

To: All Members of the County Council
All Chief Officers

From COUNTY SECRETARY'S
DEPARTMENT

Ask for David Roberts
Ext. 25562
Minicom 26611
My Ref. DR/
Your Ref.

CABINET
17 JUNE 2002

MINUTES
ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

D A Ashley, D Beatty, R J M Ellis (Chairman), G D Game, R I N Gordon, M H T Janes, D B Lloyd, J M Pitman, I E M Tarry.

Other Members present:

D Billing, N K Brook, P V Goggins, T G M Kent, I H Laidlaw-Dickson, B J Lamb, R Mays, R Sanderson, R J Smith.

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 17 June 2002 as circulated, copy annexed, executive decisions were reached and are recorded below:

Note: No conflicts of interest were declared by any member of the Cabinet in relation to the matters on which decisions were made at this meeting and set out below.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet held on 20 May 2002 were confirmed as a correct record.

- 2. STRUCTURE PLAN - ALTERATIONS TO 2016: proposals for pre-deposit public consultation**
(Forward Plan Ref. A010/02)

Decision

Council be recommended:

1. That Council adopts the plan monitor, manage approach (Option C in the report) as the preferred development strategy for the purpose of Pre-Deposit consultation on the Alterations to the Structure Plan.

2. That a comprehensive Pre-Deposit consultation exercise be undertaken on the Alterations to the Structure Plan for a minimum period of twelve weeks using the approaches set out in Section 5 of the report and including:
 - i. information on the other development strategy options (Options A and B)
 - ii. detailed Policies to support Option C as set out in Appendix 2
 - iii. suggested amendments to other Policies in the plan as set out in Appendix 3
 - iv. documentation referred to in Para 5.2
3. That the Director of Environment be authorised to finalise the documentation in consultation with the Executive Member, including the revision of the wording of the last sentence on page 27 to read as follows:

"The status of the Areas of Special Restraint that are already formally identified in the adopted East Herts and Welwyn Hatfield Local Plans would, at this stage, be unaffected by this new policy but would be revisited in the context of the Structure Plan's other policies as part of the final preparation of the Deposit Draft Structure Plan."
4. That the Director of Environment be authorised to pursue the objection to the Stevenage Local Plan for the removal of the Strategic Allocation West of the A1(M), including the preparation of evidence and appearance at the Local Plan Inquiry.
5. That Council adopts the following programme for the completion of the review of Alterations to the Structure Plan:
 - Deposit Plan January 2003
 - Examination in Public July 2003
 - Adoption February 2004

Reasons for the decision

The County Structure Plan is a key strategic document, which sets out the general policies and proposals of strategic importance for the development and use of land in the County. The current Structure Plan is the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review, which was adopted in April 1998. It covers the period 1991 to 2011. Government Guidance on Development Plans sets out that plans should be kept up to date and reviewed regularly if they are to be effective, and that a full review should take place at least every five years.

Work commenced on Alterations to the Structure Plan in October 1999. It was agreed at that time that in order to examine how best to reduce the amount of greenfield development in the County, a review of the adopted plan should be commenced immediately. At the heart of the technical work underpinning the review was to be a thorough investigation of the capacity of settlements in the County to accommodate the housing figures of the emerging regional planning guidance.

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG 9), set an annual house building target for Hertfordshire of 3,280 new homes each year from 2001 onwards. For the period covered by the RPG this would total 49,200 homes between 2001 and 2016.

For the Structure Plan Alterations, the County Council has to provide a planning framework for the period 2001 to 2016, through which this number of homes can be delivered.

Guidance as to how to meet these targets is contained in PPG 3 Housing, which sets out a sequential approach to the identification of land for housing. Housing Capacity Studies are required to identify the potential for housing on previously developed land. The results of such studies should then inform a second stage, which is to decide on the scale and location of green field development that may be needed to meet the overall housing requirement.

The report contained the proposed development options for consultation, and identified a preferred option. It also set out in Appendix 2 the policies which reflected the preferred development strategy option and at Appendix 3, the remaining Structure Plan policies and any proposed amendments. The Structure Plan Panel had considered the options, the Policy changes and the revised Technical work, and had recommended that they be agreed for public consultation and that public consultation should now commence.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

3. BUS AND INTALINK STRATEGIES, TRANSPORT OPERATIONS BEST VALUE IMPROVEMENT PLAN
(Forward Plan Ref. A049/02)

Decision

1. That Cabinet approves the Transport Operations Best Value Improvement Plan and invites Environment Scrutiny Committee to monitor progress on the implementation of the action points
2. Council be recommended:

That Council formally adopts the Bus and Intalink Strategies as supporting documents to the Local Transport Plan.

Reasons for the decision

The outcome of the Best Value Review of Transport Operations, including a number of recommendations, was agreed by the former Executive Committee on 18 September 2000.

In November 2000, the Transport Act 2000 was published, which included a requirement for each authority to consult on and produce a Bus Strategy for their area. In progressing both the Best Value Review outcomes and the need for a Bus Strategy, an Improvement Plan for the service has also been prepared.

The Government requires Bus Strategies to incorporate a section on the authority's bus information strategy. The Council deals with passenger transport information through the Intalink Partnership, which includes rail operators as well as bus operators. For this reason, as well as producing a Bus Strategy, a full Intalink Strategy has also been developed.

The Transport Panel has overseen the development and consultation process for the Bus and Intalink Strategies and these were finally approved at the Transport Panel meeting on 27 March 2002.

The Audit Commission carried out a Best Value Inspection of the Transport Operations service, concluding that the service was “Good” with “Promising” prospects for improvement. The Audit Commission also made a number of recommendations to improve the service. The Best Value Inspection report, the Improvement Plan and the Inspectors’ Recommendations were all reported to Environment Scrutiny Committee on 19 March 2002. The Committee recommended that Cabinet agree the Inspectors’ recommendations for inclusion in the overall Improvement Plan.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

4. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT AND POLICY CHANGES

(Forward Plan Ref. A045/02)

Decision

Council be recommended:

1. That Council approves the Local Transport Plan Annual Progress for submission to the Department for Transport before 31 July 2002 including:
 - a) amendments to the bus and cycle policies
 - b) new policies on “Social Inclusion” and “Transport Issues for Disabled People”
2. That, in consultation with the Executive Member and the Chairman of Transport Panel, the Director of Environment be authorised to finalise the document including:
 - incorporating a submission from St Albans Council within the district comments section, when received;
 - further performance indicator data and associated commentary;
 - inclusion of the street lighting inventory;
 - any update on the Croxley Rail Link and Baldock Bypass schemes subject to the outcomes of the current discussions with the Department for Transport, and
 - the amendments suggested by the Transport Panel, and any other minor changes.

Reasons for the decision

The County Council is required to publish an Annual Progress Report on the Local Transport Plan for submission to DfT by 31 July 2002. The format of the document follows the guidance produced by DfT.

This year’s Annual Progress Report contains changes to four of the policies set out in the Local Transport Plan. These changes have been developed in consultation with over 500 local organisations.

The development of the Annual Progress Report has been overseen by the Transport Panel. The draft document, including the proposed policy changes, was agreed at its meeting on 27 May 2002 for consideration by the Cabinet.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

5. CHILTERN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY - Creating a Statutory Conservation Board
(Forward Plan Ref. A018/02)

Decision

1. That the efforts being made by the Chilterns partners to secure more effective arrangements for the protection and enhancement of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are welcomed;
2. That support, in principle, be given to the establishment of a statutory Conservation Board subject to:-
 - the new arrangements complementing existing County Council activity;
 - representation for all appropriate Hertfordshire local authorities;
 - no significant cost increases, and
 - prior agreements being reached between the Conservation Board and the County Council where powers are to be 'shared'.

Reasons for the decision

The creation of a Conservation Board is supported as a way of:

- securing long term Government funding;
- formalising the current ad hoc joint working arrangements;
- ensuring public involvement in, and scrutiny of, the setting of policies and priorities for the AONB; and
- influencing the relevant strategies and investment programmes of public, private and voluntary organisations.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

6. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN HERTFORDSHIRE
(Forward Plan Ref. A042/02)

Decision

That the recommendations arising from the Best Value Review of Economic Development be adopted.

Reasons for the decision

A review of economic development has been undertaken following the standard methodology. At each stage the core officer review team has researched information and developed proposals. These had been tested with external challengers at three workshops during the course of the review, before being presented at each stage to the Member Reference Groups.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

7. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE
(Forward Plan Ref. A041/02)

Decision

That the recommendations arising from the Best Value Review of Mental Health Services for Older People be adopted.

Reasons for the decision

The Review showed how changes could be made from by shifting the balance of care from residential care, to domiciliary care, which would be more cost effective.

A random sample of 35 older people in specialist mental health beds in residential care was analysed. The analysis indicated that 50% of them could have been maintained for longer in their own home before admission to residential care, possibly by about 30 weeks on average. This would be possible only if additional or enhanced domiciliary services are established and funded. Significant improvements could be made by reconfiguring services and investing in domiciliary, rather than residential care. Such reinvestment would benefit more people in the community than if the same amount were spent on residential care. This would offer best value for the resourcing available.

The Review also indicated how integrated working between NHS and Adult Care Services staff would be more cost-effective and efficient and improve access, information and support to users and carers. Pooling resources between ACS and the NHS would improve service availability and should eventually provide more equitable services across Hertfordshire.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

8. LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT
(Forward Plan Ref. A054/02)

Decision

1. That the following 14 targets be agreed as the basis for negotiation with government

1. Nat 4 – GCSE A* - G
 2. Nat 5 - Truancy
 3. Nat 7 – Pre-admission & rehab
 4. Nat 9 – Children in care A* - C
 5. Nat 30 – Cost efficiency
 6. Nat 31 – E-govt capability
 7. Nat 35 – Roads maintenance
 8. Local – Employment/ training disadvantaged people
 9. Local – Packages of Care
 10. Local – Road Safety KSI
 11. Nat 8 - Looked after children at 19
 12. one of:
Local – Townscape / landscape assessment
Local - Sustainability design guide
 13. Local - Preventable fires (*excluding car fires*)
 14. Local - Key worker housing
2. That the resourcing framework set out in the report is agreed as the basis for funding and in particular that the targets related to other funding sources be negotiated in relation to these sources.
 3. That the detailed resource requirements be identified and reported to Cabinet when final agreement is sought.
 4. That funding for the cost to the Council of delivery targets be charged to the appropriate service budgets as the budget proposals are developed.
 5. That 40% of the reward grant be directly applied to the services delivering the targets pro-rata to their delivery and allocation of the remainder be determined by the Council as part of the overall budget consideration.
 6. That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to finalise and submit the bid on 1 July 2002.

Reasons for the decision

Local PSAs are three-year agreements between a local authority and central government to raise standards in selected areas. In entering into Local PSAs, The County Council may benefit from additional flexibilities and freedoms and be eligible for additional resources.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Decision

That under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

PART II (CLOSED) AGENDA**1. PROPERTY DISPOSAL: LANGLEYBURY, HUNTON BRIDGE**

(Forward Plan Ref. A006/01)

Decision

That

1. Disposal of the site of the former Langleybury School (excluding those parts subject to residential secure tenancies) be agreed.
2. A planning brief be prepared with Three Rivers District Council. This brief to seek to cover the whole of the Langleybury Estate.
3. The Corporate Director, People and Property, be authorised to make a planning application for development of the site in accordance with the provisions of the planning brief.
4. All third party occupiers of the Langleybury Estate be informed of the County Council's proposals and be given the opportunity to comment upon the draft planning brief.
5. Proposals be formulated for either the relocation or the retention of the Children's Farm, alongside preparation of the planning brief.
6. Proposals be formulated for the relocation of the Children Schools and Families Service quadrant office and a further report be brought to Cabinet at an early date.
7. No more staff move to the site, without the prior written agreement of the Corporate Director, People and Property, after consultation with the Executive Member.

Reasons for the decision

School use at the Langleybury site ceased at the end of the 1998 summer term and pupils now attended the Francis Combe School site in Garston. Part of the former school buildings was presently in temporary use as the Children Schools and Families (CSF) Service South Quadrant Office. Other parts of the buildings and site were occasionally used for filming. The site includes a farm, listed buildings, playing fields and 6 dwellings.

The former school site was surplus to the County Council's long term property requirements. A planning brief to guide future uses of the site is required and that needs to be taken forward with Three Rivers District Council. An essential pre-requisite to that work was a clear decision to dispose.

The CSF Service South Quadrant Office needed to be relocated to more suitable office accommodation and the preparation of proposals for this move would be formulated at the same time as the planning brief work.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

(Note: the above statement is the same as the statement set out in the separate Part II minutes.)