



MEETING OF THE CABINET
7 NOVEMBER 2005 - 10.00 AM – 12.58 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
Councillor Terl Bryant
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor John Smith
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright

Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal – Leader / Chairman

Chief Executive
Corporate Director of Finance and Strategic Resources
Corporate Director of Community Services
Corporate Director of Operational Services
Head of Planning Policy and Economic Regeneration
Management Accountant
Public Relations Manager
Scrutiny Support Officer
Trainee Democratic Support Officer

Other Members Present:

Councillors Brailsford, Hewerdine, Kerr, Moore, Wheat, Wilks

The Leader welcomed Catherine Hammant and John Plumb from Stamford Vision to the meeting.

CO76. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th October were confirmed as a correct record.

CO77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Smith declared a personal interest in Minutes CO78 by virtue of him being a member of the governance group.

CO78. STAMFORD GATEWAY PROJECT: REQUEST FOR CONTRIBUTION

DECISION:

That the Cabinet is minded to approve the contribution for the sum of £350,000 for the Stamford Gateway project subject to the following terms:

- 1. That the sum is payable in three instalments of 40%, 40% and 20% linked to the delivery of specified outcomes approved by Cabinet;**
- 2. That a reasonable contribution should be sought from the Town Council to demonstrate their commitment to the project;**
- 3. That the development should fulfil a series of outcomes, to be decided on through liaison with officers and that these should be reviewed at a future date by the Cabinet;**
- 4. That the final scheme design, including any liabilities or responsibilities that will accrue to the District Council will be approved by the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Assets;**
- 5. No further financial assistance will be sought or forthcoming from the District Council for this project.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

1. Report to Cabinet, Number PLA525 by the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Regeneration giving details of the Stamford Gateway project and a breakdown of projected contributions and their sources, including the request for a District Council contribution of £350,000;
2. A presentation received from Catherine Hammant and John Plumb of Stamford Vision explaining other funding sources that had been secured;
3. The project would fully align with the Council's Town Centre priority; when appraised by the Property PMG alongside other capital projects, Stamford Gateway ranked highest amongst all candidate projects;
4. The transformation of the two key areas would make them safer routes for all entering the town. The proposed scheme also offers greater accessibility;
5. Investment offers the unique chance to develop a new heritage for the town, bringing together the goals of safer pedestrian spaces and rediscovered places, which could be enjoyed by both towns' people

- and visitors;
6. The project would provide significant regeneration, which would generate a national profile;
 7. Alignment with District Council priorities: Town Centre regeneration, improvement of the street scene and tackling anti-social behaviour. Conversations with the police had suggested that an area in which residents could feel proud would prevent crime and disorder;
 8. A contribution from Stamford Town Council would show that they were committed to the project.

Other Options Considered and Assessed

1. To offer a lesser sum than requested, or to make no contribution at all dependent upon whether Stamford Town Council has made any contributions;
2. A reduced contribution could result in a lesser scheme and delays, should revision of the scheme be necessary;
3. It could result in the abandonment of the project.

The Cabinet adjourned from 10:50 to 11:10 to consider the Stamford Gateway item.

CO79. * REVIEW OF CAR PARKING CHARGES IN GRANTHAM AND STAMFORD

DECISION:

That the Cabinet:

1. Approves the tariffs proposed in Option 3 in report number DOS294 for implementation as of April 2006;
2. That fines for failure to display a valid ticket should be increased to £60.00 (reduced to £30 if paid within 7 days);
3. That fines for parking for a longer period than paid for should be increased to £40 (reduced to £20 if paid within 7 days);
4. That the cost of season tickets should be increased in line with those presented in report number DOS294;
5. In light of representations made by members of the public, no charge will be introduced for parking on Sundays, bank holidays or evenings at this time;
6. Acknowledge the time taken by Stamford Chamber of Trade and Commerce in putting forward its own proposals for charges. Whilst it could not accept these because they did not comply with the Council's policy of equalisation, the Cabinet considered that there was merit in some of their suggestions and requested that the Management Accountant consider these aspects.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

1. Background paper: report to Cabinet, number DPM229 from 22nd December 2003;
2. Report to Cabinet, number DOS294 by the Management Accountant in compliance with the Council Policy for biennial reviews of car parking charges, to increase them in line with inflation and to align charges in Grantham and Stamford;
3. Recommendations by the Resources DSP Budget Working Group (26th October 2005) and the Economic DSP (2nd November 2005);
4. Over 50% of car parking tickets sold at long stay car parks are for 2 hours or less, where parking for the same period is cheaper than in a short stay car park, meaning the charging structure would need to be altered if long stay car parks are to be used by those with all day parking needs;
5. Existing policy that short stay rates over three hours should be punitive, long stay rates over three hours should be competitively priced;
6. To make Excess Charge Notices punitive would serve as a deterrent against parking violations;
7. Car parking revenue is a major source of income and its surpluses help provide services such as CCTV and Town Centre Management. An increase in charges would also provide a balance between Council Tax increases and ensuring return on assets is maximised;
8. Results of public consultation on car parking provision within Grantham;
9. Suggestions received from Stamford Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

Other Options Considered and Assessed

1. Smartcards - To be examined in a future report to Cabinet, these would relieve pressure created by cash collection;
2. Payment on exit – Users would not be time constrained when parking and could return at their convenience. An attendant may be necessary or a help button, which would provide a direct line to someone who could advise accordingly. This option would be considered in conjunction with the development of Welham Street Multi-storey Car Park;
3. Charging for Disabled Parking – whether parking for the disabled should be free, or free for a specified period may be considered in the future, after a strategic review of car parking provision across the District. This was considered inappropriate with the structure in operation;
4. Evening, Sundays and Bank Holiday Charging – given the increase in hours of commercial operation, the possibility for charging at off-peak periods was considered. There was no perceivable benefit for charging for off-peak periods.

CO80. USE OR PREMISES AT WAKE HOUSE, BOURNE, BY THE BOURNE ARTS & COMMUNITY TRUST

DECISION:

1. To agree to the disposal of the Property to the Bourne Arts and Community Trust Limited at a price to be agreed with the District Valuer. The price will fully reflect the restricted use of the property by the Trust;
2. The car park adjoining the Property be retained by the District Council for Town Centre development;
3. The disposal to the Trust will be subject to the use of the premises for the Trust purposes only. In the event that the Trust ceases to exist and/or no longer occupies the property, then the property shall be sold back to the Council at a price set by the District Valuer using the same valuation basis;
4. In the event that the Trust are unable to pursue the purchase of the Property prior to the 31st December, the Cabinet agree a new short term Lease for the maximum period of one year, to enable the purchase to proceed.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

1. Portfolio Holder decision dated 14th February 2005 that negotiations be commenced with Bourne Arts Community Trust Ltd to conclude a new Lease of Wake House Bourne premises excluding the car park on terms to be agreed;
2. Report to Cabinet number DLS48 by the Solicitor to the Council on the lease of Wake House to the Bourne Arts Community Trust;
3. The presence of a community trust in Bourne is complimentary to the Council's priority for town centre regeneration;
4. The adjoining car park could offer opportunities for Town Centre Development.

Other Options Considered and Assessed

1. Short-term lease for five years at nominal rent – it would not allow the Trust to invest in improvements on the Property and the progress of the Trust;
2. Long term lease for a period of up to 25 years – the Trust would be unable to commit to a long-term lease where there would be no guaranteed rent control after the initial five-year period;
3. Disposal of the property on the open market – this had not been pursued because it would result in the loss of a building which is required for use for the benefit of the community.

CO81. FUTURE OF POLICING IN LINCOLNSHIRE

DECISION:

1. That a response should be submitted to the Home Secretary and copied to the Lincolnshire Police Authority, detailing the limited consultation, the constraining criteria for the creation of fit for purpose units, regionalisation and the views of other members of SPARSE;
2. That the Chief Executive is asked to consult with those rural authorities within SPARSE, regarding their own views on the reorganisation of police forces;
3. The Cabinet welcomed the proposals from the County Council and Lincolnshire Police Authority for Community Units, which would lead to a considerable injection of resources in this area. However, at this stage in the budget process, the Cabinet did not feel there was sufficient information for South Kesteven to make a financial commitment at this time but in the light of further information received, will consider funding as part of the Budget round.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision:

1. Report to Cabinet, number CEX305 stating that the arrangement of 43 police forces was not fit for current purpose;
2. To be a viable and sustainable police unit would require at least 4,000 serving police officers. At the end of September, Lincolnshire had 1,218 full-time officers;
3. The Police forces of the East Midlands had selected two options: a single police force serving the whole of the East Midlands region, or two police forces in the East Midlands region, one serving Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and the other serving Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire;
4. The contribution sought would require the provision of an additional £100,000 on top of that already committed to anti-social behaviour; there would be no guarantee of the number of community units would be established in South Kesteven;
5. No tangible evidence had been obtained that community units like the Earlesfield model had a positive influence on outcomes;
6. Cabinet had taken forward the sum of £60,000 for the current budget round specifically identified for meeting the prioritised requirement emanating from the Crime and Disorder Action Plan;
7. As a rural county, the needs of Lincolnshire may not be best met in a police force covering the whole of the East Midlands;
8. There would be a single precept for the whole of the new police area, which would mean that residents in South Kesteven would be supplementing policing initiatives for large cities.

CO82. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MONITORING OF EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

DECISION:

To note report number HR&OD82 and express concern at current performance in completing appraisals.

Considerations/Reasons for Decision

1. Report to Cabinet, number HR&OD82 by the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development giving details of recent monitoring of employment activities in terms of gender, disability and ethnic origin;
2. The criteria against which the employment breakdown is monitored has been done using the Audit Commission's definitions;
3. Workforce profile statistics are included in national Best Value Performance Indicators;
4. When the Council is under represented by particular groups, it has the responsibility to take positive action.

CO83. VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING

The report refers to some tight deadlines that the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) has imposed upon the Voluntary Sector to resolve a number of issues in the South Area Partnership. This situation affects organisations within South Kesteven.

In view of these tight deadlines, the Leader has agreed to take this as an urgent item at the above meeting so that the Cabinet may seek to influence GOEM about the allocation of funding to the Voluntary Sector.

DECISION:

That the Cabinet requests:

- 1. The Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) to place in reserve the £72, 065 until a solution concerning the Area South Partnership is found;**
- 2. The Lincolnshire Consortium should work with the Area South Partnership to find a solution to the problems of partnership working as soon as possible to ensure that all possible funds are secured for the voluntary sector;**
- 3. That the Cabinet express their concern that Voluntary Action Kesteven is outside of the Partnership and the impact on their services. The Cabinet should meet with Voluntary Action Kesteven Trustees as soon as possible.**

Considerations/Reasons for decision:

1. Report to Cabinet number DCS31 on the ten year 'Change Up' programme, a joint government, voluntary and community sector framework to encourage capacity building and develop support and infrastructure for the voluntary and community sector;
2. New voluntary sector Partnerships would receive funding from GOEM through Change Up and some funding from Lincolnshire County

- Council;
3. The board of Voluntary Action Kesteven had indicated that they were not happy to commit to the proposals of a Consortium. The Partnership may have decided not to pursue a Partnership of equals;
 4. The sum of £288,260, originally designated for the South Area Partnership was reduced to £216,195 to cover all areas in the south of the County not served by Voluntary Action Kesteven;
 5. Staff managing the Change Up Programme at Government Office believe that the onus is on the Lincolnshire Consortium and the individual organisations concerned to find ways to develop better partnership working;
 6. The geographical area supported by Voluntary Action Kesteven will not receive Change Up funding from the programme. This would result in a significant area of the district missing out on funding unless Voluntary Action Kesteven can convince the Lincolnshire Consortium that they should receive funding in their own right or change their position about their involvement in the Area 3 South Area Partnership.

CO84. NEW GUIDANCE ON DISTRICT CPA

DECISION

The Cabinet recommends:

1. **An additional guiding principle: the costs of any CPA process should be proportionate to the expenditure of local authorities;**
2. **To use peers for inspecting. These could be drawn from the public and private sector;**
3. **That the four assessment criteria should be weighted as follows:**

Use of Resources	25%
Services Assessments*	60%
Corporate Assessments	10%
Direction of Travel Assessment	5%

*** Service assessments should align with Council priority areas.**

4. **The selection approach for re-categorisation (Option B), calculated using assessment framework Option 4;**
5. **That the process and practice of inspections be internalised within Local Government through the secondment of Senior Managers and Members in the inspection process and the Audit Commission's role becomes purely strategic;**
6. **That CPA has failed in its primary objective in informing the public about the performance of their Councils, and should therefore be replaced by a more effective regime.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision

1. Report number CEX306 to Cabinet in response to the new Audit

- Commission Framework for Comprehensive Performance Assessment of District Councils from 2006;
2. Report Number CEX301 to the Resources DSP
 3. Recommendations from the Resources DSP Budget Working Group (10th October 2005);
 4. Peers could add value to any assessment if they had good practical experience of the particular circumstances faced by the local authority they were inspecting;
 5. It was felt that services assessed should align with Council priorities, so some say in which services should be inspected would need to be included;
 6. Of the framework possibilities for Option B, Option 4 presented the only evaluation methodology that to measure the standard of service provision
 7. CPA assessments were viewed as being heavily externalised and opaque regarding the making of final decisions and the evidence taken into account;
 8. Assessment using seconded Senior Managers and Members would embody the process of inspection within the culture of Local Authorities, improve the understanding and skills of staff and overcome concerns that inspectors lack cotemporary management knowledge or experience;
 9. Residents of South Kesteven and other Councils were not seen as being interested in or aware of CPA outcomes.

The Leader and the Chief Executive left the meeting; the Deputy Leader assumed the Chair.

CO85. BROADBAND FOR MEMBERS

DECISION:

1. **The Cabinet supports in principle the introduction of Broadband to all Members in order to improve the utilisation and effectiveness of their home working arrangements;**
2. **A strategy be developed to eliminate the existing duplication of costs in printing and postage of reports as members adopt new working practices;**
3. **Funding to be provided for a start up programme of Broadband connectivity. These costs will reduce over time but, initially, estimates indicate between £15,000 and £25,000 in year one, reducing to an ongoing annual cost, in the future, of around £10,000, depending on negotiations with suppliers;**
4. **Plans to deliver the equivalent savings of approximately £10,000 per annum be drawn up to fund the additional investment;**
5. **These proposals are put to consultation with members, specifically the E-Government Working Group.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision

1. Report Number DOS296 to Cabinet by the Director of Operational Services on the means by which members connect to the Council's IT systems from their homes and the new opportunities presented by recent developments in Broadband availability in South Kesteven;
2. The need for the production and postage of Council reports and correspondence would be removed;
3. Broadband would improve the speed of access and downloading of reports/mail, and the ability to deliver larger files such as reports with graphics, photographs and mapping information, offering an incentive for its use;
4. There should be a reduction in the support necessary for users;
5. Reduced in-house costs from printing and postage, plus associated administration;
6. The opportunity to remove duplication of costs;
7. Opportunities increased for greater use and functionality such as on-line training for Members;
8. Availability to existing members, location of connectivity within member's property, the policy in respect of existing users of broadband and the preferred method of procurement would need to be considered.
9. Potential efficiency benefits from the introduction of Broadband would only be realised if operation charges outlined in report DOS296 are achieved.

Other Options Considered and Assessed:

1. Improving e-mail deliver access problems by ensuring file sizes being delivered are below a certain size. This restricts functionality;
2. Produce CD Roms with the Members' mail and documents. These would be posted to the Member's address. This could be utilised for those without broadband links;
3. Let Members introduce broadband as they see fit, with an allowance being paid as they adopt its use. The Council would negotiate with and recommend a supplier;
4. Introduce more docking stations at Council Officers for quick updates of files.

CO86. ITEMS RAISED BY CABINET MEMBERS INCLUDING REPORTS ON KEY AND NON-KEY DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

Councillor Mrs. Frances Cartwright: Portfolio – Organisational Development, LSVT and Housing Landlord Function

Decision: That the firm of Trowers and Hamlins Solicitors of Sceptre Court, Tower Hill, London be approved as legal advisors to deal with the necessary procedural and compliance requirements leading up to the possible transfer of the Council's housing stock for phase 1 works (pre ballot advice) in the sum of £15,000 and that the Council retain the option to seek

tenders for phase 2 (advice to the RSL in the post ballot phase) and phase 3 (advice to the Council in the post ballot phase) of the project when the outcome of the tenant's ballot is known.

[Decision made 24.10.05]

Decision: That a two-year red-circled protection of earnings policy is introduced following any reorganisation at which time there is an undertaking to assist the employee with their development associated with an equivalent undertaking from the employee to fully participate in such development activity.

Such protection to be offered only when, through no fault of the postholder, their post (or assimilated post) is at a lower grade after the re-structure than before. It should not apply in the following cases: -

- Where an individual requests a change of job.
- Where a disciplinary finding results in downgrading.
- Where deterioration in health necessitates a change of job.
- Where an employee unreasonably refuses other suitable alternative employment.
- Where, under a redundancy situation, an employee accepts alternative employment (not necessarily suitable) as an alternative to being made redundant.

[Decision made: 07.11.05]

Decision: That the tender received from John Martin-Hoyes in the sum of £20,418.40 for the provision of car parking at locations identified at Great Ponton and Princess Drive and East Avenue Grantham be accepted.

[Decision made: 07.11.05]

Councillor John Smith: Portfolio – Economic

Decision: That the tender submitted by GBM Demolition and Earthworks of Warwick Road, Louth, Lincolnshire for the demolition of the former Kwik Save Store and Car Park in the sum of £318,989.30 be accepted.

[Decision made: 07.11.05]

Decision: That approval be given to the following names in order to provide new postal addresses for a retail development and a housing development in Grantham:-

1. AUGUSTIN RETAIL PARK for the retail development on the former Cattle Market, Dysart Road/Sankt Augustin Way, Grantham;
2. HARRIS WAY for the development off Springfield Road, Grantham.

[Decision made: 07.11.05]

CO87. DATE DECISIONS EFFECTIVE

The Key Decision at minute number CO79 and other non key decisions made on 7th November 2005 can be implemented on 16th November 2005 unless subject to call-in by the relevant Development and Scrutiny Panel Chairman or five Members of the Council.

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

**Contact: Cabinet Support Officer- Tel: 01476 406119
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