



MEETING OF THE CABINET
7 MARCH 2005 - 10.30 AM – 12.02 PM

PRESENT:

**Councillor Teri Bryant
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor John Smith**

**Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew – Deputy Leader /
Chairman**

**Corporate Director, Regulatory Services
Corporate Director, Community Services
Head of Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration
Head of Design Services (Surveying)
Business Services Manager
Member Services Manager
Senior Planning Officer (Policy)
Public Relations Manager**

**Non Cabinet Members – Councillors Kerr ;
Stokes ; Mrs M. Wheat ; Wilks**

CO108.APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from the Leader, Councillor Mrs Linda Neal.

CO109. MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7th February 2005 were confirmed as a correct record.

CO110. PROVISION OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES: GRANTHAM

DECISION:

- (1) To approve the Grantham Bus Station as the most suitable site for the provision of attended toilets in Grantham;**
- (2) To approve the costs of refurbishment estimated to be £125,000 in 2005/2006;**
- (3) To ensure that the additional cost of providing an attended facility in Grantham will be contained within the 2005/2006 budget allocation. Should any additional budget be required in 2006/2007 this will be identified in the 2006/2007 budget round;**
- (4) To include as part of the scheme proper signposting within the town centre area to indicate the location of the attended facilities and approximate walking distance;**
- (5) That officers investigate the terms of the lease with Morrisons for the use of the Bus Station site;**
- (6) To seek a formal response from the Grantham TCMP and the Police on the preferred location.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Recommendations from the Environment DSP Working Group set up to consider the location of an attended toilet in Grantham, together with an oral report given at the meeting by a member of that Working Group;
- (2) The Grantham Local Area Assembly's preference for the Bus Station as the location for the toilets;
- (3) A technical evaluation of the Abbey Gardens and the Bus Station sites which indicated that the Bus Station has the potential to provide larger facilities in an area of town where there is considerably higher footfall. The benefits of providing a facility where large numbers of people are either waiting for transport or completing journeys. The Bus Station therefore offers the greatest potential to provide quality facilities; is in an area where most people would expect to find toilets, and would have the advantage of being in a high footfall area;
- (4) Report number DCS15 by the Director of Community Services summarising the outcome of consultations and details of the technical evaluation for both options – Abbey Gardens and Grantham Bus Station;
- (5) The Capital Programme includes a sum of £200,000 to meet the capital costs of refurbishing the toilets in Grantham. Subject to

agreement with Morrisons, the work could be completed at the Bus Station in October 2005;

- (6) Signposting within the town centre area will inform visitors where to find the toilets and advise on approximate walking distance;
- (7) The lease on the Bus Station site has another 18 years to run; in view of the Council's proposed investment in the public conveniences, consideration needs to be given to the terms of this lease;
- (8) The comments from the Grantham TCMP and the Police were not contained in report DCS15.

Other options considered and rejected:

The Abbey Gardens site:

- (1) The site is away from the shops and is a smaller footfall area;
- (2) Recently approved plans for additional security measures for the Abbey Gardens, including extended railings and gates, will restrict access at the site to office opening hours only. Security at this particular location is a high priority issue having regard to previous arson attacks on the building and the inappropriate activity which necessitated the closure of the public toilets in Abbey Gardens and Conduit Lane;
- (3) The specified requirement for a 24 hour facility will not be possible at Abbey Gardens.

CO111. SCIENCE DISCOVERY CENTRE FOR GRANTHAM: OUTLINE FEASIBILITY STUDY

DECISION: To note the work undertaken by ABL Consulting and to approve the following actions:

- (1) Officers to consider how the development of a Science Discovery Centre could be taken forward as part of future work into the development of the Grantham Canal Basin; and**
- (2) To bring forward options for the future use of Conduit Lane car park consistent with the Grantham Town Centre Masterplan;**
- (3) To take forward discussion with Lincolnshire County Council to identify initiatives that promote and interpret Grantham's scientific heritage with the objective of increasing the number of visitors into the town centre.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number DCS17 by the Director of Community Services summarising the results of the feasibility study undertaken by ABL Consulting;
- (2) Oral report made at the meeting by a local ward member in his capacity as the Council's representative on the Grantham Canal Partnership;

- (3) The study has shown that a significant market exists for a medium sized Science Discovery Centre. A larger site is therefore needed and the Grantham Canal Basin site offers a real opportunity to combine a visitor attraction with mixed development to create an interesting and exciting scheme;
- (4) The canal basin site has the potential for Section 106 funding contribution to the overall costs. Combined with a larger development project on this site with greater economic outputs, it may be possible to attract external funding in the longer term;
- (5) By opening up a dialogue with Lincolnshire County Council, opportunities for joint working can be examined. There may be the potential to develop joint proposals which would deliver a Science Discovery Centre in Grantham.

Other options considered and rejected:

Conduit Lane car park: This site was surveyed and a mixed development was considered to include the Science Centre and other uses. The study concluded that there was insufficient demand for anything other than a scheme that combined the Science Centre with residential development on the site. Given the predicted market for this attraction, the car park site is too small and would make it difficult to generate a significant capital contribution to make it viable. Without significant external financial support, the project is not deliverable.

CO112. WORTH COURT, BOURNE

DECISION:

- (1) To note the current position on the apparent unsuccessful bid for the Extra Care Scheme in respect of Worth Court, Bourne;**
- (2) To continue support for the re-development and improvement of this accommodation.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Oral report from the Director of Regulatory Services referring to the current informal notification that the bid submitted in partnership by this authority, the Lincolnshire County Council, and the Hanover Housing Association had been unsuccessful. Officers would now await formal feedback on the areas of the bid which were unsuccessful with a view to considering alternative measures for the site;
- (2) To note that ward representatives, residents, and the Cabinet would

continue to be kept informed on progress. The Cabinet wished to place on record its acknowledgement of the excellent record of communication between officers and those affected by this scheme despite the disappointing news.

CO113. REVIEW OF GRANTS CONDITIONS (DISCRETIONARY GRANTS SCHEME)

DECISION:

- (1) To approve the reviewed Grants Criteria as appended to report DCS16, subject to the title being changed to “Social Grants Criteria”;**
- (2) The Director of Community Services to investigate the appropriateness of the requirement for applicants to raise at least 10% of matched funding;**
- (3) That the maximum grant awarded to any single organisation be cash limited to £1,000;**
- (4) To delegated the award of discretionary grants to the appropriate Cabinet Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Director of Community Services.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number DCS16 explaining how discretionary grants have been administered in the past and the reasons behind the review of this process;
- (2) The Council’s prioritisation process has resulted in a number of service areas where realignment of budgets could be made in favour of the new priorities. As a consequence, the budget available for the award of discretionary grants has been adjusted;
- (3) To ensure that grants are allocated on an equitable basis, the new guidance has been drawn up to help local organisations to make successful applications for financial support;
- (4) The new criteria will ensure that any financial support given contributes to the overall objectives and priorities of the Council;
- (5) A cash limit of £1,000 will enable the Council to support a larger number of organisations. It is intended not to accept applications for less than £100;
- (6) To specify “Social Grants Criteria” distinguishes the scheme from the Business Grants award.

CO114. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

DECISION:

- (1) To approve the draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) as attached to report number PLA485 for the purposes of an eight week period of consultation beginning in April; the consultation to form the pre-submission stage of the new Local Development Framework process;**
- (2) That the Economic Portfolio Holder be granted delegated authority to approve the questionnaire leaflet summarising the SCI to be sent out as part of the public consultation.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number PLA485 by the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Regeneration setting out the core aims of the Statement of Community Involvement – one of the documents which forms part of the new Local Development Framework (LDF), and what the consultation mechanisms will include;
- (2) The SCI sets out the standards which the local authority intend to achieve in relation to engaging the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents and for all planning applications;
- (3) Once the SCI is adopted, all Local Development Documents and planning applications must be subject to the appropriate community involvement and consultation set out in the Adopted SCI;
- (4) A number of training events are to be held in parallel with the public consultation period. It is therefore sensible to extend the consultation period in order that these activities can co-incide.

CO115. REVIEW OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND CORPORATE PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

DECISION:

- (1) To refer the contents of the Chief Executive's report CEX283 to the relevant Development and Scrutiny Panels before any formal endorsement by the Cabinet;**
- (2) To adopt the new targets for Recycling as detailed in report CEX283.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number CEX283 prepared by the Chief Executive asking the Cabinet formally to review that element of the Corporate Planning Framework concerning the Council's priorities which are divided between Category A (step-change) and Category B (incremental change). The Council has determined that this review should be undertaken annually;
- (2) In reviewing the services in categories A and B, consideration is given to new data available to the Council, in particular the results of the 2005 customer survey, reports from inspectors, any new government priorities and the performance of the Council against the targets set;
- (3) Indications from the un-weighted data of the customer survey show a strong support for the Council priorities, the Council's Vision, and a fairly high level of pride in the local community;
- (4) Status of progress on recycling: the Council's ability to meet future recycling targets is becoming increasingly dependent upon its success in securing DEFRA grants. DEFRA have made it clear that priority for future grant applications will be given to those Councils who have elected to set higher targets than the minimums set. Increased targets for this priority would enable the Council to address the current inequity and variations in the service across the district which has resulted in some customer dissatisfaction;
- (5) Status of affordable housing: improved projected provision in 2004/05 of new affordable homes – 60 compared with 35 in 2003/04. Outcome of the Strategic Housing Services Inspection which has challenged several aspects of the Council's performance in this area and suggested ways of improving. The inspectors were of the opinion that targets already set represented a step-change. Early indications from the Stock Options Appraisal Commission (SOAC) that stock transfer may emerge as a recommendation to the Council. Coupled with a valuation of the housing stock, transfer could deliver a considerable capital receipt to the authority which could be used to fund the delivery of affordable housing. Taking these factors into account, there would appear to be a clear justification in moving Affordable Housing from Category B to a Category A priority with consequential adjustments to the targets;
- (6) The Cabinet is of the view that the DSPs must have an opportunity to consider the above factors before any formal endorsement is taken by the Cabinet;
- (7) Because of the need to improve the Council's performance on recycling, the revised targets are accepted.

Other options considered and assessed:

Category B - Planning and Conservation: The Council has made substantial progress in improving the speed of planning applications and has exceeded most of the targets set. As a result of this, new targets have been set and will be included in future Best Value Performance Plans. In view of the importance of the service to residents and the present large incentive grants from the OSPM, it is not recommended that the Category B status of this

service is changed.

CO116. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - NEW LOCAL INDICATORS/MEASURES
2005/06

DECISION: To amend the targets for the following local indicators:

(1) Street Scene Priority A: Satisfaction with street scene by TCMPs:

**To reduce the percentages accordingly: 80% for 2005/06;
82% for 2006/07, and 84% for 2007/08**

(2) Communications: No. of editions of Districtline issued: To increase the target for 2005/06 to 4 editions.

(3) Diversity Priority B: % of new applicants for housing from ethnic backgrounds: To delete this local indicator for the time being and to review in 6 months' time;

(4) That the revised recycling targets approved under the previous minute CO115 be aligned within the Performance Indicators for 2005/06.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

- (1) Report number DOS274 by the Director of Operational Services explaining that the Council's ongoing development of its performance management arrangements requires new local indicators/measures to better reflect the priorities. Following the Cabinet's approval of the draft set of indicators/measures on 10th January 2005, comments were sought from the DSPs, the LSP and the recent round of the Local Area Assemblies;
- (2) Details of observations/comments received during the consultation period;
- (3) Recommendations made by the Environment DSP that the targets set for the percentage satisfaction with the street scene by the TCMPs is too high;
- (4) The original target of 3 editions of Districtline for 2005/06 was set when staffing resources were low. The recent appointment of a PR Manager and the imminent appointment of a Communications Manager should bring the capacity up to meet the quarterly publication target;
- (5) The % of new applicants for housing from ethnic backgrounds is considered premature at this stage but will be subject to review in 6 months.

Other options considered and assessed

The existing set of national best value performance indicators does not provide sufficient coverage for the Council to effectively measure its progress

CO117. ITEMS RAISED BY CABINET MEMBERS INCLUDING REPORTS ON KEY AND NON KEY DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS.

Non Key Decisions:

(1) Councillor Ray Auger: Portfolio - Environment

Decision: To approve a new Dog Control Contract running from 1 April 2005 to 30 March 2009 to K9 (Euro) Ltd of PO Box 133, Wigan, Lancs, WN1 1AA, registered office K9 (Euro) Ltd, Empire House, 175 Piccadilly, Mayfair, London, W1V 9DB.

[Decision made 07.03.05]

(2) Councillor Paul Carpenter: Portfolio - Technology

Decision: To approve the awarding of a contract to develop an ICT strategy for the Council to Western Connect.

[Decision made 28.02.05]

(3) Councillor John Smith: Portfolio - Economic

Decision: To approve a partnership contribution to Lincolnshire Development of £15,000 towards development costs, estimated to be in excess of £5 million, for a 30 Acre, proposed employment site on the Northfields Business Park (adjacent to Park Air Systems) in Market Deeping. The contribution to be made available from the service area budget for this financial year.

[Decision made 07.03.05]

(4) Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright: Portfolio - Cultural

Decision: That in compliance with its contractual commitments and E-Gov targets the District Council acquires a range of software and hardware for its leisure centres at Stamford, Grantham, Bourne and the Deepings as detailed in the appendix to report LAC141 at a cost of £83,649.23.

[Decision made jointly with Councillor P. Carpenter on 07.03.05]

Decision: To give approval to the write off of uncollectable non-domestic rates totalling £27,556.73.

[Decision made on 21.02.05]

**(5) Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew: Portfolio – Deputy Leader
[Decisions made in the absence of the Leader]**

Decision: To approve the awarding of the internal audit contract to Pricewaterhouse Coopers, for a period of 4 years beginning 2 May 2005.

[Decision made 07.03.05]

Decision: To approve a Councillor Development Charter the commitment to which to be signed on behalf of the Council by the Leader and Chief Executive, subject to:

1. A cabinet member being designated to “champion” the charter.
2. A councillor being designated to undertake Councillor Development Charter assessor training alongside the training and development manager to achieve the standard.
3. The Capacity and Resources Development Scrutiny Panel to hold the development responsibility and progress towards the charter be part of the Development Scrutiny Panel's workflow.

[Decision made 07.03.05]

DATE DECISIONS EFFECTIVE:

Key Decisions at minutes numbers CO110, CO111, CO113, CO115, and CO116 and other non key decisions made on 7th March 2005 can be implemented on 16th March unless subject to call-in by the relevant Development and Scrutiny Panel.

**South Kesteven District Council, Council Offices, St. Peter's Hill, Grantham,
Lincolnshire NG31 6PZ**

**Contact: Cabinet Support Officer - Tel: 01476 406119
e-mail l.shuttlewood@skdc.com**