

# WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## MINUTES

Minutes of the: **Cabinet**

Held on: **Wednesday 18 April 2007**

Held at: **Council Chamber, Bradley Road, Trowbridge**

Present:

Councillors: Content (Leader), Brown, Bryant, Carbin, Cox, James, Newbury and Osborn

Also present: Cllr Phillips OBE

Officers: Chief Executive (AP), Environmental Health Services Manager, Policy & Communications Services Manager (PM), Conservation Officer (CP), Principal Human Resources Officer (LH), Community Development Officer (MM), Principal Lawyer (A A-P), Member Support Officers (PS and MC)

### 69. Apologies

There were no apologies.

### 70. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 14 March 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

### 71. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 72. Recommendations of Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Phillips OBE presented the report which highlighted the recommendations from Scrutiny Committee concerning the Council's approach to youth development.

#### RESOLVED:

#### That Cabinet

- **considered and addressed the recommendations made by the task and finish group on youth development as detailed in the report.**
- **endorsed the principles contained in the report and requires the Sustainable Communities manager to report back to Cabinet in August 2007 setting out the feasibility of the options and also setting out the resource implications.**

The leader announced that she would be changing the order of the agenda. Consequently, the applications were dealt with in the following order (numbers refer to the application number on the agenda):

5, 6, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 11, 12, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 20, 21.

### **73. Announcements from the Leader**

- Local Government Review - this had moved to the second phase and it was disappointing that there had been no public consultation. The Council will be consulting with stakeholders and putting across a balanced view. Shrewsbury Council were trying for a judicial review and we would be offering them moral support.
- The Waterside project continues on target and a paper was going to the County Council's Cabinet meeting.
- The Customer Service Unit (CSU) has been built and staff are now in place. The cash office closed on 1 March and the customers who still pay at the Council offices are being dealt with by the CSU. The reception has been refurbished and a family interview room has been completed.

### **74. Disability Equality Scheme**

The Leader presented the report, which detailed the proposed Disability Equality Scheme for the Council.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Cabinet**

- **approves the Disability Equality Scheme, action plan and its implementation**
- **agrees to the Scheme being reviewed and updated every three years with the involvement of disabled people**
- **authorises the Head of Human Resources and Customer Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to make minor alterations or amendments to finalise the Scheme prior to publication.**

### **75. Update from the Environment Portfolio Holder – Cllr Brown**

#### Decriminalised Parking

All roads in the district have been examined and high speed roads where it would be unsafe and impractical for parking attendants to operate have been identified.

### Cemetery Land

Bradford on Avon - The offer is within the approved budget and will be subject to planning approval. This will secure sufficient land for the foreseeable future.

Melksham - a plan is being worked on for pre-application discussions with the Planners.

### Avoncliff Car Park

The documents are with the lawyers.

### Land Drainage

A Notice to correct the problem within one month under Section 25 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 was served on the owner of properties in Elms Cross Drive, Bradford on Avon who had attempted to remedy the situation but not effectively. The site had been re-inspected and the requirements made clear. We will monitor developments.

## **76. Proposed Dog Control Orders**

Cllr Brown presented the report which had first been reported to Cabinet in January 2007. Formal consultation had taken place and a summary of the responses was attached to the report.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That Cabinet**

**Recommends to Council that the two draft dog control orders attached as appendix 2 of the report be approved.**

## **77. Health Act 2006 – Introduction of Smoke-free Workplaces**

Cllr Brown presented the report, which informed Cabinet of the impending introduction of the new smoke-free regulations and sought approval for the delegation of the new smoke-free duties to the Environmental Health Services Manager.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That Cabinet**

- **approves the delegation of the Council's powers as an enforcing authority under Part 1 of the Health Act 2006 to the Environmental Health Service Manager in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder**

## **78. Items from the Leisure and Arts Portfolio Holder**

The Leisure Team are continuing work on the L&RNA action plan. Recent developments include:

- The Play Strategy is now out for consultation. Once the consultation is complete the Council will adopt the strategy before it is submitted to the Big Lottery in September as part of a bid amounting to £240,000, which will be spent on improving play provision across the district.
- The results from the 'non user survey' are now available. The main barriers to using the 8 leisure centres that people face have been identified as lack of time, cost, and not being aware of what is on offer.
- Work has started on the facilities planning model project with Sport England. A full report on the survey will be presented to Cabinet in the autumn as part of the first Leisure Facilities Review report.
- Jane Smedley, the new Leisure & Projects Officer will be starting in May 2007.
- The cricket community coach is delivering '*spirit of cricket*' initiative to West Wiltshire primary schools with a focus on the Warminster area, identifying and developing talent.
- The Inclusive Fitness Initiative's (IFI) Sports Development Plan in partnership with DC Leisure has been signed off and approved by the English Federation of Disability Sport's (EFDS) regional manager.

## **79. Financial Support to Arts Organisations and Projects 2007/08**

Cllr Cox presented the report which sought Cabinet's approval for financial support and service arrangements to arts organisations and projects in 2007/08. He thanked Meril Morgan for a clear and detailed report.

### **RESOLVED**

#### **That Cabinet**

**approves financial support to the following for 2007/08:**

- **£11,000 to the Arc Theatre**
- **£13,000 to Wiltshire Music Centre**
- **£6,500 to the Wiltshire Youth Arts Partnership**
- **£5,500 to Rural Arts Wiltshire**
- **Cabinet noted that a further report will be presented about any future service and funding arrangements beyond March 2008.**

## **80. Update from the Planning and Development Portfolio Holder – Cllr Jeff Osborn**

Cllr Osborn gave the following update:

- The Local Development Framework Core Strategy PPG would meet next week to consider consultation with the five community partnerships.

- There would be a planning liaison meeting with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Transforming Trowbridge steering group were meeting this week. There was a need for a more prominent role for the steering group.

## **81. Adoption of Character Assessment for Warminster Town Centre Conservation Area.**

Cllr Osborn presented the report which detailed the responses to the consultation exercise on the draft conservation area assessment for Warminster town centre.

### **RESOLVED**

#### **That Cabinet**

- **adopts the Conservation Area Character Assessment for Warminster Town Centre, subject to the inclusion of further references to watercourses as requested by the Environment Agency, and any minor amendments.**

## **82. Items from the Community Portfolio Holder – Cllr Bryant**

### Innovation Project at Westbury

There was a youth event held at Leighton Recreation Centre on Saturday 14 April from 10am to 4pm. It included extreme sports, DJ workshops, an assault course, information and advice and lots more.

### Sparkplugs

The Sparkplug project came to a grande finale on 27th March 2007 and was marked by a celebratory event at Trowbridge Reference Library to which many contributory individuals were invited.

### Clean Up Day at The Heathlands

On Thursday 12th April 2007 the young people from The Heathlands in Warminster got together with the help of the local PCSOs, Youth Development Workers and Families in Focus to clean up their estate.

### New Stronger Communities Team

The Stronger Communities Team was created in November 2006 when Corporate Management Team supported a restructuring of Sustainable Communities in order to reallocate staff resources to better meet corporate priorities.

The team comprises David Crisfield, Stronger Communities Manager and Community Development Officers Jacky Nicholas, Kathy James and Meril Morgan.

## Migrant Workers

Kathy James as the Council's Single Point of Contact (SPOC), on migrant workers, was asked to present a workshop at an event, 'A8 migration - sharing good practice' held in London on 21st March. The event was organised by the Communities and Local Government, CGL, with the Audit Commission, I&DeA; Commission for Rural Communities.

### **83. Youth Champions End of Year Report**

Cllr Bryant presented his end of year report on the issues affecting young people and the work taking place to address them.

The Leader thanked Cllr Bryant for his work in the past two years

### **84. Items from the Housing Portfolio Holder – Cllr Tom James**

- Choice based Lettings Statistics - on 18 April 2007 there were 4535 active applications on the housing register.
- School pack presentations had been very successful and it was hoped that this would be repeated.
- Refurbishments to Kinsbury Square Hostel were being carried out.
- Enabling – 141 new affordable dwellings started on site in 2006-07 against the target of 100. There were now 109 finished units.

### **85. Items from the Finance and Policy Portfolio Holder – Cllr Trevor Carbin**

#### PFI Update

The process for choosing our shortlist of PFI bidders is still continuing. The Project Board has carefully considered the strengths and weaknesses of our bids and a number of other options for taking the project forward.

Planning Committee has recently approved two applications for Council owned sites at Southwick Road, North Bradley and Weymouth Street, Warminster. This means that we now have enough land with planning permission for 86 new homes, towards the target of 200 properties set by government.

Nine more applications are currently going through the system and these will hopefully be determined early in the new Planning Committee cycle.

#### Finance

Payment method modernisation continues to be successfully implemented

- Cash office at Bradley Road has closed

- New payment cards are being used for council tax at around 30 outlets across the district. This has resulted in reduced payment through the bank and increased payments through post offices, helping to keep our post offices viable.
- Direct debit take-up for council tax payers is now 70%, compared to 57.8% at April 2003.
- Telephone payments using credit and debit cards are increasing
- Internet payment is about the same
- This week is likely to be the busiest week so far, as first payment installment of new year.
- Customer activity is being closely monitored.

Year end close down of accounts 2006/07 is going well. There should have provisional out turn figures middle to end of May. Substantial changes in the way the financial information is presented was resulting in additional work for the accountants.

#### Revenues and Benefits

The Council's contractor has collected £792,542.50 made up as follows:

	Council tax	NNDR	Total
2004/05	33,170.78	15,806.05	48,976.83
2005/06	265,793.85	73,555.08	331,913.70
2006/07	<u>339,135.34</u>	<u>65,081.40</u>	<u>404,216.74</u>
Totals	<u>638,099.97</u>	<u>154,442.53</u>	<u>792,542.50</u>

#### Procurement Update

On the 1 March the council entered into a joint agreement with the County Council and the three other district councils for an exclusive advertising contract with TMP.

The Council has also entered into a joint agreement with 7 other councils across the West for its office stationery & equipment.

From April the council will enter into an agreement, again in partnership with the County Council, the district councils and BANES for the procurement of temporary staff. A framework has been drawn up where 3 agencies can be asked to provide a temporary worker over a range of employment categories.

The Gershon forward looking annual efficiency statement identified over £115K from procurement projects by the authority. The procurement of a long term agreement for insurance led to on going savings of £90K, with the renewal of the ICT contract generating £13K of ongoing savings.

## **86. Update from the Champion for Health and Older People – Cllr Jeff Osborn**

Cllr Osborn gave an update on his role since it had been created.

- He had been a regular attendee at Bradford on Avon Senior Citizens Forum.

- He was making enquiries about the cessation of the no. 260 bus, which was used regularly by older people.

The Leader thanked Cllr Osborn for his important work and added that it had been noted and credited in the Peer Review.

### **87. Cabinet Forward Workplan**

The latest version of the Cabinet Forward Work Plan was presented.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- **That the Cabinet Forward Work Plan be approved.**
- **That a report on the Council's approach to Youth Development be added to the forward workplan for August.**

### **88. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Cabinet was scheduled for Wednesday 6 June at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber, at the Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge.

(7.05pm – 8.45pm)

These minutes were prepared by Pam Sidgwick, who can be contacted on 01225 770322 or by e-mail: [psidgwick@westwiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:psidgwick@westwiltshire.gov.uk)

These minutes were published on 24 April 2007.