

CABINET CAPITAL ASSETS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a MEETING held in KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN on Tuesday, 22 July 2014.

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| Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe | Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Skills and Strategic Transport |
| Cllr Jonathon Seed | Cabinet Member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding |
| Cllr Toby Sturgis | Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property, Waste |
| Cllr John Thomson | Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband |
| Cllr Dick Tonge | Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform |

Also in Attendance: Cllr Keith Humphries, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Stuart Wheeler

Key Decisions Matters defined as 'Key' Decisions and included in the Council's Forward Work Plan are shown as 

Councillor John Thomson, Deputy Leader in the Chair

17 Apologies and Substitutions

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Jane Scott.

Cllr Scott was substituted by Cllr Jonathan Seed.

18 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Capital Assets Committee held on 20 May 2014 were presented.

Resolved:

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2014 subject to the inclusion of Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe's name in the list of those who had tendered an apology.

19 **Leader's Announcements**

There were no announcements.

20 **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

21 **Public Participation and Questions from Councillors**

The Deputy Leader explained that, as usual, any public present were welcome to address the meeting on any of the items on the agenda.

The Deputy Leader reported receipt of a question from Mr Andrew Hall, of Martingate Centre Ltd of Devizes concerning the disposal of the Corsham Mansion House and Library at Corsham, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of these minutes and available online with these minutes.

Cllr Sturgis responded to the question by explaining that the bids in respect of Corsham Mansion House and Library would be discussed by Cabinet Members on the rising of this meeting. When asked, Cllr Sturgis confirmed that it was hoped that a decision could be made by the end of the month (July 2014).

22 **Urgent items**

There were no urgent items.

23 **Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD): Site Allocations**

 Cllr Toby Sturgis presented a report which informed members of the outcome of an assessment of council owned land for inclusion as potential new traveller sites in the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD) and sought agreement to include these sites in the development plan process through to potential allocation in the draft plan.

Resolved:

That the Capital Assets Committee endorse the inclusion of the Council owned land listed at Appendix 3 of the report for further assessment as part of the Gypsy and Traveller DPD process to help maintain a five year supply of sites throughout out the proposed plan period in accordance with national policy.

Reasons for decision:

There are a number of drivers for pursuing the opportunity to include public land in the proposed Gypsy and Traveller DPD. These include:

- (i) The requirement to maintain a five year supply of traveller pitches included in national policy.
- (ii) The need to provide a choice in the size, type and location of traveller sites in Wiltshire.
- (iii) The legal requirement in the Housing Acts for councils to provide for the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in their area.
- (iv) The requirement in national policy for councils to respond positively to the accommodation needs of travellers, a commitment the Council has also made to the Wiltshire Core Strategy Inspector.
- (v) The benefits of reducing unauthorised encampments / developments.

24 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved

To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following items of business because it was likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

Reason for taking the item in private:

Paragraph 3 – information relating to the financial information or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

No representations had been received as to why this item should not be held in private.

25 **Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (DPD): Site Allocations**

Resolved:

That the Committee note the confidential appendix presented and in so doing, confirm its decision taken under minute no. 23 above.

26 **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Project**

 Cllr Toby Sturgis presented a confidential report which asked members to note the update to the project costs and timescales involved and to consider the options open to the Council.

Resolved:

That the Committee adopt the proposals as set out in the confidential report presented.

Reason for decision:

To advise cabinet of the factors involved and options available with a view to arriving at an appropriate decision.

Appendix

Question from Mr Hall (signed minutes and online)

(Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 2.20 pm)

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| These decisions were published on the 25 July 2014 and will come into force on 4 August 2014 |
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The Officer who has produced these minutes is Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 713948 or e-mail Yamina.Rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk
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Question to Cabinet Capital Assets Committee

Tuesday 22nd July, 2014

Good afternoon. I am a Director of Martingate Centre Limited. My company purchased the Centre from North Wiltshire Council in 2002 and our track record of refurbishing and managing the Centre clearly demonstrates our long term support for the town.

The Mansion House and Library site is also important to the future vibrancy of Corsham town centre, given its potential role in retail, job creation and education. The Committee will recall that the Council no longer needs the site and has sought to sell it for some years. Most recently, it offered the site for sale with a deadline for bids of 27 November 2013, some eight months ago.

In 2011, this Committee was informed that the cost to the tax payer to retain the site would exceed £850,000 for the Mansion House alone with a risk of increased costs due to its Listed status. The site is now effectively empty and our consultants have told us that urgent work is needed to protect the site not only from significant weather damage this winter, but also from possible public liability costs from youths breaking in. We have previously advised the Council of specific incidents in this regard.

There is now significant local interest in seeing the building reinstated, particularly in light of the heavy cost and liability to the tax payer if delayed further.

As one of the bidders in the process in a position to proceed with the purchase with immediate effect, could the Committee please confirm to us when it expects to select its preferred bidder? We understand the Committee has all of the necessary information it needs to make an informed final decision, but we are very willing to provide any additional information the Committee requires to expedite the decision process and bring about the regeneration of this important asset to the town.

Thank you.

By email

Andrew Hall

Martingate Centre Ltd

16th July 2014

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