feedback on improving health
- Practical measures
- Inclusion of targets in relation to drugs, mental health and dementia
- Outline of the consultation process

Decision Made:

That the Health and Wellbeing Strategy be approved for the purpose of consultation with a view to a report on the outcome of the consultation being delivered by February 2009.

Reason for Decision:

To enable consultation to take place and feedback be collated to inform the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

12. IRWELL SCULPTURE TRAIL

Councillor Graham, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive on the Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership. The Portfolio Holder informed Members that the Arts Council North West would be supporting the development of the Irwell Sculpture Trail as part of a five year plan to invigorate the trail.

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

- The condition of footpaths and access routes
- Encouraging tourism
- Community involvement
- Section 106 Agreement funding
- Nature of art works, locations and preventing vandalism
- Formation of a working group and Councillor involvement
- Wider issues such as future maintenance and grass cutting

Decision Made:

1. That support be given to the ongoing work of the Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership and ongoing commitment to the Irwell Sculpture Trail Business Plan
2. That authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods to oversee any actions emanating from the audit of the trail and the development of a service level agreement with the County Council.

Reason for Decision:

The support given to the work of the Irwell Sculpture Trail Partnership contributes to the Council's Strategy in relation to delivering regeneration across the Borough, keeping our Borough clean and green, promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit, and Improving health and well being across the Borough.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

13. FOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLAN 2008 – 2009 INCLUDING A PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE 'SCORES ON THE DOORS'

Councillor Graham, Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods presented the Food Law Enforcement Service plan 2008-2009, which also included a proposal to introduce 'Scores on the Doors'. She informed Members that the Food Standards Agency had made recommendations for a national 'Scores on the Doors' scheme. This would keep members of the public more informed about the food establishments they use.

In considering the report, Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods, Environmental Health Manager and Environmental Health Officer responded:

- Informative for Customers
- Helps members of the public assess the quality of the establishment
- Useful to proprietors
- Costs of the scheme and costs to the business
- Re-visit charges
- Publicity and literature
- Reducing salt in food
- Regular inspection and frequency of inspections

Decision Made:

1. That Full Council be recommended to approve the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2008-2009.
2. That detailed costings of the 'Scores on the Doors' scheme be brought back to Cabinet for consideration.

Reason for Decision:

The Food Law Enforcement Plan complies with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency and the Food Law Code of Practice.

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 provided an update on the General Fund estimates monitoring for 2008/09 and the Capital Programme and Treasury matters. He informed members that in the current economic climate there would be a need to focus on priorities within the Capital Programme and he proposed setting up a sub-group comprising the Section 151 Officer, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services and Chair of the Audit Committee Councillor Gledhill to identify priorities.

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

- Sub-group to review priorities
- Concessionary travel
- Variances
- Revenue surplus
- Staff vacancies
- Stock transfer
- Planning services

Decision Made:

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That a working group be set up to examine the priorities in the capital programme in light of the changing nature of capital funds being received.

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 the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and information which is subject to any obligation of confidentiality as defined in Paragraph 8 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

16. IMPLEMENTATION OF GOVERNMENT CONNECT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Customer Services and ICT which informed Members of the Government Connect Programme.

Decision Made:

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

Reason for Decision:

Government Connect is mandatory. Failure to implement will result in the Authority being unable to perform its statutory services such as Revenues and Benefits.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

17. COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS – 2 VACANT PROPERTIES, BLACKBURN ROAD, HASLINGDEN

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Regeneration which detailed the proposed arrangements for compulsory purchase orders concerning 2 vacant properties on Blackburn Road, Haslingden.

Decision Made:

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

Reason for Decision:

The use of Compulsory Purchase powers is the only remaining option to bring these properties back into use as all other options have been exhausted.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 9.30pm

CHAIR