

1 OCTOBER 2008

**NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 1 October 2008.

p Cllr M J Kendal (Chairman)  
p Cllr B Rickman (Vice-Chairman)

**Councillors:**

e G C Beck  
p Mrs J L Cleary  
p E J Heron

**Councillors:**

p Mrs M D Holding  
p C R Treleaven  
p C A Wise

**In Attendance:**

**Councillors:**

Mrs D M Brooks  
L T Dunsdon  
Ms L C Ford  
C J Harrison  
D Harrison  
P E Hickman  
Sqn Ldr B M F Pemberton  
L R Puttock

**Councillors:**

Mrs M J Robinson  
Mrs A M Rostand  
Mrs S I Snowden  
A J Swain  
F P Vickers  
J G Ward  
P R Woods

**Also In Attendance:**

Mrs A Murphy, Tenants' Representative.

**Officers Attending:**

D Yates, R Jackson, J Mascal, Ms J Bateman and Miss G O'Rourke and for part of the meeting G Ashworth, G Bettle, J Bull, D Brown, C Elliott and N Hunt.

**42. MINUTES.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2008, having been circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

Cllr Kendal declared an interest in Minute No. 49.  
Cllrs Mrs Robinson and Vickers declared an interest in Minute No. 48

**44. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.**

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

**45. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT.**

The Chairman, Cllr Kendal, announced that he would be retiring as Leader of the Council with effect from 31 October 2008 and as such this would be the last meeting of the Cabinet that he would be chairing. Cllr Kendal said that he had thoroughly enjoyed his time as Chairman of the Cabinet. He thanked the Chief Executive, Mr D Yates, for his excellent support and advice and for his part in the success of the Council. The Chairman also thanked Jane Bateman, Committee Administrator for her efficient work in support of the Cabinet. He also expressed his thanks to Mrs M Jones and Mrs L Aldous for their work over the years as his personal assistants.

The Deputy Leader, Cllr Rickman thanked the Chairman for his dedication and hard work. Cllr Treleavan, Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder, also said that it had been a privilege working with Cllr Kendal who had always provided clear leadership.

**46. ON STREET PARKING CHARGES IN LYMINGTON (REPORT A).**

The Cabinet considered the results of investigations that had been undertaken to ascertain if proposals for the introduction of on-street charges in Lyminster should be pursued.

Members noted that following extensive consultation it was apparent that the traffic management benefits of introducing on street charges were marginal and, balancing that with the concerns raised by local groups, it would not be prudent to pursue the matter at the present time.

**RESOLVED:**

That the implementation of on-street parking charges in Lyminster be not pursued at the present time.

**47. INTRODUCTION OF THREE MONTHLY LONG STAY PARKING CLOCK (REPORT B).**

The Cabinet considered the introduction of a three monthly long stay parking clock. The new clock would help those who found it difficult to purchase an annual or 6 monthly clock outright in December of each year. It would particularly assist people in seasonal work and part time workers in small shops who currently may be reluctant to purchase an annual or six monthly parking clock. It was hoped that assisting more people to purchase clocks would help alleviate on-street parking.

**RESOLVED:**

That 3 monthly long stay clocks be made available for use as from 1 January 2009.

**48. HYTHE FERRY – REVIEW OF PARKING CLOCK SCHEME (REPORT C).**

Cllrs Mrs Robinson and Vickers declared personal interests as members of Hythe and Dibden Parish Council. They did not consider their interests to be prejudicial. They remained at the meeting. They did not have a vote.

In January 2008 the Parking Clock Scheme for Hythe Ferry was amended in order to clearly link the concessionary parking scheme with the use of the ferry. Subsequently a further review of the scheme was undertaken.

Members noted that the revised scheme had achieved its main objective of being linked to ferry usage. The number of short stay clocks sold in the Hythe Information office had reduced greatly which demonstrated that the new scheme had been effective.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Hythe Ferry Parking Clock scheme as introduced on 1 January 2008 be continued without amendment.

**49. DIAL-A-RIDE PROCUREMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS (REPORT D).**

Cllr Kendal declared a personal and prejudicial interest as Environment Portfolio Holder at Hampshire County Council. He left the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Vice-Chairman, Cllr Rickman took the chair for this item.

The Cabinet considered proposed new arrangements with HCC for the joint funding of Dial-a-Ride. New Government regulations meant that community transport providers now had to invite tenders for the provision of the service. Members were circulated with a revised Appendix A and noted that paragraph 3 relating to Vehicle Replacement Monies was no longer applicable to NFDC.

In response to concern expressed, the Cabinet noted that the tendering process would include a quality assessment and take account of the needs of the community and the views of transport providers.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Memorandum of Agreement in respect of the Dial a Ride (Call & Go) service as detailed in the revised Appendix A circulated at the Cabinet meeting and based on the latest financial allocation and making provision for inflation increases as set out in the tender documents, and taking into account any approved business plan bids, be agreed.

**50. SOUTH EAST PLAN – THE GOVERNMENT’S PROPOSED CHANGES (REPORT E).**

The Chairman, Cllr Kendal resumed the chair.

The Cabinet considered a response to the Government’s proposed changes to the submitted South East Plan. The response set out the main implications for the district and the detail of the Government’s proposals. The Plan would set a framework for the Council’s proposed Core Strategy.

In discussing the detail of the response members noted that an assurance had now been received that the ‘minimum annual average net additional dwelling requirements’ would not be interpreted as requiring 196 dwellings to be provided each and every year in the New Forest district outside of the National Park but rather that this would be a long term average requirement.

Members also commented on two specific areas of concern.

One of the Government’s proposals was to delete the policy on ‘Plan, Monitor, Manage’ and the proposal that development must be conditional on infrastructure provision. Whilst members supported the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) objection to this proposal, they felt that this was not just an issue in areas where substantial new development was planned. They expressed concern at the effect on areas in the district not included within PUSH where smaller and infill developments placed an equally great pressure on existing infrastructure and the need for funding.

Members also commented further on the proposed additions to New Forest National Park (NFNP) policy (Policy C1) in relation to restricting development within the NFNP to small scale economic development. The Cabinet were of the view that there should be a more positive approach towards the expansion of existing businesses, which should not need to demonstrate that they were contributing directly towards National Park purposes, in order to maintain the economic viability of the NFNP area and employment in the district as a whole.

**RESOLVED:**

That, subject to the response to the Government’s consultation on Proposed Changes to the South East Plan being amended to include:-

- (i) In addition to support for the PUSH objection to the proposed deletion of the policy “Plan, Monitor, Manage” which makes development conditional on

infrastructure provision, to express concern at the effect on areas in the district not included within PUSH where smaller and infill developments place an equally great pressure on existing infrastructure and the need for funding; and

- (ii) That the Council express concern at the proposal in policy C1 that only small scale economic development should be supported within the New Forest National Park (NFNP). The Council is of the view that there should be a more positive approach towards the expansion of existing businesses, which should not need to demonstrate that they are contributing directly towards National Park purposes, in order to maintain the economic viability of the NFNP and employment in the district as a whole.

the response be submitted as based on the comments set out in Section 3 of Report E to the Cabinet.

**51. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK : CORE STRATEGY – SUBMISSION DOCUMENT (REPORT F).**

The Cabinet considered the Core Strategy Submission Document which was a key part of the Council's Local Development Framework. Members noted that the Council would be recommended to agree the document which would then be published for a six week period in which public representations could be made. Following that the Council would then decide whether to formally submit the Core Strategy document to the Secretary of State.

Members expressed their thanks to Graham Ashworth, Planning Policy Manager and Louise Evans, Principal Policy Planner for their hard work over a two year period to produce the Core Strategy.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) ***That the Core Strategy document, as set out at Annex 1 to Report F to the Cabinet, incorporating the recommendations from the meeting of the Planning & Transportation Review Panel and the Planning Development Control Committee (19 September), be approved for publication as the intended Submission Document in order to receive representations on it;***
- (b) ***That, subject to the Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder being of the view that there are no major new issues arising from the representations, the Core Strategy be then formally submitted for Public Examination to the Secretary of State; and***
- (c) ***That the Planning Policy Manager, in consultation with the Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder and the Shadow Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder, be authorised to make any necessary minor editorial changes to the document in preparing it for publication and submission.***

**52. TOTTON COLLEGE CAMPUS REDEVELOPMENT (REPORT G).**

Totton College was planning a major redevelopment of its premises at Water Lane and Calmore Road, Totton. The Cabinet considered proposals to facilitate the development programme. Members noted that the proposals were an excellent example of partnership working and would be of great benefit to Totton and the area generally.

As part of the proposals the College had offered the Council the whole of the College Hall building. The acquisition of the building would provide an excellent opportunity to expand the community facilities on the site and develop the business potential of the Health and Leisure Centre. The proposed building programme would not render the College Hall available until 2012/13. Members agreed that options for the future use of the building should remain open and that in the meantime, only the minimum level of capital spend and associated revenue running costs should be committed.

**RECOMMENDED:**

***That the financial liability estimated to be £100,000 (Capital) and £40,000 (Revenue), as set out in paragraph 5.10 of Section 5 of Report G to the Cabinet be accepted to enable the transfer of the College Hall building.***

**RESOLVED:**

That, to facilitate the Totton College Campus redevelopment programme:-

- (i) The restructuring of the Council's landholding interests as outlined in Section 3 of Report G to the Cabinet be agreed and the Head of Legal & Democratic Services be authorised to enter into all necessary legal documentation to give effect to this, subject to agreement being reached on outstanding matters as detailed in (iii) below be agreed;
- (ii) The Head of Legal & Democratic Services be authorised to enter into all necessary legal documentation to give effect to the Heads of Term as set out in Appendix 2 of Report G to the Cabinet subject to agreement being reached on all outstanding matters as detailed in (iii) below;
- (iii) The Executive Director, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Leisure, Culture & Youth Matters and Finance & Efficiency, the Chief Executive and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to agree any details of the proposal which at the date of this Cabinet meeting have not been finalised subject to there being no further financial implications above those referred to in Report G to the Cabinet.

**53. CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2008/2012 (REPORT H).**

The Cabinet considered a new Corporate Asset Management Strategy that set out the broad policies for the management of the Council's property portfolio. To complement the document two new operational Asset Management Plans, one for housing assets and one for non-housing assets, would now be prepared.

**RECOMMENDED:**

***That the new Corporate Asset Management Strategy as attached at Appendix 1 to Report H to the Cabinet be agreed.***

**54. FINANCIAL REPORT – FORECAST FULL YEAR AND ACTUAL FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 2008 – AUGUST 2008 (REPORT I).**

The Cabinet considered a financial monitoring report setting out the Council's budget performance for the period April – August 2008 on a portfolio and committee basis.

Members noted that the Council was facing challenging times and was not immune to the current global economic difficulties. The Council was experiencing dramatic reductions in income as a result of the downturn in the economy whilst at the same time facing higher costs. Currently there was approximately a £500,000 shortfall in the Council's revenue budget. Whilst the Council was still financially robust, as a result of prudent budgeting in the past, the position would remain difficult for the next and future financial years especially in the light of reduced Government grant funding.

**RECOMMENDED:**

***That the following supplementary estimates be approved:-***

- ***£76,000 in respect of Housing & Planning Delivery Grant***
- ***£300,000 in respect of Planning Fee income***
- ***£136,000 in respect of Land Charges Income***
- ***£68,000 in respect of Parking and Penalty Charge Notice income***
- ***£74,000 (capital) in respect of the procurement of a Fleet Management System***

**RESOLVED :**

- (a) That the previously reported action taken by the S151 officer to authorise a payment of £20,000 in respect of Hythe Promenade be noted;
- (b) That the items set out in the revised General Fund, Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account budgets, as detailed in Appendices 1 – 3 of Report I to the Cabinet be agreed; and
- (c) That the actual expenditure position after 5 months (41.7%) compared to the budgets for the General Fund, Capital Programme and Housing Revenue Account as detailed in Appendices 1 – 3 to Report I to the Cabinet be noted.

**55. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2008-2012 (REPORT J).**

The Cabinet considered a Medium Term Financial Plan for 2008 – 2012 that set out a broad financial framework within which the Council would operate.

Members recognised the challenges that were facing the Council in terms of lower funding and rising costs, factors which were external to the Council and difficult to control. The Council's finances in the short and medium term were robust and it was important to respond strategically to challenges.

Members noted the costs of maintaining the current levels of service and the income that could be generated from reserves. Government grants would be lower than in previous years. There was currently a potential shortfall of £700,000 for 2009/10.

Review Panels and Committees would consider the position at the meetings in November and would be invited to consider ways in which to address the shortfall.

**RECOMMENDED:**

***That the Financial Strategy for development of the 2009/10 annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan as set out below be agreed:-***

- (i) The Council will endeavour to set a Council Tax increase that is affordable with particular reference to those on fixed incomes;***
- (ii) The Council aims to set a balanced revenue budget retaining uncommitted reserves for the management of unforeseen risks at the current level of £2m, approximately 10% of net revenue expenditure;***
- (iii) The Council will endeavour to maintain and improve the current level and quality of services provided. It aims to achieve this by funding already identified commitments and forecast increases in pay and prices for all services;***
- (iv) The Council aims to maintain its existing approach to Charging; although all Portfolios are requested to consider this in light of the guidance provided by the Audit Commission document "Positively Charged – Maximising the benefits of local public service charges";***
- (v) All service expenditure plan proposals will be developed within Portfolio Plans, enabling the Corporate Plan to be linked to the service planning process;***
- (vi) Portfolio Plans will be considered by all Review Panels in draft form during November 2008, enabling feedback to Cabinet pending final development of the Financial Strategy to be set out in January. Review Panels will have a further opportunity to review final detail plans in January 2009, prior to the Council determining the net budget requirement and Council Tax for 2009/10;***
- (vii) All Portfolios are asked to develop their delivery and financial plans within the context of financial assumptions set out within this financial strategy, both for 2009/10 and the medium term. This includes achieving a savings and efficiency budget reduction and containing any new development within the overall level of resources identified by the strategy; and***



*(viii) In accordance with the Council's Asset Management Strategy the Asset Management Group will recommend a capital and maintenance programme for consideration by Cabinet in January.*

**56. OUTSIDE BODY – CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP.**

**RESOLVED:**

That Cllr David Russell be appointed to serve as the Council's deputy representative on the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

CHAIRMAN

(DEMOCRAT/CB011008/MINUTES.DOC)