

## Minutes

Alamein Suite  
City Hall, Salisbury  
4.30 pm: 21 January 2004

### Part 1: *Procedural Matters*

**ACTIONED BY**  
*Cabinet Member*  
*(Contact Officer)*

**208. Present:**

Councillors K C Wren (Leader) J M Collier (Deputy Leader) J C Noeken & Mrs M M A Peach (Planning and Economic Development), D W Brown & E R Draper (Environment and Transport), J A Cole-Morgan & A G Peach (Community & Housing) and Mrs S A Warrander & D A Culver (Resources).

With the permission of the Chairman, the following Councillors addressed the Cabinet on the matters indicated - Council Chairman, Councillor Bissington (minute 226) Councillor Hewitt (minute 225) Councillor Mills (minutes 215, 218, 223, 225, 226) and Councillor West (minutes 218, 225, 229)

The Chairman welcomed Mr Chris Edwards one of the four CPA inspection team members to the meeting.

**209. Code of Conduct - Members & Officers' Interests:**

There were none.

*Cllr Wren*  
*(S Agland)*

**210. Minutes:**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman.

*Cllr Wren*  
*(S Agland)*

**211. Public/Councillor Questions and Statements:**

There were no statements. The Leader advised that he had received a letter from Councillor Dalton in respect of the exempt agenda item, which he would deal with when the item was being considered.

*Cllr Wren*  
*(S Agland)*

**212. Call-in:**

No decisions from the Cabinet's last meeting had been called-in.

*Cllr Wren*  
*(S Agland)*

**213. Forward Plan:**

The Leader presented his Forward Plan for the period 1 March 2004 – 30 June 2004 (previously circulated) that would be published on 14 February 2004 to become operational from 1 March 2004.

*Cllr Wren*  
*(S Agland)*

**Agreed:** that the Leader's previously circulated Forward Plan be adopted for publication on 14 February 2004.

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### **Part 2: Recommendations to the Council**

*(The recommendations set out below will be considered by the Council on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2004)*

**ACTIONED BY**  
**Cabinet Member**  
**(Contact Officer)**

#### **214. Council Tax – Proposed Changes for Second Homes and Long Term Empty Properties:**

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

##### **Recommended to Full Council on 18 February 2004:** that

- (1) discounts on second homes be reduced to 10%.
- (2) discounts on long term empty properties remain unchanged (6 months)
- (3) the qualifying periods for long term empties remain unchanged.
- (4) additional powers to make variations on national Exemption listing be rejected.

**Resolved** - that in due course a report be produced for Cabinet reviewing the discount policy on long term empty properties, having regard to the policy to provide loans to bring empty properties back into use, to establish whether the former policy could be altered with financial advantage to the Council and to encourage a reduction in the number of such dwellings.

*Cllr Mrs Warrander*  
*(P Ruddle)*

#### **215. Delegation of Authority to the Head of Environmental Services:**

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Environmental Services.

##### **Recommended to Full Council on 18 February 2004:** that the following powers be delegated to the Head of Environmental Services:

- (1) to approve applications under Part II, Section 2 and Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 for sex establishment Licenses where there is no objection;
- (2) to exercise and authorise officers to exercise powers with regard to the control of imported food under the European Communities Act 1972 and associated regulations.

*Cllr Brown*  
*(G Silver)*

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### Part 3: Cabinet Decisions

*All decisions set out in this section of the minutes will be implemented on or after 3 February 2004  
(unless called in for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel)*

**ACTIONED BY**  
**Cabinet Member**  
**(Contact Officer)**

**Cllr Wren**  
**(R Sheard)**

#### 216. Audit and Inspection – Annual Letter:

The Leader welcomed Melanie Watson Relationship Manager and Peter Brown Audit Manager, who then gave a presentation on the points arising from the Audit Inspection annual letter (previously circulated).

The Leader thanked the representatives of District Audit for their presentation. He informed the Cabinet that he was pleased with the report and thanked the Officers for their excellent hard work, and especially commended the Finance team for meeting all their targets. The issues identified in the Management letter would now be addressed by the Council during the forthcoming year, so that by the time of the next letter much progress will hopefully have been demonstrated.

#### 217. Portfolio Holder Plans:

The Cabinet considered the drafts of the four Portfolio Holder Plans, (the key elements of which were highlighted by the relevant Portfolio Holders), together with the Management Team cover report all previously circulated. It was noted that the views of the various Overview & Scrutiny Panels on these plans will be reported to the Cabinet meeting on 4 February. The Cabinet noted from the presentation of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development, that Salisbury had the lowest unemployment rate of all the 659 Parliamentary Constituencies at under 1%.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport advised of the following proposed changes for the reasons indicated

1. under para 5.2 - in view of the valuable service the shopmobility organisation provides, and as a considerable proportion of its income is from donations, that the £6,000 from potential efficiencies be removed and that Shop Mobility be removed from the Service Continuous Improvement Programme (the SCIP).
2. under para 5.2 - in view of the high financial impact attached to any shortfall occurring on car parking income - identified in the Risk Register, that the £35,000 potential efficiencies also be deleted from the table.

**Respective Cabinet**  
**Members**

3. under para 5.4 that the £10,000 identified for potential service reductions by reducing the floral enhancements be deleted in view of the positive effects such enhancements have on the City's attraction.
4. under para 5.4 to note that the £26,000 for Parish Grants for cleaning and skips can remain, however the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport intends to bring a report to Cabinet later this year recommending that the larger settlements should lose their entitlement to such funding (as they are capable of funding this through their own precepts) enabling the funding to be better targeted at the smaller parishes and communities who are not able to raise sufficient funds themselves. All those Town and Parish Councils affected by the proposed changes will be notified well in advance so they can take them into account when setting their precepts for 2005/06.
5. under para 5.4 that the proposed £35,000 reduction against car parking income also be deleted for the reasons identified in the risk register mentioned above.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development advised that under para 5.2 of his Plan, following a reappraisal of the benefits gained in Business Partnerships, that the £10,000 identified for potential service reductions by reducing the support for Business Partnership be deleted.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Housing advised that under para 5.4 of his plan, the £35,000 in Arts Grants identified for potential service reductions be deleted in view of the adverse impact on the community.

The Chief Executive expressed concerns regarding the likely human resources needed to deliver on all the actions in the Plans as presented and that consequently a paper reviewing the Council's corporate capacity and the implications for the Plans would be presented to Cabinet on 4 February when the Plans are finally agreed for recommendation to Council.

**Resolved :** that the four Portfolio Plans be approved in principle, subject to final consideration at Cabinet on 4 February (and subsequent recommendation to Full Council), taking account of any amendments agreed following comments made by the Overview & Scrutiny Panels, the above changes and the outcome of the review of the Council's corporate capacity.

## 218. **Draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) (Local Development Framework):**

Councillor Noeken, Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development introduced the previously circulated report of the Principal Forward Planning Officer. The recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel were submitted at the meeting, namely (a) that MP's for the District be lobbied on the issue of an inspector's report being binding upon the local authority with no recourse available in the event of a perceived mistake having been made by the inspector (b) that an objection be made in respect of the binding nature of the inspector's report as a principle in addition to the other comments raised in section 5 of the report.

The Cabinet expressed concern over the ODPM proposals which it was felt

*CllrNoeken  
(J Meeker)*

would create a democratic deficit and represented a step towards regional government.

**Agreed:** that

- (a) the points highlighted in bold in Section 5 of the previously circulated report, plus an objection, as a principle, to the binding nature of the inspector's report, be communicated to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as part of the consultation exercise on the Draft Planning Policy Statements and;
- (b) that MP's for the District be lobbied on the issue of an inspector's report being binding upon the local authority with no recourse available in the event of a perceived mistake having been made by the inspector;
- (c) that the Cabinet receive a report later in the year on the timetable for the new Framework.

**219. Performance Management:**

Councillor Culver, Deputy Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the previously circulated report from the Head of Best Value.

**Agreed:** that

- (1) the performance against the top 20 Performance Indicators be noted
- (2) the Benefits Section be recommended for a Smarties Performance Award
- (3) a report be submitted to Cabinet providing accurate figures on the number of park and ride journeys made thus ensuring the correct information is used for BVPI 502.

*Cllr Culver  
(T Beer)*

**220. Customer Care Charter:**

Councillor Mrs Warrander, Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the previously circulated report of the Customer Care Manager.

**Agreed:** that the Customer Care Charter as set out in Annex 1 of the previously circulated report be approved.

*Cllr Mrs Warrander  
(H Frances)*

**221. Loans to Bring Empty Properties Back into Use:**

Councillor Cole-Morgan, Cabinet Member for Community & Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Strategic Housing Services.

**Agreed:** that, subject to Full Council approval of the revised Capital Programme in February with regard to the financing of this Scheme then:

- (1) the provision of loans towards bringing back into use empty properties be approved;
- (2) that the maximum loan be £15,000
- (3) no interest be added to the repayment of the loan
- (4) the maximum repayment period be five years; and
- (5) £100,000 per annum for three years, 2004/05 onwards, from Right to Buy sales in the General Fund be set aside as the initial investment in the scheme
- (6) the scheme be reviewed by Cabinet after 12 months operation to determine continuance.

*Cllr Cole-Morgan  
(A Reynolds)*

**222. Results of the Tenants' General Satisfaction Survey:**

Councillor A Peach, Deputy Cabinet Member for Community & Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Housing Management.

*Cllr A Peach  
(D Streek)*

**Agreed:** that

- (1) the high level of Tenant satisfaction achieved for 2002 be noted:
- (2) praise and publicity be given to staff for an excellent set of results and in particular the highest ever level of satisfaction with the overall housing service:
- (3) Further investigations be undertaken into why individual elements of the service provided did not match the overall figure:
- (4) a Chartermark application be made to improve further customer services and obtain national recognition for the District Council's high standards:
- (5) the Housing Service contribute to the Council's web-site and in particular provide on-line reporting for repairs
- (6) More publicity be given to the Council's transfer policy; and
- (7) Availability of direct debits to improve, further, rent collection, be extended.

**223. Management Options – Review of Leisure Services – Role of Sports Development in the new Structure:**

Councillor Cole-Morgan, Cabinet Member for Community & Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Head of Community Initiatives. The Cabinet considered each of the options set out in the report in relation to improving the overall sports and recreation service. The Leader advised that it would be two months before a decision would be taken on the main principles of the leisure trust proposals.

*Cllr Cole-Morgan  
(L Waller)*

**Agreed:** that should the leisure trust proceed

- (1) Option 2 set out in the report be the preferred Option for further detailed research, as long as three or more facilities are put out to Trust Management:
- (2) Option 1 be the preferred Option if less than 3 facilities are put out to Trust
- (3) Further research examines the cost implications and delivery of Option 2 in consultation with the Principal Leisure & Community Officer and PMP with a further report being sent to Cabinet.

**224. Community District Grants:**

Councillor A Peach, Deputy Cabinet Member for Community & Housing introduced the previously circulated report of the Principal Community Development Officer.

*Cllr A Peach  
(A Skyring)*

**Agreed:** that

- (1) the recommendations agreed by the Grants Working Group as set out in Appendix Two of the report be approved subject to budget approval by Council in February 2004 and to the Council's Grant Policy and terms and conditions including development of a fund raising strategy;
- (2) Approval be given to the CAB application subject to the Principal

Community Development Officer's approval of the 2004/2005 service level agreement and to budget approval in February 2004.

- (3) That those funded organisations, as part of the grant conditions put into place robust Equal Opportunity Policies, and where relevant Child Protection Policies.
- (4) That organisations develop a Reserves Policy subject to the size of the organization as per Appendix 3.

**225. A303 Stonehenge Improvement - Update:**

Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport introduced the report of the Transportation Officer circulated following agenda dispatch. He then invited Councillor Noeken to add further comment. Councillor West expressed concern at the Highway's rejection of the District Council's call for signs to bypassed local services in Winterbourne Stoke

*Cllr Brown  
(G Wright)*

**Agreed:** that

- (1) The Public Inquiry Inspector be informed of the current status of the objection by this Council with respect to the Published A303 Stonehenge Improvement;
- (2) A decision on whether to sustain a written objection on the outstanding items identified in the report be delegated to the Head of Forward Planning and Transportation, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council
- (3) The Transportation team be thanked for their excellent work in resolving the Council's major issues of concern, which has consequently saved the Council a significant sum in anticipated legal fees
- (4) That the Officers take up the concerns expressed by Councillor West.

**226. Planning Enforcement – Policy and Practice:**

Councillor Noeken, the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development introduced the previously circulated report of the Principal Planning Officer (Enforcement). The Cabinet noted the views of the Planning & Economic Development Overview & Scrutiny Panel set out under Item 18 on the agenda.

*Cllr Noeken  
(S Hawkins)*

**Agreed:** that

- (1) the Head of Development Services and Head of Forward Planning & Transportation recruit a compliance officer together with an administrative assistant, in the event that they are satisfied that sufficient income can be generated from Planning obligations such that the additional posts are filled at no overall cost to the Council.
- (2) the Head of Development Services/ Head of Forward Planning & Transportation be authorised to levy an additional charge on Section 106 Planning Obligations, for the purposes of ensuring that benefits secured through such Obligations are provided, as follows:

- £500 per each individual obligation/ requirement within the Section 106;
- An additional fee equating to 5% of the R2 contribution paid;

Such charges to be reviewed after twelve months, if it considered that the revenue generated is insufficient to fund fully the posts.

- (3) that a paper on the Council's R2 policy (ensuring that the funds accrued are fully utilised) be presented to Cabinet once it has been through the Scrutiny process.

## 227. **Dates of Future Cabinet Meetings:**

Councillor Wren, the Cabinet Leader proposed the following schedule of Cabinet meetings for the period June 2004 – 11 May 2005 all to be held in the City Hall unless otherwise stated and commencing at 4.00 pm.

23 June 2004 (Committee Room 1)  
 21 July  
 15 September  
 20 October  
 24 November  
 15 December  
 19 January 2005  
 02 February (The budget setting meeting)  
 02 March  
 06 April  
 11 May

**Agreed** that the programme of meetings for June 2004 – May 2005 be as set out above.

*Cllr Wren  
(S Agland)*



**228. Exempt Information:**

In view of the confidential or sensitive nature of the matters to be considered, it was:

**Agreed:** that the Press and Public (except for the consultant (Mr B Garrard) be excluded from the meeting during consideration of those matters defined as 'Exempt' under the Access to Information Act 1985 as specified below:

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

Paragraph 8 namely: 'The amount of any expenditure proposed to be incurred by the authority under any particular contract for the acquisition of property or the supply of goods or services'

Paragraph 9 namely: 'Any terms proposed or to be Proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services'

***Summary of Exempt Matters***

Agenda Item 23 - Wilton and Britford Park and Ride Bus  
Operation Contract

*There were 3 members of the public present.  
The meeting finished at 7.55 pm*