

**CABINET
HELD ON 30 MAY 2007
(FROM 5.30 PM TO 6.05 PM)**

PRESENT: Councillor Mike Gardner in the Chair. Councillors Jean Butterfield, Cooper, Ellington, Andrew Jones and Don MacKenzie.

Late Arrivals: None.

Early Departures: Councillor Andrew Jones at 5.59 pm.

1/07 - **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Pat Jones.

2/07 - **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Councillor Cooper declared a personal interest to any reference on the agenda relating to Harrogate International Centre, arising from the use of the facility by his employer for conference purposes.

(5.31 pm)

3/07 - **MINUTES:** The Minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 4 and 18 April 2007 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

(5.31 pm)

4/07 - **EXEMPT INFORMATION:**

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the meeting be not open to the public during the discussion of Minute Nos 12/07, 13/07 and 14/07 as there will be disclosures of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Act.

The exempt information in question relates to the financial or business affairs of any particular person as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

(5.58 pm)

MATTERS REFERRED TO COUNCIL FOR CONSIDERATION

5/07 - **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2008/2009 TO 2010/2011:** The Head of Financial Management submitted a written report, which sought to delay the submission of the update of the medium term financial strategy pending the outcome of the current consultation on the North Yorkshire County Council's bid for unitary status. The Appendix attached to the report detailed the suggested revised timetable for consideration of the strategy, culminating in its approval by Council on 11 October 2007. Notwithstanding the proposal to delay the update of the strategy,

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provisional agreement to the percentage to be applied in the 2008/2009 revenue budget for pay increases was sought, which would enable work on salary estimates to commence on schedule. In that regard, the Director of Resources explained the inflationary pressures which could ultimately result in an award greater than the proposed pay award provision of 2.5% for the financial year 2008/2009.

In terms of savings for the next financial year, the Director reminded of the need for departments also to continue to identify savings in anticipation of the publication of the comprehensive spending review (CSR07) which, although was not due to be published until autumn 2007, indications were that cash efficiency savings of 3% per annum would be required.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) the update on the medium term financial strategy for 2008/2009 to 2010/2011 be undertaken in accordance with the timetable set out in Appendix 1(b); and

(2) Cabinet provisionally approve a budget parameter for pay increase provision of 2.5% for 2008/2009.

(5.31 pm – 5.33 pm)

6/07 - **THE HARROGATE DISTRICT CORE STRATEGY:** The Head of Planning Services submitted a written report commencing the process for consideration of the Harrogate District Core Strategy by the Council. Approval was, therefore, sought for the strategy, a copy of which had been circulated to all Members of the Council, to be forwarded to the District Development Committee at its meetings to be held on 11 and 12 June 2007 for consideration and comment. Cabinet, at its subsequent meeting to be held on 21 June 2007 would then, in light of the comments received from the District Development Committee, be asked to recommend approval of the strategy for submission to the Secretary of State on 7 September 2007. For the benefit of Members, the Head of Planning Services drew attention to some of the main elements of the core strategy as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of the report and on which fuller discussion could take place by Cabinet at its June meeting, in light of the comments received from the District Development Committee.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That the annex to the report (the Core Strategy Submission draft) be forwarded to the District Development Committee for its comments.

(5.33 pm – 5.37 pm)

7/07 - **CPA RE-CATEGORISATION BID:** The Strategic Policy Officer submitted a written report, which set out a self-assessment of the evidence of improvement, which would be used to support the Council's bid to be re-categorised under the District Council CPA Framework from a "fair" performing Council in the 2004 CPA Corporate Assessment to a "good" Council in 2007. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the outcomes of the self-assessment, which confirmed that there was

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sufficient evidence to progress such a bid. Because of the uncertainty surrounding the County Council's unitary bid and, in order for the Council to meet the 1 October 2007 deadline for submission of the bid to the Audit Commission, approval in principle to the bid was sought, together with delegation for approval of the detail and its submission being given to the Leader and Chief Executive in order that the Government's decision on unitary Councils could be taken into account.

RECOMMENDED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) the Cabinet approve in principle the submission to the Audit Commission by 1 October 2007 deadline a Council bid for re-categorisation from "fair" to "good" based on the assessment of the evidence of improvement set out in the outline proposal in Appendix 1 of the report;

(2) delegated authority be given to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive to prepare and approve the re-categorisation bid in line with the timetable in paragraph 5.8 of the report; and

(3) the Leader and the Chief Executive be authorised to determine whether or not to submit the re-categorisation bid to the Audit Commission by the October 2007 deadline, taking into account the outcome of the County Council's unitary bid.

(5.49 pm – 5.51 pm)

**CABINET
HELD ON 30 MAY 2007
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PRESENT: Councillor Mike Gardner in the Chair. Councillors Jean Butterfield, Cooper, Ellington, Andrew Jones and Don MacKenzie.

Late Arrivals: None.

Early Departures: Councillor Andrew Jones at 5.59 pm.

MATTERS DEALT WITH BY CABINET

8/07 – **HARROGATE DISTRICT 2006 HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT:** The Head of Planning Services submitted a written report following completion of the Harrogate District 2006 Housing Needs Assessment, and providing details of its contents, methodology and key findings. In respect of the latter, the Officer referred Cabinet to paragraph 5.6 of the report, which drew out the headline findings of the assessment in respect of affordable housing, market housing, migration and homelessness.

Approval of the Housing Needs Assessment was sought to inform the development of planning policies relating to settlement growth and affordable housing to be contained within the core strategy of the Harrogate District Local Development Framework, for the identification and allocation of sites for market and affordable housing in the LDF site allocations development plan document, to inform negotiations by Officers with applicants for planning permission over the amount, size and tenure of affordable housing, secured on development sites, and aid the development of future housing strategies prepared by the Council. The assessment was a robust, accurate and valuable source of information and data on housing needs and demands in the district, and provided a strong case for the continued implementation of strong affordable housing planning policies to help meet the huge need for this type of accommodation existing amongst local people.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That the Housing Needs Assessment be approved for use as described in the preamble above.

Reason for making decision:

To ensure that the Harrogate District LDF planning negotiations on affordable housing provision and the Council's future Housing Strategies are informed by an up-to-date and robust evidence base about the District's need for affordable housing, as required by the Government in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPS3).

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Alternative option considered and rejected:

Not to approve the HNA for use as described in paragraph 1.2 of the report. This is rejected because of the value to the Council of the information contained in the HNA and because the Government requires local authorities to have up-to-date robust and accurate evidence about local affordable housing needs, for use as described in paragraph 1.2 of the report.

(5.37 pm – 5.49 pm)

(D)

9/07 - **2006/2007 YEAR-END PERFORMANCE REPORT (UNAUDITED):** The Executive Director, Corporate Policy and Improvement referred to the report of the Performance Manager, outlining the Council's 2006/2007 performance on the national Best Value Performance Indicators. Whilst the figures were unaudited, little change was expected, and the executive summary provided at Section 5 of the report highlighted the improved performance in relation to both the Best Value Performance Indicators and the strategic and improvement actions agreed by the Council. The performance showed an improvement on the previous year, which itself had been the highest recorded and was, therefore, a pleasing outcome to the year's work. Cabinet, along with the Corporate Management Team recorded its appreciation to all staff for the successful performance over the past year.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That the report be received and the Council's 2006/2007 year-end performance on its BVPI's, corporate basket of PI's, SP and CIP actions be noted.

Reason for making decision:

The information is presented as part of the Council's performance management arrangements and improvement agenda.

Alternative option considered and rejected:

No alternative options were considered, as reporting progress on the Council's 2006/2007 performance is a key part of the Council's performance management arrangements.

(5.51 pm – 5.52 pm)

(D)

10/07 - **2006/2007 BEST VALUE USER SATISFACTION SURVEY – GENERAL SURVEY REPORT:** The Executive Director, Corporate Policy and Improvement referred to the report of the Performance Manager, and presented Cabinet with the 2006/2007 best value user satisfaction general survey report. The results of the survey were positive, with many areas increasing on previous

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performance, and paragraph 6.2 of the report detailed the significant areas of improvement on the BVPI questions, with Appendix 1 to the report showing the key findings arising from the survey. Cabinet wished to record its appreciation to the staff over the outcome of the survey results, and the positive improvement in a number of areas of Council services, particularly in respect of waste recycling, litter collection, parks and gardens, museums and sports and leisure facilities.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That the survey results be noted.

Reason for making decision:

A decision is required as the information is presented as part of the Council's performance management arrangements.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None.

(5.52 pm – 5.55 pm)

(D)

11/07 - **2007/2008 CORPORATE BASKET OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – PROPOSED CHANGES:** The Executive Director, Corporate Policy and Improvement submitted a written report prepared by the Performance Manager, following a review of those indicators included within the corporate basket of performance indicators, and which had been in place since its introduction in 2003. Section 6 of the report therefore detailed those proposed PI's to be deleted from the basket and Section 7 those proposed indicators to be added.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) Cabinet receive the report and agree to:-

- Delete the PI's set out in paragraph 6.1
- Add the PI's set out in paragraph in 7.1
- Monitor the PI's set out in paragraph 8.1 and 8.2 at a departmental level; and

(2) Cabinet review and agree the Corporate Basket of PI's at the start of each municipal year in order to ensure that the PI's in the "Basket" reflect the Council's corporate and strategic aims.

Reason for making decision:

To review those indicators included in the Corporate basket.

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Alternative options considered and rejected:

To not agree the recommendations would mean that the Corporate Basket would not better reflect the Council's Corporate and Strategic Aims.

(5.55 pm – 5.57 pm)

(D)

12/07 - **KNARESBOROUGH CEMETERY HOUSE:** The Head of Property and Economic Development submitted a written report which sought approval for the marketing and sale of the Cemetery House and adjoining mess-room at Knaresborough Cemetery, in order to address the investment needs for Parks and Open Spaces in line with the approval given by Council at its meeting held on 18 April 2007. The property had been declared surplus to requirements, and would be disposed of by way of auction.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) the property be sold and the legal documentation completed; and

(2) the net capital receipt received from the disposal of the property be allocated to the Parks and Open Spaces resource reallocation reserve account.

Reasons for making decision

The Property has been declared surplus by the Department of Community Services and is recommended for disposal before it becomes a liability.

Alternative option considered and rejected:

For the status quo to continue with the Cemetery House being rented out on a service tenancy.

(Minute dealt with in exempt session).

(There is also an unpublished Minute).

(5.58 pm – 6.00 pm)

(D)

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13/07 - **RIPON CEMETERY LODGE:** The Head of Property and Economic Development submitted a written report with regard to the marketing and sale of the Cemetery Lodge at Ripon, which had been declared surplus for operational needs and which would, in order to address the investment needs for Parks and Open Spaces in accordance with the approval given by Council on 18 April 2007, be disposed of by way of auction.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) the Lodge be sold and the legal documentation completed; and
(2) the net capital receipt received from the disposal of the Lodge be allocated to the Parks and Open Spaces resource reallocation reserve account.

Reason for making decision:

The asset has been declared surplus by the Department of Community Services and has, therefore, been recommended for disposal before it becomes a liability.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

For the status quo to continue with the Council receiving an annual rent under the current service tenancy.

(Minute dealt with in exempt session).
(There is also an unpublished minute)

(6.00 pm – 6.02 pm)

(D)

14/07 - **LAND ADJACENT TO SKIPTON ROAD, HARROGATE:** The Head of Property and Economic Development submitted a written report with regard to the sale of a parcel of Council owned land adjacent to Skipton Road, Harrogate. Section 5 of the report detailed the negotiations held and the agreed price for the disposal of the land in question.

RESOLVED (UNANIMOUSLY):

That (1) approval be given to the director of Development Services to sell land at Skipton Road, Harrogate, at the price offered following negotiations with the purchaser and clarification on the exact boundaries of the land once highway proposals have been finalised by the said Director. The contract for sale being conditional upon the purchaser obtaining planning permission for development of its adjoining land; and

(2) the Chief Solicitor be authorised to enter into all necessary legal documentation to conclude the sale.

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Reason for making decision:

The price offered by the purchaser is a substantial capital receipt.

Alternative option considered and rejected:

The land be retained by the Council.

(Minute dealt with in exempt session).

(There is also an unpublished Minute).

(6.02 pm – 6.05 pm)

(D)