

2 MARCH 2011

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Wednesday, 2 March 2011.

- p Cllr B Rickman (Chairman)
- p Cllr E J Heron (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- p G C Beck
- p Mrs D M Brooks
- p Mrs J L Cleary

Councillors:

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

In Attendance:

Councillors:

Mrs A J Hoare
Mrs P Jackman
Mrs M E Lewis
L R Puttock
A W Rice TD
Mrs A M Rostand

Councillors:

Mrs S I Snowden
Mrs B Smith
F P Vickers
J G Ward
A Weeks
P R Woods

Apologies were received from Mr M Ackerman and Mrs A Murphy, Housing Policy and Report Focus Group Representatives.

Officers Attending:

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

65. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2011 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllrs E J Heron, Mrs Holding, Rice and Weeks declared interests in Minutes Nos. 69 and 70.

67. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

68. SENIOR MANAGEMENT REVIEW (REPORT A).

The Cabinet considered a report detailing how well the senior management structure of the authority was working, proposing some short term changes and indicating the need for a further review later in the year.

The Leader thanked all those involved for their hard work in dealing with this difficult matter.

The Deputy Leader said that in recognising the changing nature of local government and the changing financial situation the reduction of employees was necessary. However, he said that no member had come into local government to lose staff and he was exceptionally grateful to those and all other employees for the excellent work that had been done over many years.

Since the last review in 2007/08 there had been significant changes in the national political environment and in particular the financial environment. The authority had responded to the impact of the credit crunch, a major reduction in Government grant and a huge number of radical new policies from the Coalition Government. There had been savings of over £600,000 in senior management costs over the past 6 years. However, in seeking to protect front-line services, it was recognised that more savings should be sought.

Following a comprehensive review process a number of changes as outlined in Report A to the Cabinet had been agreed. The Chief Executive thanked the Employee Side for the constructive way in which they had approached the review.

Members noted that it was likely that these changes would result in further savings of more than £250,000. In terms of both finance and posts, the scale of changes proposed was proportional to the overall savings being made by the Council.

In particular members noted that the Sustainability agenda work, which had been an active and successful role of the Head of Performance Development, would continue to be progressed by an Executive Director. Work was already underway on a Hampshire wide project to consider the use of photo voltaic solar panels and that type of work would continue to increase and deliver the green agenda together with income and savings.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the issue of reducing senior managers had also arisen through the Employee suggestion scheme and he supported the proposals in the report.

Further changes/reductions to the senior management structure would be made later in the year once any changes in the priorities of the new administration and the member structure at Cabinet and scrutiny level following the local elections was known. The detailed impact of a very wide number of new Central Government policies affecting the Council and other partners would also be clearer by the autumn.

RESOLVED:

That the management restructuring proposals as set out in Report A to the Cabinet be supported and a further report on the matter be made to the Cabinet later in the year.

Action: Dave Yates

69. PROJECT INTEGRA REVIEW (REPORT B).

Cllr E J Heron declared a personal interest in this matter as a Council appointed representative on the Project Integra Management Board and as a Hampshire County Councillor. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial. He remained at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted.

Cllr Mrs Holding declared a personal interest in this matter as a Council appointed representative on the Project Integra Management Board. She did not consider her interest to be prejudicial. She remained at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted.

Cllr Rice declared a personal interest in this matter as a Hampshire County Councillor. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial. He remained at the meeting. He did not have a vote.

Cllr Weeks declared a personal interest in this item as a Council appointed representative on the Project Integra Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial. He remained at the meeting and took part in the discussion. He did not have a vote.

As part of their 2010/15 Action Plan Project Integra had carried out a review of their service and the Cabinet now considered options for the future running and direction of Project Integra.

The Environment Portfolio Holder said that Project Integra delivered the highest diversion rate for waste to landfill in the country and the review aimed for them to continue to lead the way.

The Environment Review Panel had discussed the matter at their meeting on 27 January 2011. In broadly supporting their comments, the Environment Portfolio Holder said that whilst he agreed that targets should take account of costs and value for money he would want to see increased emphasis on customer satisfaction. NFDC was the only local authority in Hampshire that continued to provide a weekly collection service for refuse and recycling and at a lower cost than others providing a less frequent service. This was what residents wanted and it was important to maintain that satisfaction level.

Members noted that there still remained a problem with commercial waste which accounted for the majority of landfill.

RESOLVED:

That the responses suggested by the Environment Review Panel as set out in Report B to the Cabinet and supported by the Environment Portfolio Holder, with the addition of a comment relating to increased emphasis on resident satisfaction, be submitted to Project Integra as this Council's response to their consultation.

Action: Colin Read

70. PROJECT INTEGRA ACTION PLAN (REPORT C).

Cllr E J Heron declared a personal interest in this matter as a Council appointed representative on the Project Integra Management Board and as a Hampshire County Councillor. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial. He remained at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted.

Cllr Mrs Holding declared a personal interest in this matter as a Council appointed representative on the Project Integra Management Board. She did not consider her interest to be prejudicial. She remained at the meeting, took part in the discussion and voted.

Cllr Rice declared a personal interest in this matter as a Hampshire County Councillor. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial. He remained at the meeting. He did not have a vote.

Cllr Weeks declared a personal interest in this item as a Council appointed representative on the Project Integra Policy Review and Scrutiny Committee. He did not consider his interest to be prejudicial. He remained at the meeting and took part in the discussion. He did not have a vote.

The Cabinet considered the Project Integra draft annual Action Plan which was the mechanism by which the Project Integra Board received its mandate to work on behalf of the partnership. It also set out the costs of running the Board and associated joint activities of the partnership.

The Environment Portfolio Holder said that in the light of the ongoing review work, the current draft Action Plan was of a holding nature and would be reviewed further following the outcome of the review.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Project Integra Annual Business Plan 2011-2016 as set out in Report C to the Cabinet be approved.

Action: Colin Read

71. RINGWOOD TOWN ACCESS PLAN – SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (REPORT D).

The Cabinet considered the adoption of the Ringwood Town Access Plan Supplementary Planning Document.

The Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder said that the document, which described current and future plans for new and improved transportation access measures for Ringwood, had been drawn up in consultation with local organisations, residents, businesses and elected Councillors. It represented an achievable contribution to the future viability of Ringwood Town, in terms of both community welfare and economic progress.

Whilst the proposed schemes still needed to be individually funded, the Plan would enable Developers' Contributions, when received, to be directed appropriately.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Ringwood Town Access Plan Supplementary Planning Document, as set out in Appendix B to Report D to the Cabinet, be adopted as part of the Local Development Framework for New Forest District (outside the National Park);
- (b) That the Head of Planning and the Principal Engineer (Transportation), both in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and appropriate HCC officers be authorised to make minor editorial changes to the document and amend the proposals to take account of:
 - the recommendations in safety audit reports
 - the conclusions of feasibility studies; and
- (c) That the addition or amendment of individual proposals be delegated to the Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder.

Action: Nick Hunt/Neil Williamson

CHAIRMAN