

**CABINET  
13 JANUARY 2005**

Councillor R.F. Spencer (Chairman)

Councillor:	A.A. Clarke W.H. Golland R.J. Nicholson	P. Feeney I.S. Gollop R.A. Poynter
Observers:	A.J. Gilliam J.M. Parr (a)	G.J. Griffiths

**109 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An Apology for absence was received from Councillor Parr.

**110 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 DECEMBER 2004.**

RESOLVED:

That the above minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**111 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

None declared.

**112 AUDIT LETTER**

The Head of Finance submitted a copy of the Annual Letter received from the Council's external auditors which had been circulated to all Members of the Council. It was also being reported to the Personnel and Resources Committee

This was a joint audit and inspection Annual Letter and covered not just the Council's Accounts but also the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, in addition to financial aspects of corporate governance and best value.

The report showed satisfactory progress and it was pleasing to note that there were no issues arising from the audit of accounts which required separate reporting to members.

Representatives from the Audit Commission presented the letter and also answered Members' questions.

RESOLVED:

To accept the Annual Letter.

**113 HOUSING STOCK OPTION APPRAISAL AND PRESENTATION TO MEMBERS**

The Head of Housing updated Members on the outcomes of the Housing Stock Option Financial Appraisal and the consultation carried out by the Independent Tenant Advisers.

The report proposed that officers be asked to further investigate the possibility of Stock Transfer

A presentation on the Housing Stock Options appraisal was also given by the Consultants HACAS Chapman Hendy.

RESOLVED:

1. That members note the outcomes of the Housing Stock Option Financial Appraisal and the consultation carried out by the Independent Tenant Advisers

2. That the option of Stock Transfer be further investigated

3. That Councillor A.A. Clarke be authorised to establish a Working Group to oversee this process comprising the following membership, 1 Labour, 1 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat member, 4 Tenant representatives from the Tenant Panel, 1 Leasehold member representative together with relevant Officer representation.

**114 DECRIMINALISATION OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT AND PRESENTATION TO MEMBERS**

The Head of Engineering & Property submitted a report advising Members of the County Council's proposals for decriminalisation of parking enforcement in the County and to consider the implications for the Borough Council.

A presentation explaining the proposals was also given by Peter Lowe of RTA Associates.

RESOLVED:

i) That Cabinet confirms the previous view of the Direct Services Portfolio Holder that Decriminalised Parking Enforcement should not be operated at a net loss to the Borough Council's Council Tax payer.

ii) That the Borough Council would be willing to manage and run Decriminalised Parking Enforcement, provided that any financial deficits be underwritten by the County Council, or than any cross-financing would not be to the detriment of the Borough Council's budgets.

iii) That consideration be given in conjunction with the County Council and the other District Councils for enforcement and administration of the notices to be sub-contracted.

## **115 HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE 2004/5**

The Head of Housing reported that the Council was required to submit a comprehensive Housing Strategy which was both central to local planning and delivery of housing and demonstrated strategic fit to national, regional and local priorities. Essentially, therefore, it should be a working document which clearly demonstrated how priorities had been arrived at and how they were going to be achieved based on robust analysis of housing needs and markets in all housing sectors.

The Council had submitted a comprehensive Housing Strategy in 2002 which aimed at meeting the then new 'fit for purpose' criteria. In common with the majority of other Councils' housing strategies the 2002 strategy had fallen short of government expectations. It had therefore been necessary to update the strategy with these criteria in mind in consultation with the Government Office of the East Midlands.

It was anticipated that a comprehensive new strategy would be developed once a final decision had been made as to the future of the Council's housing stock.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet recommend that the Council approve the draft strategy submitted at appendix 1 to the report and delegate authority to the portfolio holder for Housing to approve amendments and changes undertaken in line with feedback from Government Office East Midlands and to ensure satisfaction of the 'fit for purpose' criteria.

## **116 CHARGEABLE ORGANIC GARDEN WASTE**

The Head of Direct Services reported that at the meeting of the Cabinet on 7th October 2004, a report had been submitted for a chargeable organic garden waste collection service available to all domestic properties within the Borough.

The Cabinet had approved the concept of introducing a chargeable organic garden waste service at the annual rates submitted in the report. A full consultation exercise had also been approved with the outcome of this process being reported to this meeting of the Cabinet.

The report outlined the scheme proposed in more detail taking into consideration the findings from the consultation and the operational issues which needed to be addressed.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the introduction of a chargeable organic garden waste collection scheme with effect from April 2005.
2. To recommend that the Personnel and Resources Committee agree to a change in the establishment of the Direct Services to include the following permanent positions:-

1 Additional Driver	(Band 4)
2 Additional Loaders	(Band 1)
1 P/T Administrative Assistant	(Band 3)
3. To agree the scale of charges for the service as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
4. To approve the "Bin Lid Closed Policy" on all wheeled bin collections throughout the Borough with effect from April 2005.

## **117 FUNDING FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS**

The Chief Executive reported that a letter had been received from the Deputy Leader of the County Council suggesting that the County Council would be prepared to make a contribution towards the cost of providing Neighbourhood Wardens and PCSOs in the Borough and also asking whether the Borough Council was prepared to increase its own expenditure on these matters.

A copy of the letter received from the Deputy Leader of the County

Council was submitted for members' information.

Members were reminded that this Council currently provided funding of up to £130,000 per annum to Nottinghamshire Police to enable them to employ an additional six PCSOs in the Borough on top of the six that they provide out of other funds. The Council also currently employed four Neighbourhood Wardens at a total cost of £153,000 per annum.

The Cabinet was asked to consider a response to this letter.

RESOLVED:

That the Borough Council do welcome and fully accept the offer of match funding from the Nottinghamshire County Council for the provision of Neighbourhood Wardens/PCSOs in the Gedling Borough Area

**118 LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTRIBUTIONS TO GREATER NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PARTNERSHIPS 2005/6**

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from the Greater Nottingham Partnership for this Council's contribution to be increased from £9,000 in the current year to £12,000 in 2005/06. Attached to the report was a copy of the letter from GNP which explained the background to this request and listed some examples of the funding which had been secured by the GNP for projects outside the city.

Members' instructions on this request for an increase in contributions were requested.

RESOLVED:

To approve the increase in contributions to £12,000 for 2005/06 to the Greater Nottingham Partnership.

**119 CABINET DATES 2005**

The Chief Executive reported that consideration needed to be given to the arrangements for two particular Cabinet meetings during 2005.

It would be helpful for there to be a special meeting of the Cabinet in February in order to give consideration to the budget and to recommend the budget and Council Tax levels for 2005/06 to the budget Council meeting in March. Given the significance of the items that the Cabinet would need to consider in connection with the budget, it was not considered that this would be best done as part of the agenda for an ordinary Cabinet meeting.

An issue might also arise with regard to the May Cabinet meeting. This was due to be held on Thursday 5th May, which was of course the day of the County Council elections in May and could well also be the date for the Parliamentary Election. In the circumstances, it was suggested that this Cabinet meeting should be deferred until Thursday 12th May.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve a special meeting of the Cabinet on 10 February 2005 in order to give consideration to the budget and to recommend the budget and Council Tax levels for 2005/06 to the budget Council meeting in March.

2. That the meeting of the Cabinet scheduled for 5 May 2005 be deferred until 12 May.

## **120 RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services reported that the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice issued under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 recommended that the Council had a Records Management Policy in place dealing with the management of its records.

The policy document submitted at Appendix 1 had been produced by the Freedom of Information Working Group and had been endorsed by the Senior Management Team, in compliance with the Code of Practice.

RESOLVED:

To note the report and the actions taken

## **121 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS**

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that Local Area Agreements (LAA) were the central government version of work on joining up public services at the local level that has been progressed by the LGA, Treasury and the Innovation Forum of 'excellent' councils. However the LAA approach was unlike other government initiatives in that formal rules for implementing LAAs had not been published and flexible approaches were being encouraged to maximise the opportunities that they potentially offer.

This paper draws extensively on the work of the LGIU, its 2 policy papers and a recent seminar. This reflected the fact that LAAs were very new and that no formal guidance had been issued.

Despite this lack of detail there were significant implications for the Council in the way that LAAs would operate and potentially in its relationship with the LSP and Community Strategy. LAAs were seen as an opportunity for Local Government to demonstrate that it could work in a joined up way and deliver national and local priorities in innovative and cost effective ways. There appeared to be a sub-text that failure to do so would strengthen the hand of 'anti-local government' lobby in Whitehall.

The proposals were based on four principles, to be achieved through a five point package details of which were included in the report.

Further reports would be presented once the pilots had submitted their proposals and it became clearer how LAAs would actually work and what the implications, particularly for districts, would be

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

**122 FORWARD PUBLICITY PLAN - WINTER/SPRING 2005**

The Head of Cabinet Office submitted a report informing members of proposed publicity initiatives planned for coming months.

The Council regularly produced a Forward Publicity Programme, to flag up issues that would require publicity in the immediate months ahead. The Programme was produced three times a year, to feed into the next edition of "Contacts" magazine.

The Forward Publicity Programme for Winter/Spring 2005 was submitted for members' information at Appendix A to the report. It was based on information provided by departments at 10 December 2004.

It was reported that a range of techniques would be used to deliver the programme. These would include the Council's website and intranet and the next edition of "Contacts" magazine.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

**123 CABINET REPORT ON POLICING AND PUBLIC HEALTH WHITE PAPERS - "CHOOSING HEALTH - MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES EASIER" AND "BUILDING COMMUNITIES - BEATING CRIME"**

The Head of Cabinet Office informed members of key elements of the above two White Papers recently published by the Government, and of the potential implications for the Borough Council and its partners.

It was as yet too early to say what the resource implications of these proposals would be for the Council. It was possible that additional responsibilities would be placed on the Council (for example, through the possible role in enforcing smoke-free public buildings) but the implications of these were not yet known.

However, it did seem likely that issues raised in both papers would impact on the negotiation and development of Local Area Agreements in 2005/06 and beyond, which would have resource implications.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

#### **124 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

Councillor Wright asked whether the Council were intending to do any additional publicity with regard to the launch of the additional module on the Web site in March/April 2005.

The Portfolio Holder for E Government and Member Services reported that Press releases and information would be available in due course.

#### **125 DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS**

The Head of Finance on behalf of the Leader and Deputy Leader submitted a report that detailed the likely General Fund base budget for 2005/06 based on provisional settlement figures, the likely position in respect of capital financing, and assumed changes to the base budget in respect of inflation, pay award etc.

There was potential for growth in the Revenue Budget, and new schemes for Capital Expenditure had been identified.

The specific aims of the report were to identify Members expectations in respect of new revenue and capital schemes and to seek comment on the key tasks for the year 2005/06.

At appendix C to the report was a summary, previously circulated to all Members, of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2005/06. This showed an additional cash allocation of £554,000 or 8.5%, in addition to which specific departments had announced other



monies that were to be made available. In all cases these amounts were provisional and/or represented Officers' best assessments of likely resource to be allocated to this Council.

Cabinet were invited to request feedback from Scrutiny Committees on the proposals for the 2005/06 Budget, especially in respect of Revenue and Capital Development bids falling within Category B, prior to submission to Council on 2 March 2005.

Comments on other aspects of the budget and improvement tasks were also welcomed.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet request feedback from Scrutiny Committees on the proposals for the 2005/06 Budget, especially in respect of Revenue and Capital Development bids falling within category B, prior to submission to Council on 2 March 2005.

**126 FORWARD PLAN 01 FEBRUARY TO 31 MAY 2005**

RESOLVED:

To approve the Forward Plan for the period 1 February until 31 May 2005.

**127 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT.**

None.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.