

MINUTES

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2008

2.00 PM



PRESENT

Councillor Mike Exton □ Chairman

Councillor Bob Adams
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Christine Brough
Councillor Robert Broughton
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor Elizabeth Channell
Councillor George Chivers
Councillor Michael Cook
Councillor Nick Craft
Councillor Alan Davidson
Councillor Stuart Farrar
Councillor John Harvey
Councillor Robert Hearmon
Councillor Bryan Helyar
Councillor David Higgs
Councillor Trevor Holmes
Councillor Reginald Howard
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Sam Jalili
Councillor Mrs Maureen Jalili
Councillor Albert Victor Kerr
Councillor Jock Kerr

OFFICERS

Acting Chief Executive (Ian Yates)
Strategic Director (Beverly Agass)
Acting Strategic Director (Tracey Blackwell)

Councillor Reg Lovelock M.B.E.
Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
Councillor Andrew Moore
Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal
Councillor Benjamin Newcombe-Jones
Councillor John Nicholson
Councillor Alan Parkin
Councillor Mrs Margery Radley
Councillor Bob Russell
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Bob Sandall
Councillor Trevor Scott
Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Mrs Maureen Spencer-Gregson O.B.E.
Councillor Michael Taylor
Councillor Jeffrey Thompson
Councillor Frank Turner
Councillor Graham Wheat
Councillor Mike Williams
Councillor Avril Williams
Councillor Raymond Wootten

OFFICERS

Principal Planning Officer (minute 51 only)
Principal Democracy Officer
Corporate Head, Finance & Resources

"Listening Learning Delivering"

42. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

[2:00 – 2:10pm]

Question 1 – From Mr T. Burns

To Councillor Mrs Linda Neal (Leader of the Council)

Between 2003/4 and 2006/7 the Council created 23 posts paying £40,000 a year. I wish to know how much this is costing the Council in the last full tax year. These payments should of course include pension pots.

Reply from Councillor Mrs. Neal

In response to your specific question as I have previously informed you, the Council did not create 23 additional posts but, as part of a restructure, replaced existing posts with a reduced number of posts which assumed a broader range of duties. The 2007/8 cost for the posts you refer to is £1.36 million (this includes an element of pension costs which amount to £213,000).

This review of the structure did not create an additional financial burden on the Council tax payer. In fact I would point out the restructure created a reduction in costs and an annual salary saving of £200,000. The Council has continued to rationalise its staffing structure with a further saving of £105,000 following the streamlining of senior management posts. This means that savings of over £300,000 have been realised, including a reduction in pension costs of £52,000.

Mr Burn's Supplementary Question

Councillor Mrs Neal, please can you explain why the Human Resources Department told me that there were on costs of £950,000 per annum.

Reply from Councillor Mrs Neal

I am aware that there may be some confusion with the actual years, this figure refers to 2006/7 and not 2007/8. In this year the total costs were indeed £950,000 with a pension pot of £152,000.

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs Bosworth, Chivers, Dawson, Mrs Kaberry-Brown, Joynson, Gaffigan, McBride, Stephens, John Smith, Judy Smith, Andrea Webster, Tom Webster and Wood.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

45. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 19th June and 14th August 2008 were signed as a correct record by the Chairman subject to the following:-

19th June - minute 28, page 5 - second line to read 'decision NOT to sign up'

19th June - minute 37, page 14 - record Cllr Crafts vote against the motion

46. COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS)

A list of the Chairman and Vice Chairman's engagements since the last council meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

47. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2008/09 TO 2010/2011
DECISION:-

- (1) To approve the revised medium term Financial Plan for the period 2008/09 to 2010/11, as detailed in report CHFR116;**
- (2) To note that an annual review of the Plan will be undertaken to reflect the local and national economic climate and emerging issues; and**
- (3) To note that, following public action, an updated Plan will need to take into consideration the findings of the newly revised Housing Revenue Account business forecast model.**

Council had before them report CHFR116 of the interim Corporate Head of Finance on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, which brought together the financial position of the Council and demonstrated how its revenue and capital financial resources were organised in order to deliver the Council's priorities.

The Plan had been reviewed to take account of current economic

factors, current spending pressures, the Government's efficiency target agenda and the three year grant settlement as well as the financial outturn position for 2007/08 and the approved revenue and capital budgets for 2008/09.

In respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), its financial modelling and forecasting would need to be fundamentally reviewed to prevent the HRA falling into deficit in the short term. In response to a members question it was clarified that the Leisure Trust was only regarded as a financial risk because it had not yet been established.

Councillor Craft advised that the question of car parking charges in Bourne would be considered at the next meeting of the Resources Policy Development Group on 9th October 2008.

The motion was duly proposed, seconded and carried.

48. REVISION OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

DECISION:- To approve the revised Capital Programme for 2008/09 as set out in report CHFR117, including:-

- (i) The revised Housing Capital Programme (appendix A of report CHFR117)**
- (ii) The revised General Fund Programme (appendix B)**
- (iii) The revised summary Financing Statement (Appendix C)**

Council had before them report CHFR117 of the Portfolio holder – finance and assets which provided members with an update on the progress of the delivery of the Capital Programme for 2008/09. The report also identified for approval certain amendments to the programme to take account of the outturn position for 2007/08 and the current officer and contractor capacity to deliver the programme by the end of the financial year.

The report represented a complete review of the Capital Programme for 2008/09. The Housing Capital Programme for 2008/09 had been reviewed in the light of current and future contractual commitments for the completing of work on the Council's housing stock in the remaining part of 2008/09. The General Fund had also been reviewed to reflect slippage for the 2007/08 Programme and new additional projects that had been scored by the Capital Assets and Management

Group.

At present there had been no amendment to the General Fund or Housing Capital Programme for future years. The Capital Asset Management Group had completed scoring of capital bids in accordance with the Council's capital scoring matrix. A full review of the Capital Programme for the financial years 2009/10 – 2011/12 will be undertaken at the time of budget setting in March 2009. The interim S.151 officer detailed the projects within the Programme that had slipped. He also confirmed that an updated strategy on fees and charges would be reported to Cabinet in October 2008.

In reply to a question from a member, the monitoring officer and interim S.151 officer confirmed that the road at Manor Drive, Grantham was owned by the owners of the adjoining properties whereas the roads at Alma Park were owned by SKDC.

The motion was duly proposed, seconded and carried.

49. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF CAR PARKING CHARGES IN BOURNE

This report had been withdrawn.

50. ANNUAL REVIEW OF PRIORITIES

DECISION (UNANIMOUS):- To approve the repackaging of the Council's Priorities under four broader priority themes as follows:-

- **Customer First**
- **Quality Living**
- **Open for Business**
- **Quality Organisation**

Council had before them report SD022 of the acting Chief Executive and strategic directors which outlined the recent review of the Council's priorities and also evaluated and recommended the repackaging of the priorities under four broader 'priority themes'.

The Council had first set its priorities in 2004 and these had been regularly amended and updated in the intervening four years. Currently there were six category A priorities and four category B priorities. These had been initiated where a specific improvement in performance had been required, in order to focus attention on those areas. This approach had assisted in an improvement in discrete areas, for example, in meeting recycling targets, improved street

cleanliness, exceeding targets for affordable housing and in addressing public concerns about anti social behaviour. However the current approach was not necessarily the most effective way to deal with more holistic, longer term issues which required the input of the entire organisation. It was therefore considered appropriate to adopt a more general thematic approach towards focussing our resources on what mattered to local residents and businesses thus ensuring that all resources across the Council contributed to key objectives and made a real difference to local people.

The overriding aim was to achieve brilliant Customer Service and satisfaction. To do this it was necessary to put the customer at the heart of what the Council did, get service delivery right first time and at the first point of contact and put any mistakes right quickly.

The following four themes were therefore suggested:-

Customer First

Putting the customer at the heart of all we do

Quality Living

Protection and improvement of our environment

improvement of health and well being

working with our partners to create communities where people are safe and feel safe

Open for Business

Develop strong, vibrant and inclusive communities with a strong economy

Quality Organisation

A Council delivering brilliant services-further improve performance and satisfaction levels

Transforming the business and gaining value for money

After discussion, the motion was duly proposed, seconded and carried unanimously.

51. ADOPTION OF LOCAL LIST OF INFORMATION REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED WITH AN APPLICATION UNDER THE PLANNING ACTS
DECISION:-

- (1) To adopt the local list attached to report PLA713 as approved by Cabinet on 11th August 2008; and**
- (2) To delegate the correction of any typographical errors, amplifications or amendments within the list (but not additional items to it) to the Corporate Head of Sustainable Committees.**

Council had before them report PLA713a of the Economic Development Portfolio holder which advised that, following the introduction of the national single application form for all applications made under Town and Country Planning legislation, the Government had comprised a list of (a) compulsory requirements for planning applications and (b) additional information to address specific issues. The local list comprised matters taken from the Government's list, this must be approved by the local authority. The recommendations in the report had been endorsed by the Cabinet on 11th August 2008 and formed part of the Government's 'E Government' agenda.

Councillor Parkin confirmed that the Development Control Committee had also considered these proposals and given them their unanimous endorsement.

The motion was duly proposed, seconded and carried.

52. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION; RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE
DECISION:- To concur with recommendation of the Constitution Committee on 14th July 2008 that

- (1) The minor amendments to the scheme of delegation contained within report LEF021 be approved; and**
- (2) Page 99 of the Constitution be amended as follows:**
 - (i) "8. To approve permits for public collections for charitable or other purposes under the provisions of the Charities Act 1992 and 2006 when the Act comes into force, and other relevant statutory provisions.**

(ii) **Table below 9 on page 99 to read as follows:**

<u>Act</u>	<u>Function</u>
Local Government Miscellaneous Act 1982	Street trading
Licensing Act 2004	Alcohol licensing
Gambling Act 2005	Gambling

(iii) **Item 12 of report LEG021 be amended to read 'at 20, 21, 22 and 23; and**

(iv) **Item 15 of report LEG021 be amended to include anti social behaviour officers and legal officers.**

Council had before them extracts from report LEG021 which had been presented to Constitution Committee on 14th July 2008. The report contained a number of recommendations, these had been endorsed by the Committee and now required Council approval.

The motion was duly proposed, seconded and carried.

53. LEADER'S REPORT ON URGENT NON KEY DECISIONS

The report numbered CAB0096 by the Leader of the Council was noted.

54. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL DECISION:- To note the Annual Scrutiny report to Council

Council had before them report DEM017 which set out for members information details of scrutiny activity from May 2007 – April 2008. In the absence of the Scrutiny Chairman and Vice Chairman the Strategic Director confirmed that the Scrutiny Committee was able to examine any matter it wished and its discretion should not be fettered.

The motion was duly proposed, seconded and carried.

55. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

There were no questions on notice.

56. NOTICE OF MOTION GIVEN UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE

RULE 12:

DECISION:-

(1) This Council deplores the continuing unfair bias of the Government in favour of metropolitan areas. This is eroding the infrastructure of county and rural areas and leading, in areas like South Kesteven District, to a situation whereby our country towns and villages are unable to sustain their new generations because of lack of employment opportunities, absence of local transport systems and housing which has been priced beyond their reach.

We call on the Government to address these issues urgently and reverse this decline. We seek particularly action on the heavy burden being placed on incomes by rising fuel prices in areas when there is no local transport system and people have to rely on cars; and

(2) That this Council is of the view that this matter should be taken up with the Local Government Association and the Sparsity Partnership for Authorities Delivering Rural Services (SPARSE).

Councillor Maureen Jalili introduced and moved the motion. She observed that policy was often made by Government with urban or metropolitan areas in mind. Councillor Mike Williams, in seconding the motion, agreed that everything from Government was based on an urban model.

Councillor Thompson asked if the SPARSE organisation still existed, if so the Council should pursue this matter through that organisation. The Acting Chief Executive confirmed that SPARSE was indeed still in existence. Councillor M Jalili agreed to amend her motion accordingly.

A number of members spoke in favour of the motion none spoke against it. In summing up, Councillor Jalili observed that, in rural areas, people without a car did not have ready access to shops, doctors surgeries, dentists etc.

Having been moved and seconded, the motion was put to a vote and was duly carried.

The Chairman announced that, following the tea break there was an item of urgent business to consider.

(Council adjourned for tea from 3:37 – 3:47pm)

Following the tea break, the Council gave thanks to Beverly Agass and Ian Yates, Strategic Directors, for the very capable way they had deputised for the Chief Executive during his absence on extended leave.

57. ITEM OF URGENT BUSINESS: PROVISION OF ALLOTMENT SITES

The Chairman gave notice that he would allow the following item of urgent business to be considered in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 since negotiations were at an advanced stage and urgent decisions needed to be made.

DECISION:- That Council

- (i) Approves a supplementary estimate of up to £100,000 in order to facilitate the potential acquisition, subject to contract, of an appropriate allotment site; and**

- (ii) Approves the carrying out of all necessary investigations by officers into all options identified up to and including the preparation of a draft compulsory purchase order for approved by Council, if necessary.**

Council had before them report FD23 of the Acting Chief Executive which sought approval for a supplementary estimate to fund the acquisition, subject to contract of an allotment site by negotiation. In the event that negotiations proved unsuccessful, alternative options were available including the possible compulsory purchase of land.

The report contained an exempt appendix and after discussion it was

RESOLVED:- That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded because of the likelihood in view of the nature of the business to be transacted that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Act.

After further discussion the motion was moved, seconded and carried unanimously.

The meeting closed at 4:28pm.