

# Cabinet Minutes

Date: 21 September 2015

Time: 7.00 - 8.22 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ms K S Wood (Executive Leader of the Council - in the Chair)

Councillor Mrs J A Adey	- Cabinet Member for Community
Councillor D H G Barnes	- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Engagement and Strategy
Councillor D A Johncock	- Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Mrs J D Langley	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor Mrs J E Teesdale	- Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor D M Watson	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor R Wilson	- Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration

## By Invitation

Councillor S Broadbent	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor D J Carroll	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor R Gaffney	- Chairman of the Improvement & Review Commission
Councillor Mrs G A Jones	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor M E Knight	- Leader of the East Wycombe Independent Party
Councillor Mrs W J Mallen	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor S Saddique	- Deputy Cabinet Member for HR, ICT and Customer Services

**Also present:** Councillors C Whitehead, D Knights and Ms J D Wassell

## **24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Z Ahmed (Deputy Cabinet Member for Community), A Hussain (Deputy Cabinet Member for Engagement & Strategy), I McEnnis (Chairman of the Council), R Newman (Cabinet Member for Youth), G Peart (Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources) and A Turner (Leader of the Independent Group).

## **25 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20 July 2015 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of Interest.

## 27 CABINET RECOMMENDATION ON THE MOTION SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL ON MONDAY 27 JULY 2015

The report before Cabinet detailed the response to the Motion received at Council on Monday 27 July 2015. The Motion stated “This Council supports the view that the release of the Reserve Sites presents a golden opportunity to substantially meet the current and future social housing needs of our district. In addition to the focus on infrastructure it is essential that another strand of work is added to identify the scale of the need for social housing and ensure that any new development is maximised to ensure the need is met. Wycombe District Council should take the lead in organising a multi-agency housing summit to be held in the autumn of 2015 to identify and discuss the needs, challenges, and opportunities for housing provision in the Wycombe District.” Councillor Mrs J Wassell, the proposer of the Motion, presented the Motion to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member for Planning reiterated the response set out in the report that the Council had already undertaken extensive activity in relation to affordable housing. He commented that given the current work being undertaken and the existing level of engagement, a housing summit was not necessary or appropriate, and therefore it was recommended that the Motion be refused.

The following recommendation was made as extensive work was already being undertaken to identify the need for affordable housing and to engage with relevant stakeholders and agencies on the delivery of affordable housing.

**Recommended:** That the motion submitted to the Council on Monday 27 July 2015 be rejected.

## 28 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The budgetary position to the end of June 2015, including the Repairs and Renewals Fund, Major Projects spending and the position on Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), was presented to Cabinet for review. Cabinet also considered the actions set out in the report and whether any further action was necessary.

The following decision was made as the Cabinet approved a budget each year within the context of a Medium Term Financial Strategy to achieve the Council’s priorities. Regular monitoring reports were submitted to Cabinet for review during the financial year, with management actions highlighted to ensure that Cabinet could assess whether any further action was required.

**RESOLVED:** That the current budgetary position at the end of June 2015 be noted and the actions already taken and those proposed be supported, in order to ensure that the budget was achieved.

## 29 REVENUES & BENEFITS DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT UPGRADE AND SERVER REPLACEMENT

Cabinet approval was sought to upgrade the current Revenue & Benefits software to provide improved functionality to capture electronic documents. The report highlighted that the supplier was phasing out the current software and it was necessary to upgrade the system. It was also agreed that a replacement server would be acquired to host the new application.

The following recommendation was made to enable the migration of the revenues and benefits workflow system and replacement of the application server.

**Recommended:** That £126,500 funding from the major projects programme for the migration of revenues and benefits to Northgate information at work (document management and workflow system) the replacement of the Revenue's and Benefits application server be approved and released.

## 30 SHORT-TERM REVIEW OF EMPLOYMENT SITES

Cabinet were informed that a review of existing employment sites had been undertaken in order to identify if any sites could be redeveloped for residential use. Cabinet approval was sought to release the employment land sites listed in Appendix A to the report for potential residential development to contribute towards the five year housing land supply. Particular consideration was given to the future economic implications of releasing employment land.

The following decision was made to contribute towards meeting the Council's five year housing land supply requirement.

**RESOLVED:** That the sites listed in Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix A of the report be released as being acceptable in principle only for residential development (subject to subsequent detailed proposals for planning permission being acceptable).

## 31 REVIEW OF DISCRETIONARY COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT POLICY

Cabinet considered the report which detailed the review that had been undertaken on the discount policy for discretions in relation to Council Tax Discounts for empty dwellings. The report detailed that no major operational issues had arisen from the outcome of the current review. Cabinet recommended that the Council's current discount policy continue with the same level of discount for 2016/17.

The following recommendation was made as the Government amended the Council Tax Regulations requiring Billing Authorities to set local discount policies in relation to a number of categories of former exemption classes which were abolished from April 2013.

**Recommended:** That (i) Under section 11 subsection 4A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by S 114A(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 **purpose built holiday homes and**

**chalets, second homes** (prescribed Class A & B as defined by SI 2003 No. 3011) should continue to receive a 10% Council Tax discount;

(ii) Under section 11 subsection 4A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 **empty and unfurnished dwellings** (prescribed Class C) as defined by SI 2003 No. 3011) should receive a 100% Council Tax discount for a period of 60 days;

(iii) Under section 11 subsection 4A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 **empty dwellings undergoing structural alterations and repairs** (prescribed Class D as introduced by SI2012 No 2964) should continue to receive a 100% Council Tax discount for the first 12 months the dwelling is empty;

(iv) Under section 11B, subsection (1) (b) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by S 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012) **long term empty dwellings** would be charged an empty home premium of an additional 50% of the Council Tax payable; and

(v) a minimum occupation period of 6 weeks before a new empty discount could be granted.

## **32 POTENTIAL EXPANSION OF PRINCES RISBOROUGH AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY RECEIPTS**

The Cabinet Member for Planning explained that the Local Plan was exploring the scope for major expansion of Princes Risborough. He commented that the Council had been working closely with the local community in the development of expansion plans for the town. It was noted that planning major growth by means of a neighbourhood development plan was not considered appropriate, in this instance, as it would not conform with the current adopted Core Strategy. Parish or town councils who prepared a neighbourhood development plan were entitled to receive 25% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts. However, as the local Steering Group was putting together an Area Action Plan which could be argued as an equivalent of a Neighbourhood Plan, Cabinet decided that it was appropriate to also allocate 25% of future CIL to the Princes Risborough Town Council.

The following decision was made to provide appropriate local discretion in the spending of the Community Infrastructure Levy, given the scale of potential growth being considered at Princes Risborough and the fact that a Neighbourhood Development Plan was not considered appropriate for bringing forward this level of growth.

**RESOLVED:** That for Community Infrastructure Levy receipts received relating to the major expansion of Princes Risborough, 25% of those receipts should go to Princes Risborough Town Council for the duration of the Local Plan period (up to the year 2033).

### **33 SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY 2015 - 2020**

The report before Cabinet sought approval to adopt the new Sports Facility Strategy for the period from 2015 to 2020. The Strategy had been amended to ensure the continued development of sports facilities for the local community over the next five years. The proposed Strategy provided an analysis of indoor and outdoor sports provision, and requirements of local sporting providers. Members noted that significant consultation had been undertaken with Wycombe SPAN, local sports clubs and sports providers, and Wycombe Districts Council's Planning Department regarding the proposed changes.

The following decision was made as the last adopted Sports Facility Strategy covered the five years from 2009 to 2014 and a new strategy was required to support the development of sports facilities across the district.

**RESOLVED:** That the new 2015-2019 Sports Facility Strategy be adopted.

### **34 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

Cabinet received the following files on actions taken under delegated powers:

Community C/47/15 – C/50/15  
Deputy Leader DL/01/15  
Environment E/5/15  
Finance F/28/15 – F/31/15  
Planning & Sustainability PS/15/15 – PS/17/15

#### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as they contain exempt information as defined in Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, more particularly as follows:

#### **Minute 35 – Regeneration Fund**

#### **Minute 36 – Review of Red Kite Community Housing Rules**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations)

#### **Minute 37 File on Action taken under Exempt Delegated Powers**

**Economic Development and Regeneration sheet nos:  
EDR/48/15 – EDR/60/15**

**Environment sheet no: E/02/15**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations)

**35 REGENERATION FUND**

Cabinet approval was sought to allocate funds from the Regeneration Fund to acquire a freehold property for development.

The following decision was made as the Council had the opportunity to acquire a freehold property on terms that exceeded the Regeneration Fund delegated authority for capped spend and a minimum return criteria.

**RESOLVED:** That the Regeneration Fund be used to acquire the property, as detailed in paragraph 7 of the report, on terms that fall outside the Fund's delegated authority.

**36 REVIEW OF RED KITE COMMUNITY HOUSING'S RULES**

Cabinet approval was sought to endorse the new governance arrangements proposed by Red Kite Community Housing for implementation. It was noted that the proposals were in accordance with National Housing Federation guidance.

The following decision was made to support the improvements in the governance arrangements set out in the proposed new Rules which Red Kite Community Housing wished to implement in accordance with model Rules issued by the National Housing Federation.

**RESOLVED:** That the proposed changes to Red Kite's rules as detailed in paragraphs 26 to 34 of the report and as per the National Housing Federation's recent guidance be agreed.

**37 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER EXEMPT DELEGATED POWERS**

Cabinet received the following files on exempt actions taken under delegated powers:

Economic Development and Regeneration: EDR/48/15– EDR/60/15

Environment: E/02/15

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

- Karen Satterford - Chief Executive
- Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager
- Catherine MacKenzie - Principal Democratic Services Officer
- Steve Richardson - Head of Finance and Commercial