

# Minutes

**Meeting of** : The Cabinet  
**Meeting held in** : The Alamein Suite, City Hall, Salisbury  
**Date** : Wednesday 01 October 2008  
**Commencing at** : 6.00 pm

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**Present:**

Councillor P W L Sample (Leader), Councillors P M Clegg (Planning), B E Dalton (Community Initiatives), P D Edge (Economic Development and Tourism), A C R Roberts (Finance), J C Robertson (Environment), A A P Thorpe (Resources) and I R Tomes (Housing)

**Apologies:** S R Fear (Deputy Leader), H McKeown (Transport)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Britton spoke on minute 270 and Councillors Spencer and King spoke on minute 272.

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The Cabinet observed a one minute silence in memory of Councillor Simon Howarth, who died on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

**265. Declarations of Interest:**

Councillor Dalton declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter set out under minute 270 (30 year HRA Business Plan) because he rented a garage from the council. He did not speak or vote, and left the meeting for the duration of the item.

**266. Minutes of Last Meeting:**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**267. Public and Councillor Question and Statement Time:**

Councillor Parker made a statement, and asked a number of questions relating to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). He felt that there was confusion about the move to a unitary authority and that staff were being tasked with a lot of work from Wiltshire County Council, thereby inhibiting the district council's ability to carry out work. He asked who funded the extra work imposed on staff by the LGR process. He felt that the role of Community Area Boards and Community Area Partnerships was unclear. He asked where the projected £18 million savings associated with the move to unitary status would be made.

Councillor Sample acknowledged Councillor Parker's concerns, and said that many members would empathise with his feelings. However, the move to a unitary authority was a process which was imposed on the council rather than one of its own making. He invited Councillor Parker to attend a meeting of the Implementation Executive and make his feelings known, and promised a written answer to the questions raised.



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CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Awarded in:

Housing Services

Waste and Recycling Services

The Leader presented his Forward Plan for the period 1 November 2008 – 28 February 2009.

**Resolved:** that the Leader's Forward Plan 1 November 2008 – 28 February 2009, be adopted for publication, and become operational from 1 October 2008.

**269. Call-in Matters:**  
There were none.

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## **Cabinet Decisions**

*All decisions set out in this section of the minutes will be implemented on or after 14 October 2008 (unless called in for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel)*

### **270. 30 Year HRA Business Plan:**

Councillor Britton addressed the Cabinet and presented the recommendations of a joint meeting of the Resources and Community & Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel held to consider the 30 Year HRA Business Plan as set out below:

- 1) Cabinet is urged to press for the creation of a Local Governance Board to take overall responsibility for the management of our housing stock;
- 2) Cabinet should call on the government to recognise the serious negative effect the present subsidy system has created for Salisbury District Council and its tenants;
- 3) Cabinet is urged to continue to support the present process of lobbying government to bring about the changes to the subsidy system we need;
- 4) Cabinet is recommended to immediately commission work to produce contingency plans against the eventuality that changes to the subsidy system are not forthcoming.

Members debated the recommendations. They felt that it was unnecessary to commission immediate work on contingency plans due to the high level of uncertainty associated with the ongoing HRA Subsidy review and Local Government Reorganisation. Councillor Tomes introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Housing Management.

#### **Resolved:** that

- (1) Cabinet will press for the creation of a Local Governance Board to take overall responsibility for the management of Salisbury District Council's housing stock;
- (2) Cabinet will call on the government to recognise the serious negative effect the present subsidy system has created for Salisbury District Council and its tenants;
- (3) Cabinet will continue to support the present process of lobbying government to bring about changes to the subsidy system;
- (4) the 30 year HRA Business Plan as set out in appendix 1 of the report be approved;
- (5) the Implementation Executive recommend that the plan be approved prior to sending to GOSW for a fit for purpose assessment.

### **271. Amesbury Conservation Area Appraisal:**

Councillor Clegg introduced the previously circulated report of the Principal Conservation Officer. He thanked all involved in the preparation of the report for their efforts and the Northern Area Committee for their proposed changes.

#### **Resolved:** that

- (1) the conservation area appraisal for Amesbury be approved, subject to amendments to the document suggested by the Northern Area Committee;
- (2) the recommendations in the management plan be approved, including the proposed boundary changes for Amesbury, and subject to amendments to the document suggested by the Northern Area Committee.

**272. Regional Spatial Strategy:**

Councillor Clegg introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Forward Planning and Transportation. Councillors Spencer and King addressed the panel and presented the recommendations of a meeting of the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel held to consider the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (as set out at appendix 1):

**Resolved:** that

- (1) the level of growth proposed for the Salisbury HMA should be accepted as a reasonable proposal for regional housing provision. Any additional proposed growth beyond this level should be included in any partial review activity which may take place subsequently;
- (2) the evidence regarding predicted occupancy rates submitted to Cabinet by the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel be forwarded to all relevant bodies requesting a response as a matter of urgency;
- (3) The Secretary of State's recommendations relating to Policy A should be supported. The removal from Policy B & C of the reference to the need for authorities to assess the role and function of settlements should be challenged. The rejection of policy C2 should be supported;
- (4) An objection should be raised to the proposed changes to Policies SD1 to 4 and Policies G and RE5 for the reasons set out in section 6 of the officer's report. Policy G should be reinstated;
- (5) Regarding infrastructure (Policy D), Salisbury District Council does not approve of the loss of emphasis on ensuring the delivery of infrastructure and believes that the original wording at pages 49-50 should be reinstated. The council largely supports the proposed changes to policies E, F, H and I;
- (6) The routes for freight set out in the Regional Freight Map should be reinstated rather than the Primary Route Network and corridors should be amended to reflect north/south connections;
- (7) The A303T is identified as a corridor of regional importance. If it is to perform this function urgent improvements are necessary to address capacity issues;
- (8) The remaining proposed changes to the Transport Section of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and the move to an outcomes focus are supported;
- (9) There are no significant concerns about the Proposed Changes to Policy H1;
- (10) Policy ES2 'Providing for Employment Land and Premises' should be strengthened by referring to the need for collaboration across Local Authority Boundaries;
- (11) The Forward Planning team be authorised to respond to the consultation on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West Proposed Changes based on these recommendations with any amendments agreed by the Cabinet.

**273. Health and Safety Policy:**

Councillor Thorpe introduced the previously circulated report of the Safety Adviser.

**Resolved:** that the final draft of the council's revised Health and Safety Policy be approved.

**274. Sub National Review of Economic Development and Economic Priorities for South Wiltshire:**

Councillor Edge introduced the previously circulated report of the Economic Development Manager.

**Resolved:** that

- (1) the proposals put forward in the sub national review of economic development and the district council's response be noted;
- (2) the economic priorities for south Wiltshire and the timetable for development of the new economic strategy for the district be noted.

**275. Recommendation from the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on Monday 15 September – Urgent Item Solstice Park**

Councillor Edge introduced the previously circulated recommendation from the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on Monday 15 September.

**Recommended:** to make representations to the Highways Agency identifying the importance of swift development at Solstice Park and to urge them to do all within their power to expedite consideration of planning applications at the site.

**Resolved:** that the above recommendation be approved.

**276. Unitary Update:**

The Chief Executive gave an update on the transition to a unitary authority which is summarised below:

- Key projects were considered to be on track, with repair and refurbishment having begun on the original Georgian building at Bourne Hill, and major issues including the Housing Revenue Account, the Parishing of Salisbury and the Salisbury Vision due to go before the Implementation Executive;
- Capacity had been stable during September and arrangements had been made to cover senior posts which were currently vacant;
- Performance was improving as frontline staff felt reassured that many of them were likely to be based in Salisbury;
- The Implementation Executive would consider the staff appointments process on Monday 6 October;
- Budgets for the new council were being prepared and more information would be shared as it arose.

Members felt that officers were performing well under difficult circumstances and thanked them for their continued dedication. Having considered the Chief Executive's report the Leader indicated his concern that the need to equalise Council Tax across the county would result in significant Council tax increases in South Wiltshire.

**277. Successes of the Council:**

Councillor Sample introduced the previously circulated list of successes and achievements of the Council over the last month.

**Resolved:** that successes and achievements be noted.

**278. Update on Petersfinger Park and Ride:**

Cabinet considered the previously circulated briefing note on this matter.

**Resolved:** that the update position be noted.

**279. Special Delegation Procedure:**

The Cabinet noted the matters determined under the Special Delegation Procedure as set out at Agenda Item 16 (papers previously circulated) namely:

- (a) Concessionary Travel Scheme
- (b) Avonmead Estate Durrington – Transfer of amenity spaces

**Recommendations to Cabinet made by the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel regarding the draft Regional Spatial Strategy:**

**Recommendation A**

- 1) The level of growth proposed for the Salisbury Housing Market Area should not be accepted as there is significant concern over the statistics and assumptions used in reaching this figure;
- 2) With regards to predicted occupancy rates up to 2026, the Regional Assembly should request confirmation from the Office for National Statistics about the upwards trend indicated by recent figures. If the trend is confirmed then steps should be taken to revise the targets accordingly;
- 3) That the council's Forward Planning and Transportation Unit also investigate the upwards trend in occupancy rates referred to above in advance of submitting the council's response to the current consultation on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy;
- 4) The draft Regional Spatial Strategy is predicated on the assumption of strong growth. With the current concerns about credit, banking and funding it is important that the growth forecasts are revised as soon as possible so that realistic targets, rather than optimistic targets, are available as the basis for further planning;
- 5) Any variation to the proposed growth level should be included in any partial review activity which may take place subsequently.

**Recommendation B**

- 1) The Secretary of State's recommendations relating to Policy A should be supported. The removal from Policy B & C of the reference to the need for authorities to assess the role and function of settlements should be challenged. The rejection of policy C2 should be supported.

**Recommendation C**

- 1) An objection should be raised to the proposed changes to Policies SD1 to 4 and Policies G and RE5 for the reasons set out in section 6 of this report;
- 2) Policy G should be reinstated.

**Recommendation D**

- 1) Regarding infrastructure (Policy D), Salisbury District Council does not approve of the loss of emphasis on ensuring the delivery of infrastructure and believes that the original wording at pages 49-50 should be reinstated;
- 2) The council largely supports the proposed changes to policies E, F, H and I.

**Recommendation E**

- 1) The routes for freight set out in the Regional Freight Map should be reinstated rather than the Primary Route Network and corridors should be amended to reflect north/south connections;
- 2) The A303T is identified as a corridor of regional importance. If it is to perform this function urgent improvements are necessary to address capacity issues;
- 3) The remaining proposed changes to the Transport Section of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and the move to an outcomes focus are supported.

**Recommendation F**

- 1) There are no significant concerns about the Proposed Changes to Policy H1.

**Recommendation G**

- 1) Policy ES2 'Providing for Employment Land and Premises' should be strengthened by referring to the need for collaboration across Local Authority Boundaries.

**Recommendation H**

- 1) The panel note that there has been no briefing or committee discussion on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy throughout the LDF process. This has prevented councillors making a genuine contribution.

**Recommendation I**

- 1) In the event that Cabinet does not approve any of the above recommendations as part of the council's response to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy they should be submitted directly as a response from the Planning and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny panel.