

**CABINET
HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2006
(FROM 5.30 PM TO 6.11 PM)**

PRESENT: Councillor Dr Gardner in the Chair. Councillors Jean Butterfield, Cooper, Ellington, Andrew Jones, Pat Jones and Sturdy.

Late Arrivals: None.

Early Departures: None.

42/06 - **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** There were no apologies for absence.

(5.32 pm)

43/06 - **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Councillor Cooper declared a personal interest relating to any reference on the agenda to Harrogate International Centre arising from the use of the Facility by his employer for conference purposes

(5.32 pm)

44/06 - **MINUTES:** The Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 26 July 2006 were approved unanimously as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

(5.32 pm)

45/06 - **EXEMPT INFORMATION:** The relevant Appendix of the report referred to at Minute 52/06 below was regarded as exempt in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. Discussion on the item was, however, held in open session.

(5.33 pm)

MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION

46/06 - **NOTICE OF MOTION – CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:** Further to Cabinet Minute 39/06 the Executive Director, Corporate Policy and Improvement submitted a written report setting out a proposed approach under which the principles of caring for the environment set out in the Notice of Motion submitted by Councillors Cooper and Andrew Jones could be enshrined in the Council's Corporate Priorities and improvement actions in the 2005/2008 Strategic Plan. Whilst the Council had already agreed its priority actions and budget allocation for 2006/07 the report, at Section 6, identified how the principles of the Notice would impact on those actions in terms of resource re-allocation, consultation, current action plans and forward planning. The proposed approach would ensure that the principles in the Notice of Motion were, therefore, taken into account in the remainder of the current financial year as well as feeding into the corporate and service planning process for 2007/2008 and beyond.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That the approach set out in the report be approved.

(5.33 pm)

47/06 - **2006 HOUSING STRATEGY:** The Director of Community Services submitted a written report together with, for approval, the 2006 Housing Strategy. The strategy brought together a range of policies and initiatives, which had been the subject of extension consultation with all stakeholders. In addition, the priorities in the second draft strategy had been considered and endorsed by the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Commission and at a special meeting of the Tenants Advisory Forum. A number of minor amendments to the strategy had been identified following consultation with the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber which when incorporated into the document would enable it to be declared fit for purpose.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That the 2006 Housing Strategy be approved and commended to Council.

(5.34 pm – 5.35 pm)

48/06 - **REVIEW OF PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING POLICY:** The Director of Community Services submitted a written report in connection with a scheduled review of the Council's Private Sector Housing Policy agreed in June 2003 upon adoption of the then new policy. The commitment to undertake a review at that time was given in order to ensure that the policy remained aligned with local needs and government objectives. The current review had identified that the policy continued to be effective in delivering such objectives, subject to limited amendments to the Repairs Assistance Scheme as detailed in paragraph 2.3 of the report, and editing to take account of the new legislative provisions contained in the Housing Act 2004.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) the policy outlined in the report be approved;

(2) the Council's Private Sector Housing Policy document be amended to take account of the legislation prescribed in the Housing Act 2004; and

(3) in respect of the Council's Repair Assistance Scheme, the following changes to eligibility be introduced:

- that a 3 year residency requirement is added to the qualification criteria,

- eligibility is amended to exclude any applicant if they have an owner's interest in another property, and that if the property in question is owned jointly (excludes husband/wife or partners) then all owners must be on qualifying benefits and live at the property.

- where an applicant resides in a flat within a building and the works as requested will benefit other occupants within the building then repairs assistance is limited only to those works which directly benefit the

applicants (i.e. within the applicant's individual unit of accommodation). The only exception to this is where prior written agreement has been secured to apportion costs between flat owners deriving benefit from the works.

(5.35 pm – 5.37 pm)