

CABINET

7 APRIL 2005

Councillor R.F. Spencer (Chairman)

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

158 PRESENTATION ON ARNOLD MMAA AND LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The presentation was deferred.

159 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Golland, Nicholson and Parr.

160 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 MARCH 2005.

RESOLVED:

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

161 CABINET PORTFOLIOS - RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE PLANNING SERVICE AND CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

The Chief Executive reminded members that the Audit Commission had recently completed its inspection of the planning service and had issued a draft report which had been the subject of discussion with senior officers and Members. Whilst the final report was still awaited, it would be the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Cabinet. It was suggested that it would be opportune to act on one particular observation from the inspectors now.

In the draft report, the inspectors had observed that "although accountabilities and responsibilities for planning are clearly outlined in the constitution, there is a lack of clear leadership, challenge and drive

for service improvement from the Cabinet for the full range of planning services.” In discussion with the inspectors, they had clarified this observation by pointing out that they had detected some confusion within the Council as to whether responsibility for the planning service and planning performance generally (as opposed to responsibility for making decisions on individual planning applications) rested with the Executive or with the Planning Committee. They believed that this lack of clarity was unhelpful and could lead to a lack of Cabinet level “ownership” of planning performance and issues impacting upon that performance. Whether or not such confusion was actually present within the Council, the fact that the inspectors perceived that there was a lack of clarity in the arrangements at Member level with regard to the management and performance of such an important service was significant.

It was the case that the Development and Economic Regeneration portfolio at the moment only expressly included within its remit planning policy. It was suggested, in the light of the observations by the inspectors, that it would be appropriate to include within the remit for that portfolio “all executive responsibilities with regard to the delivery and improvement of the planning and building control service”.

The other issue related to customer relationship management, which was coming to be seen as a major function of the Council in its own right, involving very significant resources across the Council and with significant implications for service delivery and service efficiency. It was also, obviously, at the heart of the Council’s relationship with the residents in the Borough.

The Council had already started to bring about significant change in the way in which it dealt with this function for visitors to the Civic Centre by the creation of the One Stop Shop. This had led to consideration of the possibility of acquiring customer relationship management equipment and IT software in order to develop the function into the more effective “One Stop” management of customers communicating with the Council electronically and by telephone.

Further consideration of the matter with the assistance of the Improvement and Development Agency, however, had illustrated that this was not just a matter of IT software acquisition and implementation – it was a more fundamental cross service corporate issue about the way in which the Council did business with its customers which could have far reaching implications for all services.

Up to now, this matter has been led at Cabinet level by the portfolio holder for E-Government and Member Services, largely on the basis that

it was seen initially to be an essentially IEG matter, although that portfolio also included responsibility for the One Stop Shop.

In the circumstances, it was suggested that it would be beneficial to reflect the strategic significance and priority of this issue at Cabinet level by allocating an express, specific responsibility for customer relationship management to one of the portfolios, which would also clarify responsibility for taking forward the development of the customer relationship agenda. It was, accordingly, recommended that the remit of the E-Government and Member Service Portfolio be amended by the addition of the words "Customer Relationship Management and" before "One Stop Shop".

RESOLVED:

1. That the remit of the Development and Economic Regeneration Portfolio be amended to include responsibility for the delivery and improvement of planning and building control services.

2. That the remit of the E-Government and Member Services Portfolio be amended to include customer relationship management.

162 FUNDING FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDENS

The Chief Executive submitted a copy of the letter which he had sent to the Deputy Leader of the County Council pursuant to Minute 117 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th January 2005.

Submitted at Appendix 2 to his report was a copy of a letter which had since received from the Director for Culture and Community Services at the County Council which sought to clarify the position of the County Council on this matter and suggested that it should be the subject of discussions between the Deputy Leader of the County Council, an appropriate Member from this Council and the Police Divisional Commander.

RESOLVED:

To note the report and to appoint Councillor Gollop as the Council's representative to continue negotiations with the County Council.

163 ARNOLD TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report informing members of progress towards developing a master plan for the area of Arnold bounded by High Street, Croft Road, Front Street and Cross Street.

Further work would be necessary to formulate an initial development brief for the site. It was intended that this brief be developed by officers in conjunction with Nottingham Regeneration Ltd and agreed with the portfolio holder. Initial consultation on the brief would then take place with key stakeholders, including a presentation on the brief and proposal to the Arnold Local Area Forum. This brief would then be used as a basis for selecting consultants to undertake the study in accordance with the objectives outlined above. It was anticipated at this stage that selection of consultants would be by a member panel. Discussions would also need to take place with the County Council to determine what outcomes, if any, be included for the library. Careful consideration would also need to be given to the design element of any proposal given the location of the site and the potential mixed use that it could be put to.

It was recognised that the proposal was likely to generate significant public interest and accordingly it was proposed that as part of the overall study the consultants undertake further consultation on the proposal, particularly with local businesses. This would allow more detailed input, especially from those businesses potentially affected by any development proposals. It would also provide a further opportunity to reassure both local businesses and the public that overall car parking provision within the town centre would be maintained.

An Officer working group, comprising the Estates and Valuation Manager, Town Centre Manager, Community Partnerships Manager, Local Plans Manager and the Deputy Chief Executive, was providing the internal staffing resource to oversee the project with support from NRL. This group would report to the portfolio holder for Direct Services and Property.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

164 UPDATE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE YOUTH REVIEW

Consideration of this report was deferred to a future meeting.

165 CALVERTON LEISURE CENTRE REVISED OPENING HOURS

Consideration of this report was deferred to a future meeting.

166 ADOPTION OF THE INTERIM PLANNING GUIDANCE ON

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Head of Housing Services reported that the development of Interim Planning Guidance on affordable housing had been identified as a priority action within the Council's Housing Strategy. The guidance provided a clear direction for those involved including developers and housing associations whilst enabling the type and tenure of the affordable units on each site to be determined on a site-by-site basis, taking account of local demand and the need to create a balanced housing market. A copy of the Interim Planning Guidance was submitted at Appendix 1 to the report.

RESOLVED:

To approve the adoption of the draft Interim Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing at appendix 1.

167 DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR ARNOLD TOWN CENTRE

The Head of Cabinet Office reported that at its meeting held in December 2004, Cabinet had agreed an outline Town Centres Strategy and a programme of further consultation, from which Action Plans could be developed for the four main shopping areas of Arnold, Netherfield, Carlton/Carlton Hill and Mapperley.

A comprehensive consultation programme had been conducted for the first of these, covering the Arnold shopping centre.

The consultation had included with 27 face-to-face interviews with business managers and stakeholders, representing 30 businesses/organisations, and 320 on-street surveys with shoppers/visitors.

Arising from these extensive comments, a draft Action Plan had been prepared. A copy of the Action Plan was attached at Appendix A to this report.

RESOLVED:

To agree the draft Action Plan for Arnold Town Centre for consultation as outlined in the report.

168 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Councillor Woodward referred to a recent article in the Nottingham Evening Post regarding the proposed development of the land to the north of Arnold and the need to correct the information contained in the

article in the light of the comments made this evening.

He also asked if the acoustics in the Council Chamber could be improved, as many members of the Council and public present at the meeting were unable to hear the debate.

Councillor Poynter reported that Engineers had investigated the problem in the Chamber, and had re-balanced the speakers. He indicated that it might be necessary for the Council to provide additional funding in order to solve the continuing problem of the Council Chamber acoustics.

Councillor Clarke also asked for an update on the Access strategy that was currently being considered, with particular reference to funding commitments at Netherfield.

Councillor Poynter reported that it was not proposed to increase the physical presence of access to services around the Borough but the Council was looking for improvements to the telephone system and the availability of the internet and the provision of services at Carlton Cemetery.

Councillor Poynter further reported that no firm conclusion had yet been reached on the Access strategy but in the short and medium term, the Council intended to expand services.

169 CHANGES TO NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Head of Cabinet Office reported on proposed changes to Best Value Performance Indicators announced recently by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), and work now being carried out to accommodate these changes.

Full details of the all Best Value Performance Indicators could be found at the web address quoted in Appendix A, or via the Audit Commission website: -

www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

170 "GEDLING 500" CONSULTATION - CONCESSIONARY FARES, CAR PARK CHARGING AND POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

The Head of Cabinet Office reported that at its meeting held on 2

December 2004, Cabinet had considered a referral from Resources and Management Scrutiny Committee relating to that Committee's review of Concessionary Fares and had resolved: -

"To use the Gedling 500 for a consultation exercise in respect of Car Park charging, Concessionary Fares and the funding of PCSO's by the Council, the questions for the exercise to be drafted by Officers in consultation with Group Leaders".

Research consultant John Hiley had been commissioned to carry out the survey for the questionnaire, drawing on Mr Hiley's expertise, in consultation with Group Leaders as instructed. The consultant's report on the outcome of the exercise was attached as an appendix to the report.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

171

AREA-BASED INITIATIVES

The Head of Cabinet Office reported that following the success of work to address a range of community safety and wider quality of life issues in the Honeywood Gardens area of Carlton in 2003, the Council had agreed to expand such Area-Based Initiative activity to other areas of the Borough in 2005/06 and beyond.

This commitment formed part of the agreed CPA Improvement Plan.

Delivery of Area-Based Initiatives was very much a partnership-focused activity, requiring the participation and support of various public agencies, as well as the communities involved.

It was therefore felt most appropriate to progress Area-Based Initiatives through the Gedling Partnership, in which all key agencies were involved.

The Partnership Executive had recently considered a report on the issue, a copy of which was submitted at Appendix A. The report explained in more detail what an Area-Based Initiative was and how each would be progressed.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the report.

2. To congratulate the Officers on their work and to confirm Cabinet

support for Area Based Initiatives.

172 FORWARD PLAN 01 MAY - 31 AUGUST 2005

RESOLVED:

To approve the Forward Plan.

173 PROGRESS REPORTS FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

The following progress reports on items within their purview were received from Portfolio Holders:-

AGENDA 21, CRIME AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Attendance at Community and Quality of Life
- LSP Board Meeting
- E Government and Member Services
- Information for Public and Councillors to be live on the Internet.

DEVELOPMENT & ECONOMIC REGENERATION

- Chair of Arnold Shop Watch appointed.

E GOVERNMENT AND MEMBER SERVICES

- Information for Councillors and Public – Soon to be live on the internet

HOUSING

- Stock Option appraisal
- HEAT Project
- County Wide Homeless Watch Survey
- Empty Property Strategy
- Accreditation of the Housing Landlord Function
- Homeless Hotel
- Satisfaction of Tenants with the Housing Repairs Service
- HECA
- Homelessness Temporary Tenancies
- Void Performance
- Extra Care Unit
- Private Sector Grants

FINANCE

- Housing Benefit's Quality Management report
- Council Tax levels
- Council Tax Bills problem with delivery
- Efficiency Statement 'signing off'

- Highways Agency - Thanks to Chris Groves

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.