

DECISION SHEET

MEETING NO 2 OF THE CABINET HELD ON 11 JULY 2006

1. **REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY**

CABINET DECISION

That the publication of the independent panel's Examination in Public report in relation to the East of England's Regional Spatial Strategy be noted, and that it also be noted that the Chairman and the Planning and Conservation Portfolio Holder intend to arrange a public meeting as soon as possible, possibly in September, to discuss concerns arising from the report.

Note: The above item was raised as Other Business by the Chairman.

2. **MINUTES**

CABINET DECISION

That the Minutes of Meeting No 1 of the Cabinet held on 6 June 2006 be confirmed.

3. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

CABINET DECISION

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act.

4. **THE CINEMA PROJECT, BRICKET ROAD, ST ALBANS**

Culture and Heritage Portfolio Holder

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services)

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That Cabinet notes the discussions taking place.
- (ii) That Cabinet agrees to the principle of the lease being granted on a tax-efficient basis using an appropriate company structure as set out in paragraphs 8.9-8.13 of the report in order to save Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) of an amount as set out in Part II to this decision sheet.
- (iii) That Cabinet authorises the Valuer and Estates Surveyor or the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to agree the detail of any necessary amendments to the contract documents (the Development Agreement and Agreement for Lease) resulting from decisions made under (ii) above and (iv) below.
- (iv) That the Council's brief be amended to require only 150 Council car parking spaces being provided between 7am and 7pm Monday to Friday at no annual charge for the length of the 150 year lease when the new development is opened. This reduction will be achieved by a combination of

home working, green travel initiatives and the introduction of flexible staff benefits in negotiation with Unison. Should any gap between this target and what is achieved remain it will need to be accommodated within the Council's revenue budget.

Notes:

[1] The requirement in respect of Council car parking would now be as follows:

“The Council's need for car parking: 150 car parking spaces reserved Monday - Friday, 7am - 7pm for the Council's use. This reduces to 50 spaces after 7pm (100 spaces on up to 12 occasions a year) and 18 spaces on a Saturday (for Saturday working).”

[2] The meeting resumed in open session on the conclusion of the above item.

5. **ITEM REFERRED FROM THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE – REVISED DRAFT POLICY ON THE USE OF ICT EQUIPMENT BY MEMBERS**

*Community Safety and Support Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Services)*

CABINET DECISION

That Cabinet agrees in principle to provide computers for Members and that the Community Safety and Support Portfolio Holder work with Officers and Group Leaders to establish a suitable control system and Members' protocol for their use.

6. **ITEM REFERRED FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (COMMUNITY SERVICES) – A DRAFT GREEN SPACES STRATEGY FOR ST ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT**

*Sport and Healthy Living and Planning and Conservation Portfolio Holders
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services)*

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the draft Strategy be accepted.
- (ii) That the Green Spaces Action Plan be presented to the 14 November meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services) following consultation with Town and Parish Councils. [Note: This has been agreed with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee].

7. **ITEM REFERRED FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (COMMUNITY SERVICES) – GARAGE SITES REVIEW – UPDATE AND INTRODUCTION TO FUTURE STRATEGY**

*Housing Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services)*

CABINET DECISION

That the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services) be considered in conjunction with the report elsewhere on the agenda (Item 9 below refers).

8. **THE PROVISION OF WHEELED BINS FOR THE COLLECTION OF REFUSE AND THE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMUNITY PANEL**

Environment and Sustainability Portfolio Holder

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services)

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That the Cabinet agrees in principle that there are substantial potential environmental, recycling and financial benefits for the provision of wheeled bins and for the alternate week collection of household refuse as set out in section 14 of the report.
- (ii) That tenders be sought for implementing the operational changes, referred to in (i) above, in the forthcoming refuse collection contract tender as well as the continuation of a weekly sack collection.
- (iii) That implementation of the provision of wheeled bins for an alternate week kerbside collection of refuse will however be subject to:
 - (a) Receipt of tenders showing a financial revenue saving of not less than £50,000 pa for ten years
 - (b) A further report and recommendations to Cabinet from the Refuse Collection Working Party setting out the criteria for the selection of streets remaining on a weekly sack collection or a 140 litre bin collection and an analysis of the total number involved.
 - (c) Further consultation with city conservation area residents and other relevant community stakeholders, Parish Councils and Residents Associations across the District being conducted regarding the implementation of the Council's strategy as agreed in (b) above.
- (iv) That the Environmental Services Manager and the Refuse Collection Working Party be asked to recommend to Cabinet a policy for the proposed change to wheeled bins for refuse and the alternate week collection of refuse, which sets out the contractor performance and customer care standards required by the Council to ensure clarity for residents, officers, members and contractors.
- (v) That the Officers be given authority to negotiate the extension of the present contract in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability with a view to starting the new contract on Monday 31 December 2007.

9. **GARAGE SITES REVIEW – UPDATE AND INTRODUCTION TO FUTURE STRATEGY**

Housing Portfolio Holder

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services)

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That Cabinet agrees the holistic approach to garage sites as set out in options 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 of the report.

- (ii) That officers approach Registered Social Landlords in relation to priority category 1 sites to prepare affordable housing schemes and planning applications for consideration.
- (iii) That officers review garage rental levels as part of the HRA budget process for 2007/08.
- (iv) That officers identify garage sites which are a priority for investment and identify budget provision within the resources available as part of the HIP budget process for 2007/08.

10. **CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM)**

*Community Safety and Support Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Services)*

CABINET DECISION

That Cabinet:

- (i) agrees that sufficient return on investment has been identified and the required funding of £183,000 can now be released (in line with the capital programme) to proceed with CRM implementation
- (ii) acknowledges that the savings identified can only be realised as cashable savings if used to reduce the number of posts
- (iii) agrees to the approach of using Comino as the CRM solution

11. **CCTV – REFERRAL FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (COMMUNITY SERVICES)**

*Community Safety and Support Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services)*

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That Cabinet acknowledges the contribution made towards CCTV by the Parish Councils.
- (ii) That Cabinet agrees that the District Council will continue to fund the capital cost of new schemes in parished areas (currently costing £5,500 per site) on the basis of each partner contributing 50% towards the cost, subject to budget provision.
- (iii) That Cabinet agrees that the District Council fund the annual maintenance of the stand alone cameras (currently £400 per annum per site).
- (iv) That Officers be instructed to work within existing budgets and seek further savings to pay for the ongoing maintenance costs of the stand alone CCTV systems in the Parishes.

12. **PLANNING IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY**

Planning and Conservation Portfolio Holder

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Enterprise and Civic Environment)

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That Cabinet agrees the actions and improvements as detailed in the accompanying Planning Improvement Strategy (Appendix 1 to the report).
- (ii) That Cabinet notes the Work Programmes associated with the Service Plan for Planning Services (Appendix 2 to the report).
- (iii) That Cabinet notes the amount of Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) allocated to this Council for the financial year 2006/07 and endorse the broad terms of the direction of expenditure as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, and that the Planning and Conservation Portfolio Holder together with the relevant Officers be requested to look at the staffing implications of the Strategy in more detail and to report back to Cabinet.
- (iv) That Cabinet refers this issue to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Enterprise and Civic Environment) for consideration at its next meeting on 12 September.
- (v) That PDG capital expenditure monitoring be undertaken through the current corporate expenditure monitoring process, whilst Officers carry out monitoring of revenue expenditure, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holders.

13. **CHARGING FOR PLANNING APPLICATION MEETINGS WITH OFFICERS**

Planning and Conservation Portfolio Holder

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Enterprise and Civic Environment)

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That authorisation be given to the meeting charging procedure as described in Appendices 1 to 4 of the report relating to meetings with applicants, prospective applicants, developers and their agents for a trial period of 12 months commencing 1 September 2006.
- (ii) That the following fee scale be charged: Band A £500, Band B £200, Band C £50.
- (iii) That the procedure be publicised as widely as possible during August 2006.
- (iv) That a further report be considered by Cabinet mid-2007.

14. **REVIEW OF SCHEME FOR PROVISION OF GRANT FUNDING TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

*Resources and Efficiencies Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Services)*

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That the new criteria and application forms for the award of grants to voluntary organisations be agreed.
- (ii) That Cabinet agrees to the process for monitoring and ensuring accountability of the grants process.
- (iii) That Cabinet agrees the documentation to ensure a consistent approach to the award of grants across the Council for the next budget cycle (2007/08) and that the Grants Panel be responsible for awarding all grants.
- (iv) That match funding criteria will be introduced gradually.
- (v) That the proposed timetable set out in Appendix 3 to the report is agreed.

15. **REVENUE BUDGETS AND CAPITAL PROGRAMMES 2005/06 OUTTURN AND UPDATE**

*Resources and Efficiencies Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Services)*

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

- (i) That Virement Rule 5.4 (e) within the Constitution be amended to read “that the aggregate of virement within any portfolio in any one of the main budget heads shall not exceed £100,000 in any one financial year without the prior approval of Cabinet.”
- (ii) That the service areas listed at Virement Rule 5.1 (b) within the Constitution be amended in line with the re-organisation of portfolios to read:
 - a) Community Leadership and Communications
 - b) Community Safety and Support
 - c) Culture and Heritage
 - d) Environment and Sustainability
 - e) Housing
 - f) Planning and Conservation
 - g) Resources and Efficiencies
 - h) Sport and Healthy Living
 - i) Functions that are not the responsibility of the executive
- (iii) That the response of Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Policy Authority to this Council’s request with regard to their budget/precept setting meeting dates and the impact on this Council’s Council Tax setting process be noted.
- (iv) That the Council’s annual budget meeting be held on the scheduled date of 21 February 2007 and that, in accordance with Section 67(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, a Council Tax Setting Committee be

established to set the aggregate amount of Council Tax for the relevant financial year following the decision of this authority, local precepting authorities and major precepting authorities.

- (v) That the functions delegated to the Council Tax Setting Committee be as determined previously, that the Committee comprise seven members with places to be allocated to the political groups in accordance with proportionality (4-2-1), that the Committee be chaired by the Leader and that the term of membership be for the balance of the municipal year.

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That the report be received.
- (ii) That the following is noted:
- the successful completion of the 2005/06 Final Accounts (pre-audit) in accordance with the Government's accelerated deadline (30 June).
 - the further improvement of £148,000 in the General Fund Revenue Account since the previous report
 - the final cost of the Oaklands Campus Planning Approval Inquiry at £342,000
 - the schedule of budgets carried forward to 2006/07 as set out at Appendix 2 to the report
 - the £5,000 excess virement within the Housing Portfolio as detailed in paragraph 10.1 of the report
 - the increased net cost of £89,000 on the Housing Revenue Account and the reduction in the revenue contribution to the Housing Investment Programme.
- (iii) That, in accordance with the virement rules, the virement of £11,300 from the Heritage, Arts and Tourism revenue budget to its capital programme to assist with the replacement of the obsolete sound system at the Maltings Arts Theatre be reported to Council.

16. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2005/06**
Resources and Efficiencies Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Services)

CABINET DECISION

That the report be received.

17. **STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL**
Resources and Efficiencies Portfolio Holder
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Services)

CABINET DECISION

That the Statement on Internal Control as attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved for inclusion in the 2005/06 Statement of Accounts.

18. **FUTURE DEMOCRATIC ARRANGEMENTS**
Community Leadership and Communications Portfolio Holder
All Overview and Scrutiny Committees

CABINET DECISION

- (i) That Cabinet agrees to set up a joint Member/Officer Working Group to examine the possible adoption of devolution/area working and its consequences for the District Council's Constitution, and to examine the relationship of the District Council with the Parishes.
- (ii) That Cabinet agrees that the membership of this Working Group includes the Portfolio Holders for Community Leadership and Communications, and for Resources and Efficiencies, one representative from each political party, and relevant officers where necessary.
- (iii) That Cabinet agrees the Working Group's Terms of Reference to be as set out in Appendix A to the report.
- (iv) That the Working Party aims to report back to Cabinet with its initial recommendations by October 2006.
- (v) That Cabinet notes the request from the Parish Liaison Joint Committee for a Parish Charter to be adopted, but considers it is premature to make such a decision until the recommendations of the working party are presented to Council.

19. **FORWARD PLAN SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 2006**
All Portfolio Holders
All Overview and Scrutiny Committees

CABINET DECISION

That the Forward Plan for the period September to November 2006 be approved as amended as follows:

September

- Defer report on identification of potential gypsy and traveller sites in South West Herts to October
- Add report on the Cinema Project

October

Add report on Future Democratic Arrangements (report of the Working Party as detailed in Item 18 above)

20. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

CABINET DECISION

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act.

21. **1-8 ST PAUL'S PLACE, HATFIELD ROAD, ST ALBANS**

Housing Portfolio Holder

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community Services)

CABINET DECISION

That action be taken as set out in Part II to this decision sheet.

Published on **Friday 14 July 2006**

The above decisions will come into force, and may be implemented on the expiry of, 5 working days after the publication of the decision (ie on Monday 24 July 2006) unless a request for call-in is made.

(Note: Any requests for a decision to be called in must therefore be received by 4.45pm on Friday 21 July 2006.)