

WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the: **CABINET**

Held on: **WEDNESDAY 27 AUGUST 2003**

Held at: **COUNCIL CHAMBER, BRADLEY ROAD,
TROWBRIDGE**

Present:

Councillors: Phillips (Leader), Clark, Newbury, Wiltshire and While.

Also present: Councillors, Bower, Brice, Marion Clegg, Cunliffe-Jones
James, Manasseh, Osborn, Squires, Syme and Wells

Officers: Corporate Officer (Democratic Services), Planning Policy
Manager, Management Accountant, Technical Services
Manager, Member Support Officer (AB)

124 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mounde and Payne.

125 MINUTES

The minutes of the special meeting held on 29 July 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

126 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wiltshire declared his interest in minute number 132 - Affordable Housing

Councillor Newbury declared his interest in minute number 130 - Land Adjoining Leighton Sports Centre, Westbury - and left the Chamber during consideration of this item.

127 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER

No announcements were made.

128 UPDATES BY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

No updates were made.

129 MATTERS REFERRED TO CABINET BY OVERVIEW COMMITTEES

a) External Overview Committee: Post Offices

At its meeting on 23 July 2003 the External Overview Committee looked at Post Offices. Part of the Committee's discussion centered on how this Council could help improve the economic viability of struggling Post Offices and a list of suggestions was recommended to Cabinet.

RESOLVED: That officers be asked to prepare a response to the External Overview Committee's suggestions with particular reference to the following:

- **payment through post offices of all forms of revenue due to the Council**
- **retention of key charging facilities due to be withdrawn in March 2004**
- **requesting Central Government to expand the business rates relief support scheme and investigate increasing the village population threshold and rateable value at which post offices become eligible for business rates.**

(b) Internal Overview Committee - Vision for Trowbridge

The Internal Overview Committee at its meeting on 30 July 2003 made the following recommendation to Cabinet:

"That the Leader and Deputy Leader be invited to the October meeting of the Committee to discuss their long term views on the Vision for Trowbridge and their commitment for the project"

The Leader informed Cabinet that he and the Deputy Leader would be attending the October meeting of the Internal Overview Committee.

KEY DECISIONS

130 LAND ADJOINING LEIGHTON SPORTS CENTRE, WESTBURY

Cabinet was asked to consider an application by Mrs G Matthews, the owner of 13 Wellhead Lane, Westbury, to purchase land adjoining Leighton Sports Centre, Wellhead Lane, Westbury. The subject land adjoined the garden of 13 Wellhead Lane and had been used as an allotment garden by Mrs Matthews since 1973. The Council purchased the land in 1982 and prior to this date Mrs Matthews (and her late husband) had rented the land from the then owners. Mrs Matthews currently licensed the land from the Council.

RESOLVED: a) **That the disposal of land adjoining 13 Wellhead Lane on terms to be set by the District Valuer be confirmed.**

- b) **That the buyer will, in the transfer of the property, covenant for a period of 80 years not to use the property for any purpose other than garden or amenity land, ancillary to the buyer's property, 13 Wellhead Lane, Westbury, Wiltshire without the content of the seller. The granting of such consent shall be t the absolute discretion of the seller.**

Statement of reason for key decisions	The land is surplus to Council requirements and its disposal will generate a capital receipt
Options considered and rejected	That the land may be of use for future expansion of the Leighton Sports Centre complex
Date of implementation (not less than five days after date of decision)	As soon as possible

131 LAND AT CHERRY ORCHARD, CODFORD

The Cabinet was asked to consider a request from the Wiltshire Rural Housing Association to purchase land at Cherry Orchard, Codford in order to provide six homes to be let to affordable rents.

The sale of this land to Wiltshire Rural Housing Association would initially enable the provision of six additional affordable homes in the district with a further four in the future. The site currently attracts maintenance costs but provides little community benefit. In the event of a disposal the sale agreement would limit development only to the provision of affordable homes for rent with any undeveloped area being properly maintained until required, with controlled public access in the interim.

- RESOLVED:**
- a) **That agreement in principle to the disposal of land at Cherry Orchard, Codford to the Wiltshire Rural Housing Association, on terms to be agreed which represent best possible consideration to the Council, be confirmed.**
- b) **That the Corporate Portfolio Holder be delegated to agree final terms prior to any disposal.**

Statement of reason for key decisions	The sale of this land to Wiltshire Rural Housing Association will enable the provision of additional affordable homes in the District
Options considered and rejected	To retain this land as an under-performing asset
Date of implementation (not less than five days after date of decision)	As soon as possible

132 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Planning Policy Manager presented a report asking the Cabinet to approve an expansion of the Council's preferred method of delivering affordable housing to incorporate a subsidy requirement from developers following the abolition of the Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG).

RESOLVED:

- a) **That the expansion of the Council's current preferred method of delivering affordable housing to incorporate a subsidy requirement from developers following the abolition of the LASHG, as the basis for negotiation be approved.**
- b) **That Cabinet supports the development of Supplementary Planning Guidance for the delivery of affordable housing in West Wiltshire through an appropriate policy project group and for consultation to be carried out prior to adoption.**

Statement of reason for key decisions	The need to expand the Council's preferred method of delivering affordable housing following the abolition of LASHG
Options considered and rejected	The option to continue to negotiate only free land was rejected due to the inability to deliver the units without subsidy
Date of implementation (not less than five days after date of decision)	The 'no subsidy' negotiation approach will be adopted five days after Cabinet approval

NON KEY DECISIONS

133 WILTSHIRE LOCAL COMPACT

Cabinet was asked to endorse the introduction of a Wiltshire Local Compact. Central Government had confirmed that all local authorities and primary care trusts were expected to establish a formal agreement (known as a 'Compact') with a voluntary and community sector. By April 2004 these Compacts should either be in place or firm plans for achieving them should be underway.

RESOLVED: **That officers be asked to cost the staff time and the additional subsidies required before the introduction of a Wiltshire Local Compact is agreed by Cabinet. Subject to the forgoing the Cabinet endorses a principle of establishing a Compact.**

134 FINANCIAL MONITORING 2003/04

Cabinet was asked to consider a report giving relevant information affecting the financial position of the Council in the current financial year.

RESOLVED: **That the report be noted.**

135 GENERAL FUND RESERVE BALANCE

Cabinet was informed of the basis of determining the recommended level of the General Fund reserve balance.

The report outlined the requirement for reserves and the methodology behind the calculation of a General Fund reserve balance. A reserve is an amount set aside in one year to cover planned or unexpected expenditure in future years. It is part of good financial management to maintain a level of reserves.

- RESOLVED:**
- a) **That the report be noted**
 - b) **That consideration is given to how the balance will be replenished when reviewing the financial strategy.**

136 DRAFT COTSWOLDS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Cabinet was informed of the draft Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan to which a response had to be provided by 19 September 2003.

- RESOLVED:**
- That the proposed comments on the Cotswold AONB Draft Management Plan Consultation Document be endorsed, so that a response may be made by the deadline of 19 September 2003.**

137 CABINET FORWARD WORKPLAN

Consideration was given to the Cabinet Forward Work Plan for the four month period from September to December 2003.

The following changes were noted from the current version of the plan.

Additional Items - September 2003

Homelessness Update
Pilot Schemes for Local Government By-elections

(7.00pm – 8.05pm)

These minutes were prepared by Anna Browne, Member Support Officer who can be contacted on direct line 01225 770322 or email abrowne@westwiltshire.gov.uk