

The Cabinet met at the Shire Hall, Warwick on the 30th June, 2005

Present

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Alan Farnell (Chair) (Policy and Governance),

“ John Burton Cabinet Member for Schools

“ Alan Cockburn (Corporate Services),

“ Peter Fowler (Family Services),

“ Colin Hayfield (Adult and Community Services),

“ Martin Heatley (Environmental Services),

“ Chris Saint (Economic Development),

“ Izzi Seccombe (Childrens Services),

“ Bob Stevens (Performance Management),

Non-Voting Invitees:

Councillors June Tandy, the Leader of the Labour Group,

Jerry Roodhouse, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Other Members:

Councillors David Booth, Ken Browne, Josie Compton, Chris Davis, Jill Dill-Russell, Richard Dodd, Michael Doody, John Haynes, Marion Hayward, Mick Jones, Frank McCarney, Tim Naylor, Raj Randev, Mick Stanley, Sid Tooth and John Wells, John Whitehouse.

1. General

(1) An Apology

was received from Councillor Richard Hobbs (Community Safety).

(2) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Bob Stevens declared a personal interest in **Agenda Item 2 – Development of the Warwickshire Strategic Partnership Plan**, as a Governor of Southam College.

Councillors Peter Fowler and Colin Hayfield declared personal interests

in any matter involving the North Warwickshire Borough Council, as members of that Council. Councillors Chris Saint, Izzi Seccombe and Bob Stevens declared personal interests in any matters involving the Stratford on Avon District Council, as members of that Council.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse declared a personal interest in any matter involving the Rugby Borough Council, as a member of that Council.

Councillor David Booth declared a personal but not prejudicial interest, in **Agenda Item 13 - Statement of Community Involvement for Minerals and Waste Development Frameworks**, because of the nature of shares he owned.

Councillor Alan Cockburn declared a personal interest in any matter involving the Warwick District Council, as a member of that Council and in **item 14 – Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan**, as a landowner.

(3) Minutes of the Meeting held on the 16th June, 2005 and Matters Arising.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Cabinet's 16th June 2005 meeting be approved.

There were no matters arising.

(5) Requests for Discussion of En Bloc Items.

It was agreed that agenda items 13 and 14 would be discussed before decisions were taken.

2. Development of the Warwickshire Strategic Partnership Plan

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Executive which related to progress on development of the second Warwickshire Strategic Partnership Plan.

During the discussion the following points were raised:-

- The Warwickshire Strategic Partnership Plan blends with the district community plans
- Consideration should be given to the levels of communication between the various organisations, particularly so as to improve feedback.
- There was a need for schools and governors to be consulted regarding the section of the Plan relating to "Working in Partnership to Help Our Children Learn".

- There was a need for a convenient date to be selected for the meeting of the County Leaders Group which would consider the approval of the Plan.

Councillor Alan Farnell, seconded by Councillor Bob Stevens, moved and it was Resolved:-

That Cabinet:

- (1) Notes progress on the development of the second Warwickshire Strategic Partnership Plan
- (2) Agrees to the recommendations from Leaders Liaison Group:-
 - (i) Warwickshire County Council Member comments be received by the end of July 2005
 - (ii) Consultation with partners be extended over the summer period
 - (iii) The County Leaders Group be asked to agree the final plan at their meeting in the autumn.
 - (iv) Improvements are made to the presentation style of the Plan.

3. Local Councils' Charter

The Cabinet considered the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive.

The Cabinet was asked to adopt the Local Councils' Charter, which was a protocol to guide the relationship between the principal councils (County and District) and the local councils (Parish and Town) in Warwickshire.

Following a brief discussion about the involvement of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, it was Resolved:-

The Cabinet adopts The Local Council's Charter.

4. Social Inclusion Strategy

The Cabinet considered the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive seeking approval to the Social Inclusion Strategy 2005-2008. The Strategy develops the new way of working on social inclusion issues, agreed by the Cabinet in October 2003

Following introductory comments from Councillor Collin Hayfield, members discussed several aspects of the report and made the following points:-

- Consideration should be given to a closer relationship between the indicators and performance actions in the Strategy.
- Promotion of more active involvement with partners.
- There was a need for the Adult and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee to examine the robustness of the indicators and other issues.
- In view of the cross service nature of the Strategy, other Overview and Scrutiny Committees should be asked for their views on the Strategy, as appropriate e.g. the Health O and S Committee for drugs problem issues.
- With regard to involving communities in addressing the needs of young people, consideration should be given to how this would relate to individuals.
- Monitoring should be undertaken to see how targets etc are included in the policies of partners.
- Under “Improving Public Health”, the reference to the “Change in the number of conceptions to females aged 15-17 compared to 1998” should indicate if this is a reduction or an increase in the number.

Resolved:-

That consideration of the Social Inclusion Strategy for 2005-2008 be deferred to enable the Strategy to be considered by the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and other Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as appropriate, before being submitted back to the Cabinet for approval.

5. Establishment of Policy Panels

The Cabinet considered the report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive relating to the establishment of panels.

Following a brief discussion about the involvement of the Leaders Liaison Group, Councillor Alan Farnell moved and it was Resolved:-

That the Cabinet ask the Leaders Liaison Group and the Chief Executive to consult on proposals for consideration at a future meeting as soon as possible.

6. Warwickshire Provisional Local Transport Plan 2005

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy.

The County Council had a statutory responsibility to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP set out the County's Transport Strategy, and provided the framework for how transport and accessibility will be improved across Warwickshire over the next five years.

The Cabinet was invited to approve the Provisional LTP including funding proposals for submission to the Department for Transport, and for a public consultation exercise prior to the submission of the Final LTP in March 2006.

During the discussion the following points were raised:-

- The reference to Bedworth Town Centre Pedestrian Priority in appendix C should include all figures.
- The result of the public consultation exercises should be submitted to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being considered by the Cabinet.
- The previous involvement of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to air quality was welcomed.
- The Portfolio Holder and other party spokespersons for the Environment should be consulted by the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy in connection with any minor amendments to the LTP.

It was the Resolved:-

That Cabinet:-

- (1) Approves the Provisional Local Transport Plan (LTP) for submission to the Department for Transport and for public consultation.
- (2) Authorises the Director of Planning Transport and Economic Strategy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and other party spokespersons for the Environment, to make minor adjustments and/or additions to the Provisional LTP prior to submission to the Department for Transport and public consultation.
- (3) Notes the implications of the LTP Air Quality Strategy and agree to work with the relevant District/Borough Councils to draw up and implement a series of Air Quality Management Action Plans.

- (4) Supports the inclusion of self financing Prudential Borrowing within the LTP Delivery Strategy as the proposed method of funding the introduction of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement in North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Rugby and Warwick Areas.
- (5) Supports the draft allocation of resources set out in the LTP and reproduced in Appendix C, amended to include all of the figures for the Bedworth Town Centre Pedestrian Priority scheme.

7. Regional Housing Strategy

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy.

The Council had been consulted on the Draft Regional Housing Strategy (RHS), by the West Midlands Regional Housing Board (WMRHB) and the West Midlands Regional Housing Partnership (WMRHP). Only 3 weeks were allowed for responses and consequently, an officer response had been sent to meet that deadline. That response had advised that any variation to the view put forward following Cabinet's consideration would be forwarded on.

The essence of the response to the consultation on the draft Regional Housing Strategy that Cabinet was being asked to endorse was that:-

- (1) The time allowed for consultation is inadequate.
- (2) The proposed use of 'housing market areas', cutting across established voluntary sub-regional arrangements (e.g. CSW), threatens to drive a wedge between housing and planning/transport/economic policy and implementation.
- (3) The high priority attached to social housing investment in the northern parts of the County and to affordable new-build housing in the southern parts of the County are to be welcomed.
- (4) The estimates of affordable housing need in the RHS are inconsistent with the basis for housing targets set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy and are therefore indicative of need rather than a robust basis for planning and delivery.
- (5) It is unclear how the allocation of funding favouring the 'decent homes' initiative paramount in urban areas will be balanced with the priority now being attached to delivery of new-build social housing in rural areas.

Following comments from Councillor Chris Saint outlining the main points of the response, members discussed several aspects of the report including:-

- The possibility of interim funding being made available by the Government for support to rural areas.
- The difficulties in defining affordable housing.

Resolved:-

That the response to the consultation on the Draft Regional Housing Strategy, detailed in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.5 (inc) of the Director's report and already conveyed to the West Midlands Regional Housing Board and the West Midlands Regional Housing Partnership, be endorsed.

8. Central Warwickshire and Southam : Area Review of 14-19 Provision

The Cabinet considered the report of the County Education Officer.

The LSC and LEA have jointly undertaken a review of 14-19 provision in Central Warwickshire and Southam. The outcome of the review was presented in the report.

During his introduction of this item Councillor John Burton advised members that Lesley King, Headteacher of Nicholas Chamberlaine Technology College in Bedworth, had been named as RAF Headteacher of the Year in the Secondary School in West Midlands at the Teaching Awards 2005.

Members asked that a letter of congratulation be sent on behalf of the Council.

During discussion of the report the following points were raised:-

- The Warwick Area Committee had endorsed the review and in doing so had welcomed the need for equal esteem between vocational and academic success.
- There should be a move towards greater use of IT in distance learning such as video links.
- Members of the Warwick Area Committee would have a further opportunity to comment on the action to be taken.

- The need for the comments to be forwarded to Connexions

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Cabinet endorse the recommendations of the Review of 14-19 provision in Central Warwickshire and Southam carried out jointly by the Local Learning and Skills Council and the County Council.
- (2) That the comments of the Cabinet and the Warwick Area Committee be forwarded to the Local Learning and Skills Council and Connexions.
- (3) That a further report be made to a future meeting of the Warwick Area Committee on the draft Action Plan prepared in response to the Area Review.

9. Corporate AMP Property Performance Indicator Report

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Property Services.

The Cabinet was asked to approve the Asset Management Plan Property Performance Indicators, subject to any necessary last-minute amendments the Director of Property Services might deem necessary in consultation with the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder

Following introductory comments from Councillor Alan Cockburn, members were advised that school buildings were not included in the Corporate AMP.

Resolved:-

That the Cabinet

- (1) approves the Corporate AMP Property Performance Indicator Report at Appendix A to the report.
- (2) agrees that in the event of any last-minute amendments being necessary, they be made by the Director of Property Services in consultation with the Corporate Services Portfolio Holder.

10. Education Capital Issues

The report of the County Education Officer was considered.

The paper recommended an increase in the resources available for two building projects at The Ferncumbe C of E Primary School, Hatton, and St. Nicholas C of E Primary School, Alcester, with the necessary finance coming from existing budgets.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the cost of the capital project at The Ferncumbe C of E Primary School, Hatton, be increased from £140,000 to £157,000, with the additional resources being taken from the underspend on Milverton Primary School.
- (2) That the cost of the project at St. Nicholas C of E Primary School, Alcester, be increased to £2,755,000, with the additional resources being obtained from sources listed in para. 2.3 of the County Education Officer's report.

11. Warwickshire County Council Implementing Electronic Government Statements 4.5

The report of the Director of Contract and Management Services was considered.

In common with other local authorities, Warwickshire County Council was required by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) to submit an Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Return for Mid Term 2005 (IEG 4.5) by 18th July 2005.

The report asked Cabinet to delegate responsibility to the Director of Contract and Management Services to produce and submit the return in consultation with the Leaders Liaison Group.

Resolved:-

That the Cabinet delegate formal responsibility to the Director of Contract and Management Services to produce and submit the IEG 4.5 return in consultation with the Leaders Liaison Group by 18th July.

12. Licensing Act 2003 – Trading Standards

The joint report of the Director of Libraries, Heritage & Trading Standards and the Director of Social Care and Health was considered.

The Cabinet was requested to authorise the Trading Standards Service to make representations regarding licence applications in the County and to request reviews of existing licences.

Resolved:-

The Cabinet authorise the Director of Libraries, Heritage and Trading Standards (and his nominated representatives) to make representations in response to applications made under the Licensing Act 2003 and to request reviews of licences granted under the Act.

13. Statement of Community Involvement for Minerals & Waste Development Frameworks

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy which related to an outline of the process to adopt the Statement of Community Involvement and a request to approve its content.

During his introduction of the item, Councillor Chris Saint suggested that the steering group referred to in the report, should have a political composition of 3-2-1 to reflect the overall political balance of the Council. The membership should include the Portfolio Holder and the Chair of the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was then Resolved:-

That the Cabinet approves:-

- (1) The draft Statement of Community Involvement for 6 weeks public consultation and participation commencing during July 2005.
- (2) That Cabinet establish a Member Steering Group with six members to guide the preparation of the Local Development Framework comprising the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, the Chair of the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee, two further Members nominated by the Conservative Group and one Member nominated by each of the Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups.

14. Draft “Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan” for Warwickshire

The report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy was considered.

The County Council was required to produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to

include principles to guide the work of the Countryside Access Team over the next ten years. A draft Plan had been compiled following extensive research and consultation with the public, users, landowners, local authorities and town and parish councils.

Members were advised that it was likely that some funding would be available under the Local Transport Plan but there was currently no detail available.

Resolved:-

That the Cabinet authorises the Director of Planning Transport and Economic Strategy, to prepare and publish pursuant to section 61(2) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 a Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan and to take all other steps required to facilitate the consideration and adoption of such a plan following completion of the consultation described in Section 5 of the report.

15. Any Other Items

There were no urgent items to consider.

16. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

Resolved:

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of confidential and exempt information as defined in paragraphs 8 and 9 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

17. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on the 16th June 2005 and Matters Arising.

Resolved:-

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 16th June, 2005 be approved as a correct record and the minutes be signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

18. Southam College: Former Caretaker's Bungalow

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Property Services which sought approval to disposing of the surplus property on the open market.

The Cabinet rose at 2.45 p.m.