
Cabinet



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held on
Tuesday 20 October 2015 at **5.00 pm** in the **Conference Chamber West,**
West Suffolk House, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman John Griffiths (Leader of the Council) (in the Chair)

Vice Chairman Sara Mildmay-White (Deputy Leader)

Robert Everitt
Ian Houlder
Alaric Pugh

Joanna Rayner
Peter Stevens

By Invitation:

Sarah Broughton

(Chairman of the Performance and Audit
Scrutiny Committee)

In attendance:

Carol Bull
Susan Glossop
Diane Hind

David Nettleton
Clive Pollington

118. **Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

119. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 1 September 2015 (informal joint meeting with Forest Heath District Council's Cabinet) and 8 September 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

120. **Open Forum**

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

121. **Public Participation**

No members of the public in attendance wished to speak under this item.

122. **Recognition of former Cabinet Members**

The Cabinet considered a narrative item which informed that former Councillors and Cabinet Members, Anne Gower and David Ray were not eligible to receive Long Service Awards at full Council on 22 September 2015. However, the Cabinet had previously informally considered that separate formal acknowledgement should be given by the Cabinet for Mrs Gower's and Mr Ray's contribution to the work of the Borough Council's executive through their roles as Portfolio Holders. Accordingly, the following motions were moved individually by the Leader, and duly carried.

(1) Anne Gower

RESOLVED:

That, in recognition of eight years of dedicated public service by Anne Gower as an elected Member of the Council for Haverhill North Ward, and in acknowledgement of her contribution to the work of the Borough Council, including her appointment as a Portfolio Holder from 2010 to 2015, and her service to the community and fulfilment of the duties and responsibilities of a Councillor, the Cabinet hereby record its thanks and deep appreciation.

(2) David Ray

RESOLVED:

That, in recognition of eleven years of dedicated public service by David Alan Ray as an elected Member of the Council for Barningham Ward, and in acknowledgement of his contribution to the work of the Borough Council, including his appointment as a Portfolio Holder from 2007 to 2015, and his service to the community and fulfilment of the duties and responsibilities of a Councillor, the Cabinet hereby record its thanks and deep appreciation.

On the individual approval of each resolution, the Leader presented former Councillor Ray with a framed copy of his specific resolution. As former Councillor Gower was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting, a framed copy of her resolution would be forwarded to her accordingly.

123. **Report of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee: 17 September 2015**

The Cabinet received and noted Report No: CAB/SE/15/060 (previously circulated) which provided an outline of issues discussed by the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee at its meeting held on 17 September 2015.

On 17 September 2015, the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee considered the following substantive items of business:

- (1) Performance Report;
- (2) Moving to a Single Member Joint Committee;
- (3) Welfare Reform Update;
- (4) Enforcement Agency Update; and
- (5) Forthcoming Issues.

Councillor Ian Houlder, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that the Joint Committee had recommended to the Partnering Authorities that the Joint Committee should move to comprising a single Member and two substitutes per authority, with the option for one of the substitutes to attend and take part in debate (but not vote).

On 28 May 2015, during consideration of the 'Annual Review of Cabinet Working Parties, Joint Committees/Panels and Other Groups: 2015/2016' report (Report No: CAB/SE/15/032 refers), the Cabinet had resolved that:

'...the potential requirement to only have one full Member representative from each of the Councils represented on the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee, as set out in Section 1.5.2 of Report No: CAB/SE/15/032, be noted. Any required changes to the Council's representation on the Joint Committee be delegated to the Service Manager (Legal) and the Leader of the Council to action accordingly.'

As delegated authority had already been granted to make changes to the Council's representation on the Joint Committee, there was no requirement to seek separate approval of the recommendation provided by the Joint Committee. The equivalent had also been resolved by Forest Heath District Council's (FHDC) Cabinet on 2 June 2015 and therefore action would be taken to implement the changes to the membership from the Borough Council and FHDC before the Joint Committee's next meeting in December 2015, in accordance with the resolution provided above.

**124. Report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee:
23 September 2015**

The Cabinet received and noted Report No: CAB/SE/15/061 (previously circulated), which informed the Cabinet of the following items discussed by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee on 23 September 2015:

- (1) Ernst and Young – Presentation of 2014/2015 ISA 260 Annual Results Report to those Charged with Governance;
- (2) West Suffolk Annual Governance Statement 2014/2015;
- (3) 2014/2015 Annual Statement of Accounts;
- (4) Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2016/2017; and
- (5) Work Programme Update.

Councillor Sarah Broughton, Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that a separate report was included on this Cabinet agenda in respect of Item (4) above.

The Cabinet particularly noted that no significant governance issues had been raised which had resulted in the successful completion of the West Suffolk Annual Governance Statement 2014/2015. In addition, no significant issues had been identified during the completion of the 2014/2015 Annual Statement of Accounts. Both sets of documentation had therefore been approved by the Committee.

125. **Recommendations from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee - 23 September 2015: Delivering a Sustainable Budget 2016/2017**

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/062 (previously circulated) which sought approval for proposals to assist with the securing of a balanced budget for 2016/2017.

Councillor Ian Houlder, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that a number of budget saving proposals had been considered by the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Section 5 and Table 2 at paragraph 5.1 of Report No: PAS/SE/15/026. Councillor Houlder drew attention to the proposals in the table and also the proposals for continuing the current scheme of gradually phasing out the Local Council Tax Support Grant by April 2017, and the continuation of the Rural Initiative Grant Scheme for the four-year period 2016-2020, through the reallocation of the underspend of monies previously allocated to the Rural Action Plan.

Emphasis was placed on the current and future financial pressures and challenges facing St Edmundsbury, as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014-2016, and how the Council needed to behave more commercially to assist with the handling of future budget constraints.

Councillor Sarah Broughton, Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, explained how the Committee had thoroughly scrutinised Report No: PAS/SE/15/026 and that like many other local councils, St Edmundsbury would need to make difficult financial decisions to secure a balanced budget for 2016/2017 and beyond.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

That the proposals, as detailed in Section 5 and Table 2 at paragraph 5.1 of Report No: PAS/SE/15/026, be included in securing a balanced budget for 2016/2017.

126. **2016/2017 Budget Setting - Bury St Edmunds Bus Station Information Building**

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/063 (previously circulated), which sought approval for a capital allocation for the reconfiguration of the bus station information building in Bury St Edmunds for investment purposes.

Councillor Robert Everitt, Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including a capital allocation of £39,500 had been requested to reconfigure the bus station information building into three separate areas: (i) café kiosk and waiting area; (ii) public toilets; and (iii) lettable space. This reconfiguration would have the potential to deliver a significant budget saving and generate an annual income from the café kiosk and lettable space.

Councillor Everitt provided further information on the reason for the project proposal, the benefits of investing to save and the financial assessment, further details of which, including existing and future potential costs and income, were contained in Exempt Appendix C.

The Cabinet considered an amended recommendation, as proposed by Councillor Everitt, which sought to clarify arrangements for finalising the reconfigured layout of the building. Members noted that this would be undertaken under existing officer delegated authority.

RESOLVED That:

- (1) having noted (2) below, a £39,500 capital investment, as detailed in Section 1 of Report No: CAB/SE/15/063, funded from 2015/16 capital invest to save budget, to reconfigure the bus station information building to release revenue savings and additional income be approved; and
- (2) the decision on the final layout, including the entrance to the public toilets, is based upon advice of the police and will be implemented under existing officer delegation.

127. **Enterprise Zones**

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/064 (previously circulated), which presented details of two sites located in St Edmundsbury that had been included in bids to become Enterprise Zones (EZ).

Councillor Alaric Pugh, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) had recently been invited by central Government to make an application into the latest Enterprise Zone bidding round. Within their bids, Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough and New Anglia LEPs had included Haverhill Research Park and 14 hectares of land at Suffolk Business Park, Bury St Edmunds respectively.

The Cabinet noted the potential benefits and implications of a successful EZ status bid, particularly in relation to business rate growth.

Members agreed that should either of the bids be successful and in order to progress the issue swiftly, that full Council should be asked to delegate authority to pursue the next stages of the decision making process.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted at this time, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are awaiting a decision by central Government regarding the award of Enterprise Zone status. The latest bidding round is once again a competitive process and Government will decide which applications are successful.

It has been made clear to both LEPs that, in the event that either of their applications are successful, that the sites submitted within St Edmundsbury will still require consideration by full Council.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

That due to the potential financial implications of a successful Enterprise Zone bid, as detailed in Section 2 of Report No: CAB/SE/15/064, the S151 and Monitoring Officers be given delegated authority to pursue the Enterprise Zone discussions further in the event that either or both bids submitted by the Local Enterprise Partnerships are successful.

128. Transfer of Street Lighting Columns to Suffolk County Council

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/065 (previously circulated), which sought approval for a capital allocation for the upgrading of transfer of street lighting assets to Suffolk County Council (SCC), which in turn would reduce annual revenue costs for the Borough Council.

Councillor Peter Stevens, Portfolio Holder for Operations, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that a capital allocation of £1.81 million was sought to enable 3,027 St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) owned street lighting columns to be upgraded. 1,547 of them would be transferred to SCC Highway Authority and the remaining 1,481 would be retained by SEBC. For the reasons provided in the report, an annual saving of approximately £157,000 per annum on current maintenance and energy costs would be expected to be achieved as a result of the investment.

The Cabinet noted that there were a number of street lighting assets that were owned and operated by parish councils. These lights were not part of this proposal, however, should Cabinet and Council approval be given and the project progressed, officers would investigate if this approach could benefit parish councils.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

- (1) the contents of Report No: CAB/SE/15/065 be noted; and**
- (2) £1,810,000 of non-allocated capital be allocated to upgrade 3,027 St Edmundsbury Borough Council (SEBC) owned street lighting assets to enable 1,547 of them to be transferred and adopted by the Suffolk County Council Highway Authority and to reduce the cost to power and maintain the 1,481 lighting assets retained by SEBC (reducing annual SEBC revenue expenditure by £156,500 per annum).**

129. Recommendations from the Grant Working Party - 16 September 2015: Community Chest Funding - Transitional Year (2015/2016)

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/066 (previously circulated), which presented the recommendations of the Grant Working Party emanating from its meeting on 16 September 2015.

Councillor Robert Everitt, Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet including that the Grant

Working Party had considered a number of applications for Community Chest funding in this 2015/2016 transitional year.

The Community Chest fund had only been established this year, therefore funding for existing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) totalling £199,770 had moved into the Community Chest. All previous agreements had been honoured and these would finish at the end of March 2016. As such the remaining Community Chest funds available for the 2015/2016 transitional phase amounted to £56,850.

Five applications totalling £44,728.50 had been presented to the Grant Working Party and following due consideration, recommendations for total funding of £32,902.50 had been put forward to the Cabinet for the reasons provided in the report.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (1) the allocation of Community Chest funding for 2015/2016, as detailed in Report No: GWP/SE/15/003, be approved, namely:
 - (a) Home Start: £5,000;
 - (b) Suffolk Accident and Rescue Service: £1,500;
 - (c) Suffolk West Citizens Advice Bureau: £17,500;
 - (d) Catch 22, Suffolk Positive Futures: £8,902.50; and
- (2) no Community Chest funding for 2015/2016 be awarded to Unit Twenty Three.

130. **Recommendations from the Sustainable Development Working Party: 8 October 2015**

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/067 (previously circulated) which presented the recommendations of the Sustainable Development Working Party emanating from its meeting 8 October 2015.

On 8 October 2015, the Sustainable Development Working Party considered the following substantive items of business:

- (1) Hopton Village Hall Site and Sarson's Field: Development Brief; and
- (2) Park Farm, Ingham: Concept Statement.

Councillor Alaric Pugh, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including that thorough consideration had been given to the two items outlined above at the meeting of the Sustainable Development Working Party.

Hopton was located in the Barningham Ward. Councillor Carol Bull, Ward Member for Barningham spoke in support of the Hopton Village Hall Site and Sarson's Field Development Brief, which she considered satisfactorily met the

future needs of the village. She commended the consultants acting on behalf of the landowner, on the level of community engagement and how the Development Brief had been suitably amended following the feedback from the consultation.

The Cabinet was satisfied that the Development Brief had been subject to a robust consultation process with exceptional community engagement and had broadly been prepared in accordance with the Vision 2031 Development Plan document, Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the Council's Protocol for Preparing Development Briefs.

The second recommendation, which sought approval for the draft Concept Statement for Park Farm, Ingham to go out to public consultation, was also accepted.

(a) **Hopton Development Brief**

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

That the draft Development Brief for the Hopton Village Hall Site and Sarson's Field, as contained in Appendix A to Report No: SDW/SE/15/012, be adopted as non-statutory planning guidance.

(b) **Draft Concept Statement: Park Farm, Ingham**

RESOLVED:

That the draft Concept Statement for Park Farm, Ingham, as contained in Appendix 1 to Report SDW/SE/15/013, be approved for public consultation.

131. **Review of Cabinet Area Working Parties**

The Cabinet received and noted a narrative item, which informed that informal consultation over the summer 2015 about the future of the Area Working Parties had identified the need for some further discussions with partners in respect of potential alternative arrangements. The matter was also discussed at the Parish Conference on 12 October 2015 which was after the publication of the Cabinet agenda. Accordingly, the matter would be deferred until the next ordinary meeting of Cabinet on 8 December 2015.

132. **Exemption to Contract Procedure Rules: Planning and Licensing IT Maintenance and Support Systems**

The Cabinet received and noted a narrative item which provided an exemption to the West Suffolk Contract Procedure Rules of the Constitution, relating to the renewal of the maintenance and system support contract for the Planning and Licensing IT systems.

Councillor Alaric Pugh, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet.

The exemption, as set out in the agenda, was duly noted by the Cabinet.

133. Decisions Plan: October 2015 to May 2016

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/068 (previously circulated), which was the Cabinet Decisions Plan covering the period October 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.

134. Revenues Collection Performance and Write-Offs

The Cabinet considered Report No: CAB/SE/15/069 (previously circulated) which provided the collection data in respect of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates and sought approval for the write-off of debts as contained in the Exempt Appendices.

Councillor Ian Houlder, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance, drew relevant issues to the attention of the Cabinet, including the current collection performance, as set out in Section 3 of the report.

He added that every attempt was made by the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) to recover outstanding debts. The relatively newly established ARP Enforcement Agency was so far performing well in the proactive collection of outstanding business rates and council tax. In addition, if debtors absconded and then were unexpectedly 'found', the debt would become written back on and action would be taken to recover the debt.

RESOLVED:

That the write-off of the amounts detailed in the exempt appendices to Report No: CAB/SE/15/069 be approved, as follows:

- (1) Exempt Appendix 1: Business Rates totalling £111,783.35
- (2) Exempt Appendix 2: Housing Benefit Overpayments £3,444.54

135. Exclusion of Press and Public

See minute 136 below.

136. Exempt Appendices: Revenues Collection Performance and Write-offs (paras 1 and 2)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Appendices 1 and 2 to Report No: CAB/SE/15/069 (previously circulated) under Agenda Item 17, however no reference was made to specific detail and therefore this item was not held in private session.

137. Exempt Appendix: 2016/17 Budget Setting - Bury St Edmunds Bus Station Information Building (para 3)

The Cabinet considered Exempt Appendix C to Report No: CAB/SE/15/063 (previously circulated) under Agenda Item 9, however no reference was made to specific detail and therefore this item was not held in private session.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
