

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
12 JULY 2004

MINUTES
ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

D A Ashley, D Beatty, R J M Ellis (Chairman), R I N Gordon, D E Lloyd,
A M R Searing, I E M Tarry

Other Members present:

N E Agar, D Billing, G R Churchard, E M Clarke, F W Clayton, R S Clements,
M D Colne, M Downing, S E Jones, T G M Kent, I H Laidlaw-Dickson, R Mays,
S Newton, I Simpson, R J Smith, B A York.

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Cabinet meeting on 12 July 2004 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, with the exception of the declaration made by David Lloyd (Minute 9
refers)*

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet held on 14 June 2004 were confirmed as a correct
record.

2. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
(Forward Plan Ref. A026/04)

Decision

That Council be recommended that :

MEMORANDUM

Date: 14 July 2004

1. The Local Transport Plan Annual Progress Report, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, is approved for submission to the Department for Transport by 30 July 2004, including a new 'Major Scheme' bid of £7.9 million for the A414/A405.
2. The Director of Environment be authorised, in consultation with the Executive Member, to finalise the document including:
 - (a) provisional financial data for 2007/08, and
 - (b) the technical submission for A414/A405 Major Scheme bid.

Reasons for the decision

The County Council is required by the Transport Act 2000 to publish a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP sets out the authority's transport objectives and programmes, and forms a bid for capital funding for transport schemes. The current LTP was published in July 2000 and covers the five-year period 2001/02 – 2005/06.

Every year the County Council is also required to publish an Annual Progress Report (APR). This document sets out progress against the programme of works and targets, and allows the County Council to make adjustments to the LTP.

The APR is an important part of the Department for Transport's assessment of the County Council's performance in delivering transport objectives, and has an increasingly significant impact in the level of capital funding that the County Council receives for transport schemes.

This year's APR document must be submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) by 30 July 2004.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

3. REMODELLING OF LINTONS HOSTEL, HODDESDON (Forward Plan Ref. A032/04)

Decision

That a supplementary capital bid of £2.57m be approved to fund the reprovision of Lintons, with an immediate release of resources to Aldwyck Housing Association.

Reasons for the decision

Lintons does not meet modern standards of service provision and cannot be adapted to do so. A scheme to reprovide Lintons on two smaller sites had been

approved. However, anticipated funding from social housing grant had not been secured so alternative funding was required for the scheme to proceed.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

4. ADULT CARE SERVICES LEARNING DISABILITY PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
(Forward Plan Ref. A024/04)

Decision

That the addition of the Adult Care Services residential properties for clients with a Learning Disability to the Aldwyck staff housing lease, with effect from September 2004, be approved.

Reasons for the decision

Outsourcing property management to Aldwyck Housing Association allows access to their housing management expertise and enables Adult Care Services to concentrate on delivering support to service users. It aims to ensure service users are able to continue with their current level of income and benefits.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

5. PRIMARY SUPPORT BASES
(Forward Plan Ref. A019/04)

Decision

1. That statutory notices be published to:

(a) close the special needs units for emotionally and behaviourally disturbed pupils on 31 March 2005 at the following primary schools:

Birchwood Avenue in Hatfield
Bushey Manor in Bushey;
Lannock in Letchworth;
Manland in Harpenden;
Oughton in Hitchin; and
Priors Wood in Ware

(b) open primary support bases on 1 April 2005 at the following primary schools:

Andrews Lane in Cheshunt;
Bowmansgreen in London Colney;
Radburn in Letchworth; and
Springmead in Welwyn Garden City

2. That, in the event of there being no statutory objections to the proposals, the Director of Children, Schools and Families be authorised to confirm them.

Reasons for the decision

The proposals stemmed from the Council's behaviour and achievement strategy and formed part of a county-wide review of current provision to improve the support for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) in mainstream primary schools.

The review concluded that a network of primary support bases in primary schools, which provided support to pupils in their local schools as well as offering a small number of places for pupils for whom this was not appropriate, would be a more effective way of meeting needs. This method had been piloted in three schools and has been validated externally as highly successful.

To achieve a successful spread of bases, as well as the three pilot bases, some existing EBD special needs units would change their operation to the new format. Other units would close and four new primary support bases would need to open. The opening and closure of SEN provision was subject to a statutory process.

Public consultation letters were issued on 26 April 2004 for each individual school affected. There was a majority in favour of the four proposals to open new primary support bases and the closure of two of the existing EBD units. The majority of respondents disagreed with the closure of the remaining four existing EBD units.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

6. REVIEW OF CAPITAL PROJECTS: NORTH EAST WATFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL REORGANISATION (PHASES 1 & 2) AND SOUTH HATFIELD
(Forward Plan Ref. A029/04)

Decision

That:

1. The implementation of the Leavesden Green School building project be delayed to allow for:
 - (a) determination of the third party occupancy issue and an outstanding "business" rate charge on that part of the school building;
 - (b) the preparation of a detailed cost analysis relating to the overall site; and,
 - (c) clarification regarding the future of the surplus part of the site,whilst maintaining the Council's ability to reduce the school to a one form of entry primary school with effect from September 2005.
2. The Scheme 2 for Alban Wood proceed at an additional cost of £238,000
3. The revised additional costs of the new Watford Primary School and the new south Hatfield Primary School of £327,000 and £600,000 respectively be approved.
4. As a consequence of the increase in the allocation of funding, from the DfES funding, of £1,165,000 to the above schemes, the other schemes previously approved by Cabinet in March 2004 for Wymondley, Tudor primary, Bengoe, and Martinswood be reviewed as part of the consideration of the 2005/ 2006 Capital Programme.
5. That the Council is willing to loan capital monies to the schools to fund additional works, such loans to be repaid out of future devolved capital allocations.
6. That should Alban Wood wish to take up this loan arrangement to enhance their project in accordance with Scheme 3, the County Council will make a further contribution of £75,000.

Reasons for the decision

Cabinet had approved these building projects on 15 March 2004. As designs for all four schemes had developed as a result of more detailed work, including end user contributions, the initial estimate has been exceeded by £1,165,000.

The planned timetable relating to the Leavesden Green School building project was delayed for the reasons set out above.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

7. HERTFORDSHIRE'S STRATEGY FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT - SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS PLUS
(Forward Plan Ref. A025/04)

Decision

That the Strategy for School Improvement, and the framework for the local authority to work with schools, to raise standards, as set out in the Hertfordshire Learning Partnership, be agreed.

Reasons for the decision

Hertfordshire is a high achieving authority with many schools performing significantly in advance of national expectations. At both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 Hertfordshire performs better than most of its statistical neighbours. However, in the period 2002-2004 results plateaued and the rate of improvement slowed across most of the statistical indicators. In this period the Authority has been less successful than its neighbours in preventing schools entering OFSTED categories. As a consequence there were too many children achieving less than they should.

This Strategy seeks to align the school standards agenda and the wider promotion of children's wellbeing. The underpinning philosophy includes the belief that the efforts schools make to raise standards are reinforced by a school improvement strategy incorporating wider interventions with vulnerable children and their families, and in communities where there is significant disadvantage. This strategy, therefore, seeks to connect the focus on school standards and the holistic vision for children set out in the Children Bill.

The implementation of this Strategy is supported by the new Hertfordshire Learning Partnership, which includes a framework for monitoring, support, challenge and intervention.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

8. PROPOSAL TO REORGANISE HERTS OUTDOORS

Decision

That the Director of Children, Schools and Families be authorised:

- (a) to continue the service at Cuffley and Hudnall Park centres,
- (b) to close the services at Astonbury, Barton, Pelham and the Herts Environment Centre, and
- (c) to continue discussions with Hertfordshire Educational Foundation, Groundwork Trust and others to establish if any third party is willing to make appropriate use of the sites in (b) above at no cost to the County Council.

Reasons for the decision

The closure of the four outdoor centres will reduce the Herts Outdoors annual deficit by £127,000. These four centres account for less than 20% of the Herts Outdoors business but are responsible for over 60% of its losses. The service will continue to operate through the two remaining centres at Cuffley and Hudnall Park, both of which have potential for development.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

9. ST GEORGE'S HARPENDEN, ST CLEMENT DANES RICKMANSWORTH, AND TURNFORD CHESHUNT SCHOOLS

David Lloyd declared an interest in relation to the matter under discussion. He left the meeting room during consideration of this item of business.

Decision

That the inclusion of additional funding for the St George's, St Clement Danes and Turnford schemes in the 2005/06 capital programme of £300,000 for St George's, up to £1m for St Clement Danes and £4.35m for Turnford, subject to agreement of final scheme costs, be approved.

Reasons for the decision

To enable these essential school expansion schemes to proceed.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

10. COUNTY COUNCIL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2004/05 ONWARDS
(Forward Plan Ref. A031/04)

Decision

That,

1. the capital strategy 2004/05 onwards be approved.
2. the wording relating to Promise B11 be changed to read "Capital requirements will depend on particular circumstances."

Reasons for the decision

The capital strategy provides the overarching corporate framework within which the Council manages its assets to deliver its cross-cutting and service specific objectives, working with its key partners in the public, private and charitable/voluntary sectors. The Council's capital investment priorities are driven by the promises made in the Best Value Performance Plan.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

11. COUNTY COUNCIL REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITOR
(Forward Plan Ref. A027/04)

Decision

1. That subject to any final technical accounting adjustments the 2003/04 accounts be closed on the basis of the provisional outturn figures presented in this report.
2. That the balance of special provision be applied to offset the final reported overspendings contained in this report and that the remaining balance of £5.3m on the provision be returned to general reserves.
3. That the following carry forwards be approved:

	£'000
Adult Care	
Performance Fund	435
Learning Disability Development Fund	297
Strategic Centre and Support	450
Children, Schools & Families	
Child Protection	143
SSI Inspection	100
Information Technology	
Infrastructure Investment Fund	228
Corporate Services	
Partnership Support	36
SHARP	259
Total Approved Carry Forwards greater than £75,000	1,948

Reasons for the decision

As set out in the report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

12. WELWYN HATFIELD DISTRICT COMMUNITY PLAN
(Forward Plan Ref. A013/04)

Decision

That Cabinet welcomes the draft Welwyn Hatfield Community Plan and authorises the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member, to endorse the final version of the Plan.

Reasons for the decision

The Community Plan had been developed in consultation with partners and the wider community of Welwyn Hatfield.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

13. DACORUM COMMUNITY PLAN
(Forward Plan Ref. A017/04)

Decision

Cabinet welcomes the draft Dacorum Community Plan and authorises the Assistant Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member, to endorse the final version of the Plan.

Reasons for the decision

The Community Plan built on the previous two plans and had been developed in consultation with partners and residents of Dacorum.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

14. DEPLOYMENT OF COUNTY COUNCIL FUNDED POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

Decision

That:

1. The use of the revised deployment criteria and the subsequent allocation of the 57 Police Community Support Officer posts, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed.
2. The Policy Statement, covering the strategic role of County Council funded deployment of Police Community Support Officers, at Appendix 2 to the report, be adopted.

Reasons for the decision

To ensure the most effective deployment of Police Community Support Officers

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

15. PROPERTY PLAN 2004 ONWARDS

(Forward Plan Ref. A0180/4)

Decision

That the Property Plan 2004 onwards be adopted.

Reasons for the decision

The Property Plan forms the County Council's high level statement of intent on property. It draws together into one simple document; the overall direction, the issues on which the Council will focus, the proposed actions in response to these issues, and targets for this work.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

16. ST ALBANS FIRE STATION - PROPOSED RELOCATION

(Forward Plan Ref. A030/04)

Decision

That:

1. The Corporate Director, People and Property, be asked to convey to the Governing Body of Francis Bacon School the appreciation of the County Council for their help and support in the achievement of the site for the new fire station.
2. The proposals for development of the new fire station at London Road, St. Albans are agreed, with a budget of £3.4m and funding arrangements as contained in section 8 of the report.
3. The existing fire station at Harpenden Road, St. Albans is closed once the new fire station is operational.

Reasons for the decision

The Fire and Rescue Service was not able fully to meet the required attendance times for the area served by the existing fire station. Relocation of the station would allow attendance times to be met.

A site search and a feasibility study had been carried out leading to the identification and acquisition of the suitable new site.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

17. WATFORD FIRE STATION - PROPOSED RELOCATION
(Forward Plan Ref. A030/04)

Decision

That:

1. The proposed new fire station is located at Lower High Street, Watford and the proposed new site is acquired as soon as possible.
2. The new fire station is developed.
3. The scheme includes accommodation for key workers above the fire station, subject to planning permission being available and to the provision of such accommodation being financially viable.
4. The existing fire station site at Whippendell Road, Watford, is sold and capital receipts arising are used to fund the new fire station scheme.
5. The existing fire station is closed once the new fire station is operational.
6. To assist with management of the scheme, the Corporate Director (People and Property) in consultation with the Executive Members for Resources and Community Services, is delegated authority to agree:
 - (a) the budgets for capital expenditure,
 - (b) the timing of the investment in the new site and the accommodation (to include the possible option of key worker accommodation), and
 - (c) the land sale.
7. The traffic management arrangements continue to be monitored to ensure the effectiveness of the new fire station.

Reasons for the decision

The Fire and Rescue Service was not able fully to meet the required attendance times for the area served by the station from its current location. Relocation was necessary in order that the times could be met. A site search and a feasibility study had been carried out leading to the identification of the suitable new site in Lower High Street, Watford.

Any alternative options considered and rejected

None

18. FINANCIAL IMPACT OF CAPITAL SCHEME PROPOSALS

Decision

This item was for information only.

19. 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.

20. WATFORD FIRE STATION - PROPOSED RELOCATION
(Forward Plan Ref. A030/04)

The decision is recorded under Minute 17 above.

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