

Minutes

Meeting of : The Cabinet
Meeting held in : The Alamein Suite City Hall, Salisbury
Date : Wednesday 28 March 2007
Commencing at : 5.00 pm

Present:

Councillors R Britton (Leader)
F Westmoreland (Deputy Leader)

Councillors Mrs P J Brown and P V H Paisey (Planning and Economic Development), D W Brown and Mrs S A Willan (Environment and Transport), J A Cole-Morgan and J R L Nettle (Community and Housing) and D A Culver and J Rodell (Resources)

With the Chairman's permission Councillor Hewitt spoke on agenda item 9, Local Housing needs and market study.

960 Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Culver declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Land at Downton Road as an appointee to the management of the community association.

961 Minutes of Last Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

962 Public Question and Statement Time:

Mrs Mary Stephens asked a question attached as annex A to these minutes. The Leader's response is as detailed in the resolution under urgent business minute 976 below.

County Councillor Douglas made a statement in respect of agenda item 14, Bemerton Heath Neighbourhood Centre attached as annex B to these minutes.

963 Forward Plan:

The Leader presented his Forward Plan for the period 1 April 2007 – 31 July 2007 (previously circulated) to be published and become operational from 1 April 2007.

Agreed - that the Leader's Forward Plan 1 April 2007 to 31 July 2007, be adopted for publication subject to the inclusion in July of the item on the Gypsy and Travellers Housing Needs Survey.

964 Call-in Decisions:

There were none.



Awarded in:
Housing Services
Waste and Recycling Services



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Cabinet Decisions

All decisions set out in this section of the minutes will be implemented on or after 12 April 2007 (unless called in for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel)

965 Land at Downton road – Proposed Swap of Community Land:

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development introduced the previously circulated joint report of the Principal Planning Officer (Forward Planning) and the Property Manager.

Agreed: to approve the land swap with Westbury, as shown on the plan (including explanatory key) attached to the previously circulated report and Officers be instructed accordingly, and once a request to vary the original Section 106 has been received from the applicant, a report be taken back to City Area (Planning) Committee recommending that the Section 106 agreement be amended.

966 Concept Statement Highbury and Fisherton Manor School Sites:

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development introduced the previously circulated report of the Planning Officer.

Agreed – to accept the proposed changes as set out in the report and in all the attached appendices and in the revised Concept Statement attached to the report, plus the City Area Committee's view that a children's equipped play area/and or sports facility should be sought on the site as per the Park's Manager's comments, and adopt the Concept statement as revised (subject to the below changes), as a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications on the site.

- (1) Page 8, delete the sentence which reads "the future management of this woodland area will be considered in conjunction with future residential development at the Old Manor Hospital Site (Area F) "
- (2) Add "investigate" to the arrows linking areas C to F on the concept plan.

967 Local Housing Needs and Market Study 2006:

The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Strategic Housing.

Agreed – that the following be noted

- (1) the findings and recommendations of the Local Housing Needs and Housing Market Study 2006 by David Couttie Associates subject to any final comments being addressed and delegated authority be given to the Head of Strategic Housing to sign-off the research.
- (2) the study provides a sound evidence base for the formulation of policy through the LDF process and revisions to the Housing Strategy.
- (3) the study recognises that to satisfy the affordable housing need in the district that an overall target for affordable housing of up to 50% on suitable sites should be considered. The overall target of 50% includes both housing for social rent (60%) and Shared

Ownership Home Buy (40%). These conclusions will be taken forward through the processing of producing the LDF Core Strategy.

- (4) The study concludes that in order to deliver additional affordable housing units the lowest threshold considered viable should be promoted and lower thresholds in rural towns and local centres should be considered (reference paragraph 5.4).
- (5) To progressing the actions as detailed in paragraph 6.1 (1 to 6)
- (6) David Couttie Associates be invited to address the Cabinet and the Strategic Housing Board early in the new municipal year.

968 Proposed Introduction of a Void Letting Standard and End of Tenancy Incentive Scheme:

The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Acting Housing Manager Area 1.

Agreed – that the introduction of a Void Lettings Standard and End of Tenancy Incentive Scheme as outlined in 4 of the report be approved.

969 Salisbury Vision – Proposed Redevelopment of the Maltings and Central Car Park:

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Forward Planning and Transportation.

Agreed – to authorise -

- (1) the appointment of a specialist consultant to carry out a feasibility study of the proposed redevelopment of the Maltings and Central car park, and possible associated projects, and make recommendations about the appointment of a developer partner.
- (2) officers to carry out preliminary work on the identification of any constraints affecting the site;
- (3) an immediate review of the Council's car parking strategy, with a view to achieving (i) the sustainable distribution of an appropriate number of car parking spaces to serve Salisbury in the future and (ii) the maintenance of the Council's revenue position;
- (4) the establishment of a budget of £90,000 to cover the cost of engaging appropriate specialist consultants.

970 Recruitment of head of the Salisbury Vision Project:

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development introduced the previously circulated joint report of the Policy Director, Pam Fox and the Head of Marketing, Economic Development and Tourism.

Agreed – that

- (1) the establishment of the post of Head of the Salisbury Vision Project, as outlined in paragraph 2.6 of the report be approved;
- (2) the additional funding of £67,000 from the LABGI grant as outlined in 3.3 of the report be approved; and
- (3) subject to (1) and (2) above being approved, to report back to a future Cabinet meeting reviewing the success of, and future requirement for, the post.

971 Interim Planned Maintenance Programme:

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Community and Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Housing Management.

Agreed – that

- (1) the interim planned maintenance programme as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report be approved; and
- (2) the work to kitchens, bathrooms and external doors be given to the Council's partnership contractor, Mitie, on the same terms and conditions as work allocated as part of the 2006-07 programme.

972 Bemerton Heath Neighbourhood Centre Big Lottery Fund Application:

The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Heads of Housing Management and Community Initiatives.

Agreed –

- (1) recognising the very significant potential benefits of the proposed new library facility to the people of Bemerton Heath this Cabinet supports in principle and welcomes the objectives of Wiltshire County Council's bid to the Big Lottery Fund community libraries programme pending further analysis of,

and this Cabinet's subsequent satisfaction with, the proposed budgets and management regime for the expanded centre.

- (2) any decision on the future of the Bemerton Heath Neighbourhood Centre and 58 Pinewood Way under measures currently being considered to resolve likely long-term deficits in the council's HRA business plan be postponed until the outcome of the Wiltshire County Council's Big Lottery bid is known. (A Stage 1 decision is expected by September 2007)
- (3) Cabinet should take a full and final decision on the terms and conditions for the provision of the proposed new facilities when all the following information is made available to it and on the understanding that no additional resources are required of Salisbury District Council.
 - a. a detailed revenue budget agreed with Wiltshire County Council, on the current costs to Salisbury District Council of running the existing facility as the basis of which this council's future contributions to the proposed larger scheme can be determined.
 - b. a budget showing the proposed sources of revenue for the expanded facilities for the 20 year period required by the lottery bid.
 - c. an assessment of the impact of the proposed expanded facility on Salisbury District Council's budgets and staff.
 - d. an in principle agreement with Wiltshire County Council and all other partners which includes, the headline terms of the 20 year lease, details of the management structure, revenue budgets and maintenance budgets.
 - e. details of community and local member commitment to and support for and involvement in the proposed project.

973 Land disposal at Chatham Close Salisbury for Affordable Housing:

The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Strategic Housing Services. The Cabinet acknowledged the former Resources Portfolio Holder Councillor Mrs Warrander's significant contribution towards the achievement of this project.

Agreed –

- (1) To approve the disposal of the site, as identified on the plan attached to the previously report, to Signpost Housing Association conditional on the construction and delivery of the Community Resource centre by December 2009;
- (2) the Head of Legal and Property Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Housing, be authorised to enter into negotiations to lease the premises to prospective tenants, conscious of the fact that the community use rents are considerably higher than the rents currently paid and may not be affordable, and there is a need to ensure the current tenants' continuation of use.

974 Business Rates Write-Offs:

The Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Revenue and Benefits.

Agreed – that the amounts shown on the attached schedule be written off for the reasons indicated and due to the fact that the council is a non-preferred creditor.

975 Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel:

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport introduced the previously circulated recommendation of the Environment and Transport overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 5 March 2007.

Agreed – that the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport ask the Secretary of State for the Department of Transport whether it was planned to extend the concessionary scheme for those over 60 to schoolchildren.

976 Matter of Urgency:

The Chairman agreed to take the following matter under urgent business -

The Cabinet considered the recommendation arising from the City Area Community Committee held on 20 March 2007 relating to the Bourne Hill Office development, namely that all work on the Bourne Hill development be stopped until after the May local elections.

Agreed - that the Cabinet's response be as follows -

Cabinet continues to agree with Full Council that centralisation of SDC's offices on the Bourne Hill site is the best solution to the Council's long-standing office accommodation problems. It notes that the City Area Committee does not disagree with the Business Case which endorses

this project and does not present any new argument in support of its demand for suspension of work which has not already been considered and rejected by Full Council. Further, Cabinet does not agree with the Committee's preference to keep our staff working in sub-standard conditions and continue to offer sub-standard service to our customers and risk losing local government employment in Salisbury in the event of a unitary authority in Wiltshire.

977 Exempt Information:

Agreed - In view of the confidential or sensitive nature of the matters to be considered, the Cabinet excluded the press and public from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 20 on the ground that it may involve the likely disclosure of 'exempt information' as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A inserted into the Local Government Act 1972 by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and that the public interest against disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in favour of disclosure as explained below:

Paragraph 7 namely: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority)

Summary of Exempt Matter

Housing Rent Write-Off

*The meeting concluded at 6.30 pm
Number of public present 4*

Question to Cabinet 28th March 2007

Now that Government has given Wiltshire County Council the green light to go to the next stage in it's bid for Unitary status, will this Cabinet adopt Councillor Fear's motion proposed and passed at City Area (Community) Committee on 20th March 2007.

I Quote:

"This committee notes with concern the continued work which is taking place on the Bourne Hill site so close to an election and without the outcome of the bid for Unitary status by the County Council being known.

It notes that some of the land where work has started is in the "control" of this committee and that the upkeep of this land has been paid out of the Special Levy on Council Tax payers living in the City. It also notes that before the election of this Administration, work on this land would have had to have gained the approval of this Committee.

It notes that the City (Planning) Committee recommended to the Planning and Regulatory Committee that they reject the planning application for the new Council Office development.

It also believes that Local Councillors have a duty to represent the views of the residents in their wards and is concerned that the Council has found it necessary to resort to legal action against one of it's members.

This Committee therefore calls upon the Cabinet to stop all work on the Bourne Hill development until after the May Local Elections.

It also agrees to establish a working party, after the May elections, to consider the action of the Administration in issuing injunctions against a member of this Committee and Local Residents in the County Court and High Court."

Mary Stephens

Big Lottery Fund

The Big Lottery Fund Community Libraries programme is a competitive £80 million capital funding initiative open to English Local Authority Library Services wishing to create or improve library buildings so that they can offer a broader range of activities. The funding is targeted on expressed need and on innovative ways of addressing those needs.

Bemerton Heath

Two areas within Wiltshire were identified as areas of high deprivation and possible candidates for this bid - Melksham and Bemerton Heath.

I made a delegated decision on 15th February to target the bid to Bemerton Heath rather than Melksham, because the library presence at Bemerton Heath is much less well established and this opportunity holds the potential for a step change, rather than an extension of existing good work. This offers, therefore, the prospect of having a greater impact on the community.

Within the area of Salisbury, Bemerton Heath is one of the most deprived areas and I am aware that, in recognition of this, the District Council has already introduced various pilots to help this estate. You have already proved that this estate is important to the city. And yet, anyone who has worked to any degree with the people of Bemerton Heath will be aware that they feel neglected, hidden away, that they have been given a bad name which they do not deserve.

When asked by your community development team what they would like, they have identified as their priorities: something for young people to do, a community centre / youth club, more community / family events, further education for adults and a family friendly cafe / restaurant with internet access.

Community Library

It is proposed to create a library/community space to deliver services that complement and integrate with facilities available through the Neighbourhood Centre. The space would provide a library and learning facility, which builds on the success of the Neighbourhood Centre and provides enhanced services in an exciting, welcoming environment.

Modern libraries are places where you can play and learn with your children, where you can meet friends, sit and relax with a cup of coffee, read a magazine or just chill; a place where you can learn new skills, use a computer, find things out, get help in doing your homework, pursue a hobby, attend a workshop, plan a holiday – as well as be surrounded by a wealth of tempting reading and films and music.

Opportunity

This bid to the Lottery fund is an opportunity to gain access to money, which does not come out of the coffers of either the District or the County Council, to meet local aspirations, to prove in one more way that the people of Bemerton Heath are significant and to help them make for themselves a good name.

It is one off funding and unlikely to be offered again and I would therefore urge you to give this bid your full support.