

To: All Members of the County Council  
All Chief Officers

From COUNTY SECRETARY'S  
DEPARTMENT

Ask for David Roberts  
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**CABINET  
16 SEPTEMBER 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:

G M Cook, T G M Kent, I H Laidlaw-Dickson, R Mays, S Quilty, R J Smith, B A York

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 16 September 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 22 July 2002 were confirmed as a correct record.

**2. THE FUTURE OF WALL HALL NURSERY SCHOOL AND NURSERY PROVISION  
IN EAST WATFORD AND ALDENHAM/ RADLETT**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A075/02 )

**Decision**

- (1) That statutory processes for the closure of Wall Hall Nursery School, Aldenham in 31 December 2003 be commenced and that a statutory notice be published to that effect.
- (2) That, in the event of there being no statutory objections to the closure, the Director of Children, Schools and Families be authorised to confirm it .

- (3) That statutory processes to open a nursery class at Knutsford School, Watford in 1 September 2003 be commenced and that a statutory notice be published to that effect.
- (4) That, in the event of there being no statutory objections to the opening, the Director of Children, Schools and Families be authorised to confirm it.
- (5) That Cabinet records its appreciation of the expertise of the staff of Wall Hall Nursery and hopes that expertise will continue to be available to Hertfordshire children.

**Reasons for the decision**

Wall Hall is an excellent nursery school, but cannot remain in its current accommodation as that was being sold for residential development by the University of Hertfordshire.

Consultation had been undertaken on the proposal that Wall Hall should close in December 2003; that in future children from Radlett should utilise spare nursery class places at St John's Infants' School, Radlett; and that a nursery class should open at Knutsford School in September 2003.

All the responses to the consultation were available in the members' room and were summarised in the report. The case for establishing a nursery class at Knutsford was supported; but there was considerable resistance to the prospect of closing Wall Hall, even though there were sufficient places to make up the shortfall at St John's. Newberries School, Radlett wanted a nursery class and had expressed reservations about the relocation of Wall Hall as a free standing nursery class on their site, which was what Wall Hall governors, parents and staff wished to happen.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**3. PREVENTING SCHOOL FAILURE**

(Forward Plan Ref. A055/02 )

**Decision**

That the new approach, set out below, to supporting self-improvement and the prevention of school failure be adopted.

- (a) Maintain the Intervention Team for up to three years until all schools are cleared from Ofsted categories and the visits programme has resulted in a shift to a significantly higher proportion of Hertfordshire schools judged to be 'self-improving';
- (b) Implement fully the mid-inspection cycle review programme in the next academic year incorporating the support of serving headteachers, and to evaluate its effectiveness in the autumn term 2003 (at the time the third inspection cycle commences);
- (c) Continue with the high risk programme for schools with inspections prior to the start of the new inspection cycle supported by serving headteachers and teachers to act as teaching and learning and leadership and management coaches;

- (d) Support the adjustment of the school visiting programme to differentiate more closely for the needs of schools, particularly those which are already deemed to be self-improving;
- (e) Strengthen further the role of governors in schools causing concern and also their skills in recruiting and retaining high quality headteachers, in line with the identified activity in the 2002/2003 Strategic Plan

**Reasons for the decision**

The County Council had a good track record for supporting rapid improvement in schools in Ofsted categories, but further work is needed to prevent some schools from falling into a category at the time of inspection. The report outlined issues identified through a review of school weaknesses and the outcomes of the Best Value review. It also detailed actions that had already been taken and proposals for further service improvement.

Action had been taken to accelerate the progress of schools in Ofsted categories and also to identify schools that may be at risk in order to provide the support and challenge that would lead them to become self-improving. This had required radical changes in the work programme in order to be fully effective in supporting rapid improvement and also in ensuring the identification of risks at the earliest possible stage.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**4. POLICY ON SUPPLEMENTARY AND COMPLEMENTARY SCHOOLS**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A064/02 )**Decision**

That the proposed improvements to the support for Complementary and Supplementary Schools set out in the report, involving:

- (a) Enhancing the quality of the partnership between maintained and Complementary and Supplementary (C & S) schools;
- (b) Establishing and delivering a programme of relevant training courses and improving access to courses to address developmental needs in management, fundraising and health and safety issues, teachers' continuing professional development and professional accreditation;
- (c) Facilitating checks via the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) on all those who are in direct contact with children at C&S schools;
- (d) Allocating additional budget of some £10,000 from the Study Support Standards Fund and devolving to C&S organisations according to clearly stated criteria; and
- (e) Providing better access to teaching materials and resources;

be agreed.

**Reasons for the decision**

The term Complementary and Supplementary (C & S) school indicates the nature of the education provision made by communities outside of school hours on a voluntary basis. This provision is additional to the educational opportunities provided by mainstream schools and complements/supplements mainstream provision.

C & S schools:

- Contribute to children's overall achievement and social integration;
- Develop the first language of children and young people in the relevant communities, thereby maintaining and improving their bilingual skills;
- Familiarise new generations with the culture of their origin and develop in them self-confidence and self-esteem;
- Develop the children's recognition and appreciation of their own bi-culturality and their potential contribution to the wider society.

C & S schools have contributed to the wider education of Hertfordshire's minority ethnic children and young adults for many years. They are delivered across the County, and are initiated by members of different ethnic minority communities. These 'schools' and classes make a strong contribution to these children's achievements and to the rich diversity of Hertfordshire.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**5. MODERNISING LIBRARY OPENING HOURS**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A056/02)**Decision**

That the revised library opening hours, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, giving an increase of approximately 30 hours each week and achieved at no additional cost, be approved.

**Reasons for the decision**

Feedback from users of libraries and others made it clear that opening hours could be more effectively structured. A proposal for revised opening hours was the subject of consultation with the public from 8 May to 28 June. The proposals had been amended in consultation with the Library Panel and other members to reflect views expressed through the consultation.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**6. COUNTY COUNCIL CONTRACT REGULATIONS**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A050/02)

**Decision**

Council be recommended:

That the amendments to Contract Regulations, to extend the circumstances when single tenders may be invited and to set out best practice in the allocation of funds from the County Council's voluntary sector budget and funds received from Central Government for specific purposes, be approved.

**Reasons for the decision**

The Best Value Review of Voluntary Sector Funding had identified the need for clear definitions and corporate guidelines when dealing with the Voluntary Sector. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to enter into contractual relationships with voluntary sector organisations without the competition required by Contract Regulations. The Procurement Board considered the issues in April 2002 and supported the extension of the exemptions in Contract Regulations, when competition does not need to be sought, to give greater flexibility in these circumstances.

In addition there would be occasions when funds were being allocated either from the County Council's voluntary sector budget or when monies have been received from Central Government for a specific purpose where it was not appropriate to use the procedures set out in the main body of Contract Regulations. It was important, however, that there was some process to ensure that there was competition for the funding available. It was proposed that this be dealt with by way of a schedule to Contract Regulations

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**7. CORPORATE IDENTITY**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A069/02)

**Decision**

That the revised corporate identity for the County Council, as displayed, and accompanying implementation programme, be approved.

**Reasons for the decision**

The Best Value Review of Communications had recognised that corporate identity was a cost-effective way of building positive public awareness of the County Council and the services it provides. It forms an essential component of building reputation and goodwill with key audiences. However, the Review found many instances of poor and inconsistent application of the County Council's identity and concluded that it should be developed by building upon the current identity.

A specialist design agency was commissioned to take the development forward. Following testing design prototypes with staff and the public, a clear favourite emerged which had subsequently been refined to meet rigorous design standards. To support the implementation of the identity, a new comprehensive style guide was being prepared so that the County Council communicates its services positively, with enthusiasm and in line with its values.

A broad implementation programme had been compiled to indicate where and when the new identity will be applied to County Council services and products. Departments would be asked to provide detailed implementation programmes. A key principle behind its implementation was the intention to introduce it as comprehensively as possible within current resources.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**8. JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

(Forward Plan Ref. A052/02)

**Decision**

- (a) The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Hertfordshire be adopted;
- (b) The appended County Council Recycling Plan as a framework for this authority to achieve a 45% recycling rate at its Household Waste Sites by 2005/6 be adopted;
- (c) The Waste Management Panel be asked to develop a detailed implementation plan for the County Council.
- (d) A Waste Planning Panel be established to commence a review of the Waste Local Plan;
- (e) The Government be urged to strenuously enforce the Packaging Regulations; to encourage the provision of private sector facilities for the safe disposal of fridges and other electrical goods, and facilities for the reclamation of motor vehicles, and to make changes in the law to encourage greater recycling.

**Reasons for the decision**

The ten Hertfordshire District and Borough Councils had been working with the County Council to develop a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for the County. A joint Member group known as the Hertfordshire Waste Strategy Development Group (WSDG) had overseen this work.

The process had been extremely thorough, involving presentations covering a wide range of waste management aspects, open hearings to establish key principles, site visits, and extensive public consultation. The knowledge gained through these processes had been instrumental in shaping the final strategy, which was approved by WSDG at its meeting on 17 June 2002, for individual presentation to each of the partnering councils for their formal adoption.

The report sets out the key features of the Strategy and advised on the future implications for the County Council.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**9. MINERALS LOCAL PLAN - review to 2016 first deposit draft for public consultation**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A065/02)

**Decision**

Council be recommended:

- (a) That an aggregates supply strategy, be adopted, based on the average of the last three years' sales as a basis for identifying preferred areas for future aggregates extraction in the 1<sup>st</sup> Draft Deposit consultation on the Minerals Local Plan Review.
- (b) That the draft Minerals Local Plan attached as Appendix 1 be adopted as the basis of a comprehensive 1<sup>st</sup> Deposit Draft consultation exercise to be undertaken for a minimum period of ten weeks using the approaches set out in Section 4 of the report.
- (c) That the 1<sup>st</sup> Deposit Draft Minerals Local Plan Review attached as Appendix 1 be adopted for development control purposes.
- (d) That the Director of Environment be authorised to finalise the documentation in consultation with the Executive Member.
- (e) That the following programme for the completion of the Minerals Local Plan Review be adopted:
 

Oct – Dec 2002	Public consultation on 1 <sup>st</sup> Deposit Draft Plan
Summer 2003	Public consultation on 2 <sup>nd</sup> Deposit Draft
Winter 2003	Local Plan Inquiry
Spring/Summer 2004	Modifications
Autumn/Winter 2004	Adoption
- (f) That a comprehensive consultation exercise be carried on the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance for Mineral Extraction in Hertfordshire on the basis of the document attached at Appendix 2, in parallel with the consultation on the Minerals Local Plan Review.

**Reasons for the decision**

The Minerals Local Plan forms part of the Development Plan for Hertfordshire, guiding how and where mineral extraction should take place in the county. The current Minerals Local Plan was adopted in July 1998. Government advice is that plans should be reviewed at least every five years and the adopted Plan includes a commitment for any review of the Plan to include an evaluation of all resources from which areas for future working will be identified.

A comprehensive site evaluation process had taken place, together with a review of all the policies in the Plan to identify gaps and the areas that Plan needs to take into account as part of the Review. The Review has been undertaken during a period of uncertainty, both in terms of Government advice as to how much primary land-won aggregate (sand and gravel in

Hertfordshire's case) needs to be planned for and proposed changes to the planning system which will replace Minerals Local Plans with Mineral Development Frameworks.

To address the first issue the draft Plan Review had been prepared on the basis of testing three different supply scenarios: the first based on current guidance; the second on the average of the last three years sales; and the third taking a middle figure. The Aggregates Panel had recommended that the lowest scenario be adopted. It had also recommended that future provision of land-won primary aggregates should not be reliant on a single site. It had therefore recommended that land at BAe , near Hatfield (a preferred area in the adopted Plan) and land at Rickneys Quarry should be identified as preferred areas for future extraction during the Plan period to 2016. In order to ensure that permissions came forward towards the end of the Plan period to meet the requirement to maintain a seven-year landbank at all times, the Aggregates Panel had also recommended that land at Coursers Road near London Colney be identified for working through Tyttenhanger plant. This land could not be worked earlier as existing permissions at Tyttenhanger mean that the plant was committed for most of the Plan period.

To address the second issue, the proposed format of the Plan draws together strategic and operational policies, with much of the latter adopting a criteria based approach. This was supported by draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to explain in greater depth how many of the policies would be implemented, but which was not part of the Development Plan.

The report also set out a proposed timetable for the Plan, leading to its proposed adoption in 2004, although this could only be indicative for the later stages as the timing would depend on the number of objections received at each Deposit stage

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**10. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2003/04 AND THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST: 2003/04 - 2006/07**

(Forward Plan Ref. A081/02)

**Decision**

- (a) That the process and timetable for the Best Value Performance Plan and budget set out in appendix 1 be agreed.
- (b) That the public's views on spending priorities be sought using the October edition of the HertsDirect newspaper and the HertsDirect website and that a postal survey of the independently established Citizens Panel and four focus groups be carried out to seek views on the BVPP promises and further examine views on spending priorities.
- (c) That the content of the questionnaire to be included in the October edition of the HertsDirect newspaper be as per the document circulated at the meeting.

**Reasons for the decision**

The report outlines the proposed process and timetable for production of next year's Best Value Performance Plan and budget.

The Medium Term Financial Forecast gave a financial context for consideration of the 2003/4 budget. The financial forecast was also important in ensuring that the BVPP consultation and publication are carried out within an agreed and deliverable budget strategy.

The potential change in the County Council's funding which could result from the current consultation on Formula Grant Distribution ranged from a loss of £52 million to a gain of £14 million. Considerable uncertainties remained which could impact on the resource and expenditure forecasts, including the outcome of the Government's consultation on formula grant distribution, the impact of new legislation, the level of specific grants, transfers of function, the collection fund surplus and inflation. The figures shown in the report represented the best estimate at that stage. Both expenditure and resources forecasts would be updated as information became available later in the year and included in future MTFE reports. However, based on the latest evaluation of spending pressures and resource options, a council tax increase of between 5.4% and 12.9% may be required for a standstill budget (for all services except Education).

The report also presented options for consulting the public on the BVPP promises, spending priorities and council tax levels. In order to give all Hertfordshire residents an opportunity to comment on spending priorities before the budget is agreed the October edition of the HertsDirect newspaper would be used to invite their views.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**11. COUNTY COUNCIL REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITOR**

**Decision**

That £1.7m of the special contingency of £5.3m be allocated to cover the overspend on Children, Schools and Families Out County Placements (Option 2 in the report) and Children, Schools and Families still seek to reduce the pressure and identify savings to reduce the call on this special contingency.

**Reasons for the decision**

As set out in the report.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

Option 1 - CSF continue to seek to manage this pressure down and identify savings to cover the overspend. At the year end any remaining overspend would be a call on reserves.

**12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE - Formula Grant Distribution Consultation**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A079/02)

**Decision**

That the proposed response, appended to the report, be approved for submission to Government before 30 September 2002 with its emphasis on 'floors'.

**Reasons for the decision**

To agree the County Council's response to the Government's consultation on formula grant distribution.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None

**13. 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. HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL PROPERTY PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACTS**  
(Forward Plan Ref. A057/02)

**Decision**

**For Property Care:**

1. Tenderer A be awarded Preferred Supplier status for the Property Care services and that the Corporate Director (People & Property) be authorised to enter into negotiations to finalise details and to conclude a contract in consultation with the Executive Member, Resources.
2. The second choice of Tenderer B be held in reserve in the event of negotiations breaking down with the preferred supplier and that the Corporate Director (People & Property) be given authority to enter into negotiations to finalise details and to conclude a contract in consultation with the Executive Member, Resources.

**For Design and Projects:**

3. Tenderer C be awarded Preferred Supplier status for the Design & Projects services and that the Corporate Director (People & Property) be authorised to enter into negotiations to finalise details and to conclude a contract in consultation with the Executive Member, Resources.
4. The second choice of Tenderer D be held in reserve in the event of negotiations breaking down with the preferred supplier and that the Corporate Director (People & Property) be given authority to enter into negotiations to finalise details and to conclude a contract in consultation with the Executive Member, Resources.

**For Estates and Valuation:**

5. Tenderer E be awarded Preferred Supplier status for the Estates and Valuation services and that the Corporate Director (People & Property) be authorised to enter into negotiations to finalise details and to conclude a contract in consultation with the Executive Member, Resources.
6. The second choice of Tenderer F be held in reserve in the event of negotiations breaking down with the preferred supplier and that the Corporate Director (People & Property) be given authority to enter into negotiations to finalise details and to conclude a contract in consultation with the Executive Member, Resources.

*Details of the tenderers are set out in the separate Part 2 decision record.*

**Reasons for the decision**

To determine the award of the property services contracts following the evaluation of the bidders proposals.

Cabinet noted that the financial standing of each of the tenderers had been vetted by the Chief Financial Officer.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected**

None