

Cabinet



Forest Heath
District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held on
Tuesday 22 December 2015 at **6.00 pm** at the **Council Chamber, District**
Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Robin Millar (Deputy Leader of the Council)

David Bowman Stephen Edwards
Andy Drummond

In attendance

Simon Cole
Colin Noble

(Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny
Committee)

(Chairman of the Performance and Audit
Scrutiny Committee)

139. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Waters.

140. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 27 October 2015 (Extraordinary Informal Joint with SEBC Cabinet; FHDC Cabinet) and 24 November 2015 (Informal Joint with SEBC Cabinet) were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

141. **Open Forum**

No non-Cabinet Members in attendance wished to speak under this item.

142. **Public Participation**

Car Parking Review (Report No CAB/FH/15/063)

Dr Vicki Richer, a resident of Rous Road, Newmarket, spoke to the Cabinet on the proposed changes with regard to the pay and display car parks within Newmarket and particularly in relation to the Rous Road Short Stay Car Park.

Rous Road and the surrounding area was highly residential and, therefore, the residents of Rous Road experienced daily problems with parking in that area and particularly at certain times of the day, ie school drop-off and pick-up.

Dr Richer expressed concerns that these proposed changes had never been discussed with the residents of Rous Road and explained that due to the unique nature of Newmarket, the Town Centre remained largely residential, as opposed to commercial.

Dr Richer, however, expressed support for the car parking regulations and charging in off-street car parks to commence at 9.00 am rather than 8.00 am. In addition to this, Dr Richer also proposed for the charges to cease at 3.00 pm, rather than 4.00 pm. This would assist with children being picked up from school and could help to reduce the associated car parking problems within that area at that particular time. This may also encourage later shopping in the Town, as it would also coincide with school times.

In relation to the introduction of charges for Sundays and Bank Holidays, this would also mean that the residents of Rous Road would no longer be able to leave their cars for free in this car park on a Sunday and/or Bank Holiday and this would have a huge negative impact on the already pressurised parking for the local residents.

143. Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 12 November 2015 (Report No CAB/FH/15/061)

Councillor Simon Cole, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented this report which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Committee on 12 November 2015:

- (1) Presentation by the Cabinet Member for Operations
- (2) Directed Surveillance Authorised Applications (Quarter 2)
- (3) Decisions Plan: November 2015 to May 2016
- (4) Work Programme Update

Councillor Cole also drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, in relation to the above items.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

144. Report from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee: 25 November 2015 (Report No CAB/FH/15/062)

Councillor Colin Noble, Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, presented this report which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Committee on 25 November 2015:

- (1) Mid Year Internal Audit Progress Report 2015-2016
- (2) Subscription Charge for the Brown Bin Service
- (3) Balanced Scorecard Quarter 2 Performance Report (2015-2016)
- (4) West Suffolk Strategic Risk Register Quarterly Monitoring Report – September 2015
- (5) Work Programme Update

- (6) Ernst and Young – Presentation of Annual Audit Letter (2014-2015)
- (7) Financial Performance R (Revenue and Capital) Quarter 2 - 2015-2016
- (8) Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2016-2017
- (9) Mid Year Treasury Management Report and Investment Activity (1 April – 30 September 2015)

Councillor Noble also drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, in relation to the above items and, in particular, referred to paragraph 1.2.6 (Subscription Charge for the Brown Bin Service) which set out the particular recommendations which had been made by the Committee in relation to this item. Councillor Noble explained that a further update would be provided to the Committee on 28 January 2016.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

145. Car Parking Review (Report No CAB/FH/15/063)

Councillor David Bowman, Portfolio Holder for Operations, presented this report which reviewed the management and operation of car parking in Forest Heath. The last review of car parks in Forest Heath had been undertaken in 2012. The profile of car parking had since changed, operation costs had risen and future developments, particularly in Newmarket Town Centre, were on the horizon.

This review had focused on the ability of the District's car parks to manage capacity, to provide a high quality of service, provide affordable car parking and meet the challenges of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The Portfolio Holder explained that this report did not conclude that the District had a shortfall in car parking, either now or in the short/medium term. A review of capacity would be required on a regular basis to monitor the impact of the Home of Horseracing, changes in the local economy of our market towns and housing growth across the District.

The report also made no proposals to change parking provision or the introduction of tariffs in Brandon, Lakenheath or Mildenhall, at this time.

Ten letters of representation had been received from local residents, covering the following:

- supporting the charging in the off-street car parks from 9.00 am, rather than 8.00 am.
- proposing that the end of the charging time in the off-street car parks be 3.00 pm, rather than 4.00 pm.
- opposing the introduction of charges for Disabled Bays.
- opposing the implementation of Sunday and Bank Holidays charges. A number of these representations were received from religious

worshippers objecting to the implementation of charging on Sundays and the effect that this could have on worship attendance.

Due to the number of representations which had been received in relation to charging on Sundays, the Portfolio Holder was, therefore, proposing the following additional recommendation for consideration by the Cabinet:

- "1. *Officers consider the operational implications of a Permit Scheme for religious worshippers within the Traffic Road Order.*"

Councillor Stephen Edwards, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance and the Ward Member for the All Saints Ward, supported the recommendations contained within the report. The Portfolio Holder also referred to the Pocket Car Parks located on the edge of the All Saints Car Park and explained that there appeared to be 13 spaces not currently taken-up and proposed that these spaces could be incorporated within the All Saints Car Park itself, should the need arise, to accommodate the potential for more spaces within that Car Park. The Car Parking Services Manager explained that a variation order for that Car Park could be undertaken under Officer delegated authority, if there was deemed a requirement to re-allocate these spaces within the Car Park.

Councillor Edwards also expressed concerns with regard to the car parking within Newmarket High Street, as the car parking restrictions were not being adhered to. The Car Parking Services Manager explained that the Newmarket Vision Transport Group would be reviewing the car parking within the High Street as a priority with Suffolk County Council.

The Chairman and Ward Member for the All Saints Ward, also supported the recommendations within the report. He was particularly grateful for the reduction in the cost for residents wishing to lease spaces in the Pocket Car Parks. The Chairman also stated that he supported the principle of charging on Sundays, particularly with regard to those visitors attending the Home of Horseracing Project. The Chairman referred to the number of representations which had been received with regard to Sunday charging and welcomed the additional recommendation for the consideration of a permit scheme for the use of religious worshippers. With reference to the comment made by the public speaker with regard to the ceasing of charging from 3.00 pm, the effect of the car parking would need to be monitored and this could be reviewed at a later stage.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the adoption of the budget by Council, that:

1. Officers consider the operational implications of a Permit Scheme for religious worshippers within the Traffic Road Order.
2. The recommendations set out in paragraph 2.4 of Report No CAB/FH/15/063 be approved and Officers be instructed to issue a revised Traffic Road Order for public consultation.

3. The investigation by Suffolk County Council into on-street parking be noted and the next steps be agreed.

146. **Allocation of Community Chest Funding 2016/2017 (Report No CAB/FH/15/064)**

Prior to presenting this report, Councillor Robin Millar, Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities, declared a local non-pecuniary interest as he was a friend of one of the applicants. Councillor Millar confirmed that he would remain in the meeting, but would abstain from voting.

The Portfolio Holder then presented this report which provided an update, following the review of applications for Community Chest funding for 2016/2017 and recommended funding allocations.

Each application had been assessed against the scheme's criteria and some had been declined. Those applications which had not been accepted were listed within paragraph 1.3 of the report. Officers in the Families and Communities Team would work with these organisations to try and identify alternative funding. Following detailed consideration, it was felt that ten applications met the scheme's criteria and should be allocated funding. These organisations and the funding allocated were detailed in paragraph 1.4 of the report.

Councillor Millar concluded that with these allocations, there still remained £18,524.00 in the Community Chest for 2016/2017. There would be the option to open a second round of funding in Spring 2016 or there would be the opportunity to commission work on behalf of communities from the Community Chest.

With 3 voting for the motion and with 1 abstention, it was

RESOLVED:

That the allocation of funding from the Community Chest be noted as follows:

- 1. Creative Arts East**
2016/17 £3,000
- 2. Dance East**
2016/17 £3,500
- 3. Fresh Start New Beginnings**
2016/17 £8,200
- 4. HomeStart**
2016/17 £13,250
2017/18 £9,800
- 5. Mildenhall High Town Pirates**
2016/17 £1,204

6.	Newmarket Citizens Advice Bureau	
	2016/17	£40,500
	2017/18	£41,540
	2018/19	£34,970
7.	Our Special Friends	
	2016/17	£6,000
8.	Relate	
	2016/17	£2,000
	2017/18	£2,000
	2018/19	£2,000
9.	Suffolk West Citizens Advice Bureau (SWCAB)	
	2016/17	£39,650
	2017/18	£39,650
	2018/19	£39,650
10.	The Voluntary Network	
	2016/17	£19,412
	2017/18	£18,400
	2018/19	£17,450

147. Decisions Plan: December 2015 to May 2016 (Report No CAB/FH/15/065)

The Cabinet considered Report No CAB/FH/15/065, which was the Cabinet Decisions Plan covering the period December 2015 to May 2016.

Members took the opportunity to review the intended forthcoming decisions of the Cabinet. However, no further information or amendments were requested on this occasion.

148. Revenues Collection and Performance Write-Offs (Report No CAB/FH/15/066)

Councillor Stephen Edwards, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, presented this report which sought approval for the write-off of uncollectable amounts in respect of Council Tax and the overpayment of Housing Benefit.

The Portfolio Holder also referred to paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 of the report which set out the collection rates for both National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) and Council Tax as at 30 November 2015. An amendment was also reported on the profiled target for NNDR which should have read 73.12% and not 74.85%.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the write-offs of the amounts detailed in the exempt appendices to Report No CAB/FH/15/066 be approved, as follows:

1. Exempt Appendix 1: Council Tax totalling £51,955.88
2. Exempt Appendix 2: Overpayment for Housing Benefit totalling £7,139.15

149. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

See Minute No. 150. below.

150. **Exempt Appendices: Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs (paras 1 and 2) (Report No CAB/FH/15/066)**

The Cabinet received Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 to Report No CAB/FH/15/066. However, as no reference was made to specific detail, this item was not held in private session.

The Meeting concluded at 6.48 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
