

The Cabinet met at the Shire Hall, Warwick on the 8th December, 2005.

Present

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Alan Farnell (Chair) (Policy and Governance),
“ John Burton (Schools),
“ Alan Cockburn (Corporate Services),
“ Peter Fowler (Family Services),
“ Colin Hayfield (Adult and Community Services),
“ Richard Hobbs (Community Safety),
“ Martin Heatley (Environment),
“ Chris Saint (Economic Development),
“ Izzi Seccombe (Children’s Services),
“ Bob Stevens (Performance Management).

Non-Voting Invitees:

Councillor June Tandy, Leader of the Labour Group,
“ Jerry Roodhouse, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.

Other Members:

Councillors Ken Browne, Richard Chattaway, Anne Forwood, Richard Grant, John Haynes, Mick Jones, Frank McCarney, Helen McCarthy, Raj Randev, Sid Tooth and John Wells.

Before the commencement of business Councillor Alan Farnell welcomed Mike Hake the Interim Director of Adult Social Services to the meeting.

1. General
(1) Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Tim Naylor.

(2) Members’ Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

To be added

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on the 17th November 2005 and Matters Arising.

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Cabinet's 17th November, 2005 meeting be approved.

There were no matters arising.

(4) Request for Discussion of En Bloc Item.

It was agreed that item 9 would be discussed before a decision was taken.

Councillor Alan Farnell stated that Agenda Item 16 relating to **Approval to Consult on a New Arrangement for Mental Health, NHS Learning Disability and Substance Misuse Services in Warwickshire** would be considered in the public part of the meeting.

2. Completion of the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA2) 2006-2009

The Cabinet considered the revised report of the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive which had been circulated before the meeting.

The revised report had been prepared at the request of the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Stevens. The report updated Cabinet on recent work undertaken in relation to LPSA2 and was fully up to date as at 6th December 2005. The report explained that work in relation to LPSA2, whilst at an advanced stage, was not yet fully complete and that it would be necessary to defer consideration of the final agreement until the meeting of Cabinet on 2nd February 2006. The extension of time had been agreed with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The recommendations, if adopted, would give delegated authority to the Chief Executive to progress the proposed agreement to the final stages of negotiation, and involve the adoption by the Cabinet of the principles set out in the report in relation the Performance Reward Grant element of LPSA2.

Following introductory comments from Councillor Bob Stevens members made the following points:-

- With regard to the performance measures for reducing criminal damage, it would be preferable to use detection rates instead of the targets indicated
- The financial impact would not be lessened by combining the targets for the Improving Education in the Early Years project.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority to continue negotiations with central government and partner agencies in order to complete the final draft LPSA2 Agreement.
- (2) That a further report will be made to Cabinet on 2nd February 2006 in which the final draft LPSA2 agreement will be presented for endorsement
- (3) That Cabinet supports the principles set out in the Report relating to the use of the Performance Reward Grant accruing to the Council under LPSA2.
- (4) That Cabinet notes the strong element of partnership work involved with LPSA2 and the close linkages that exist between LPSA2, the Warwickshire Strategic Partnership and Plan and the development of the Warwickshire Local Area Agreement.

3. 2005/06 Capital Programme – Supplementary Bids

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

The report outlined the additional £2 million of capital resources required in the current year to meet significant pressures on the Department's highways maintenance budget. The Cabinet was requested to endorse the support for this proposal agreed at the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8th November.

Following introductory comments from Councillor Martin Heatley, it was Resolved:-

That the Cabinet:-

- (1) Recommends to the Council that £2 million additional capital resources are approved and added to the 2005/06 Capital Programme for the Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy Department (PTES) to meet the budget pressures outlined in Section 2 of the report funded by additional borrowing.

- (2) Agrees that any interest costs incurred in 2005/06 are met from the underspend in Other Services reported to Cabinet as part of Quarter 2 Budget monitoring on 17th November 2005.
- (3) Recommends to Council that £180,000 to meet the on-going costs of financing the additional £2 million borrowing is included in the 2006/07 budget resolution.

4. Public Consultation on 2006/2007 Budget and Council Tax: Process

The Cabinet considered the report of the County Treasurer.

The report sought Members' approval to the planned public consultation on the 2006/2007 Budget and Council Tax. It had been considered by Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29th November 2005.

During his introduction of this item, Councillor Alan Cockburn confirmed his agreement with the process detailed in the report and suggested that there would be benefits in using the Area Committees as part of the consultation process. He added that each Committee should decide whether to call a special meeting or include the consultation item on the agenda for the first meeting in 2006.

Members discussed several aspects of the proposal and made the following points:-

- The suggested budget preparation process was based on service priorities.
- The proposal would present an opportunity for all members of the public to give comments direct to members.
- Any action taken to increase more public participation in the budget process was encouraged.
- The process should be reviewed if it did not produce the desired results this year. The review should again include the involvement of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and should examine the involvement of the Youth Council and voluntary Services.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Cabinet approve the content of the report
- (2) That the Treasurer's department go through the process of public consultation on the 2006/07 Budget and Council Tax:

- (a) through the Citizen's Panel
- (b) through the website of Warwickshire County Council
- (c) through area committees. Each one deciding whether to call a special meeting or have it as an extra item on the agenda of the early 2006 meetings.

5. Record of Performance Assessment for Social Care 2005

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Social Care and Health which provided a summary of the Commission for Social Care Inspection's evaluation and judgement of Warwickshire County Council's Adult Social Services.

During his introduction of the item Councillor Colin Hayfield drew attention to the resource implications of the improvement work to be undertaken and the need for the future involvement of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the process.

Resolved:-

- (1) That Cabinet note the Commission for Social Care Inspection's judgement that social care services in Warwickshire are serving some adults well and the Council's capacity to improve these services is uncertain.
- (2) That Cabinet endorse the use of the Audit Commission tools to improve data quality and enhance future performance management

6. Central Warwickshire and Southam: Area Review of Education and Training for Young People aged 14-19

The Cabinet considered the report of the County Education Officer.

The report asked the Cabinet to comment on the proposed Action Plan drawn up in response to the Area Review of 14-19 Provision jointly commissioned by the Authority and the Local Learning and Skills Council.

Councillors Alan Farnell, Chris Saint and June Tandy declared personal interests as Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership board members.

During his introduction of the item Councillor John Burton expressed his appreciation for the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and drew attention to the future need for consideration of the cost of transport in rural areas.

During the discussion the following points were made:-

- Members endorsed the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee including its concerns about the end of funding to support collaborative vocational learning opportunities for 14-16 year olds.
- There was a need to examine the relationship between the education and training available at specialist schools and the facilities/opportunities being offered at colleges.
- Members endorsed the views of the Warwick Area Committee.

Resolved:-

That the comments of the Cabinet and those of the Warwick Area Committee on the Action Plan prepared jointly by the Local Learning & Skills Council and the County Council in response to the Area Review of 14-19 Provision be forwarded to the Local Learning & Skills Council.

7. Voluntary Sector Consortium Resource Building, Nuneaton and Bedworth

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

Members were asked to reaffirm their support for the Voluntary Sector Consortium project and to approve the granting of a loan to the VSC of £500,000, subject to full Council giving its approval and to suitable terms and safeguards being agreed by the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy and Acting Director of Property Services.

Councillor Alan Farnell indicated that both he and Councillor Bob Hicks supported the proposal as local members.

During his introduction of the item, Councillor Chris Saint indicated that there were certain issues still to be debated but, at this stage, he suggested that the Cabinet should support the making of a loan with safeguards. He indicated that there were economic benefits in the project through providing access to services, including voluntary services, at one location.

During the debate the following points were made:-

- There was a need for the County Solicitor to agree terms and safeguards
- A further report should be prepared on the detailed aspects of the loan although it was suggested that this could create anxieties in the project

- The Cabinet Member for Economic Development would be a part of the process.
- Timing was important and the loan arrangements should be revisited if it had not been taken up within nine months.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Council be recommended to approve a loan to the VSC of £500,000, subject to suitable terms and safeguards being agreed by the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy, the Acting Director of Property Services and the County Solicitor in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, and to add this to the Capital Programme.
- (2) That before agreement is reached a further report about the detailed arrangements for securing the loan should be submitted.

8. Fire and Rescue Authority Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) – Improvement Plan

The report of the County Fire Officer was considered.

The report detailed Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority's CPA Improvement Plan following the 2005 assessment by the Audit Commission. The Improvement Plan had been endorsed at the round-table discussion meeting on 7th October 2005.

Resolved:-

That the Cabinet notes the report and approves the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Authority's CPA Improvement Plan.

9. Extended Schools

The Cabinet considered the report of the County Education Officer.

Following consideration of the half-year composite report 2005/06 at the meeting of Cabinet on 17th November, a report was requested summarising the latest developments in the DfES strategy for Extended Schools and progress made in developing Warwickshire's strategy.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse expressed concern about the possibility of missing opportunities for increased joining up of facilities and services including the implications of surplus spaces.

Councillor John Burton, Cabinet Member for Schools, indicated that, having regard to needs under the Children's Act, it was likely that the use of many properties would be examined. He understood that a further report was to be submitted to the Cabinet.

Eric Wood, the County Education Officer, advised members that:-

- The School Organisation Plan which was presently out for consultation would be submitted back to the Cabinet with the local views of the Area Committees. This would be fed back to the Cabinet in due course.
- The outcome of the work being undertaken with the Diocesan Roman Catholic School project at Rugby would be included in the report.
- With regard to surplus places issues it was possible that voluntary action by schools could be encouraged as had happened with the two Rokeby Schools.
- 79 schools have engaged in the extended school strategy which was an excellent level of involvement. Of these 40 wanted to be included in the main cluster and the remaining 39 would be treated as individual units because of their location.
- A further report would be submitted to the Cabinet during the coming Spring.

Resolved:-

- (1) That Cabinet notes:
 - (a) the emergent national framework and targets for extended school provision
 - (b) the further development of a Warwickshire strategy for Extended Schools
 - (c) the underlying issues revealed by this developing agenda.

- (2) That Cabinet supports the general direction of travel for the development of schools with extended services in Warwickshire.

10. Consultation Paper on Changes to the Recycling Credit Scheme

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy which discussed and proposed a response to the consultation on changes to the recycling credits scheme.

Resolved:-

That the response detailed in Appendix A of the report is sent to Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on the proposed changes to the recycling credits scheme.

11. Additional AWM Capital for Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods Initiative

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

The Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods Initiative had recently been successful in securing an additional £785,000 external capital funding from Advantage West Midlands to be spent in the current and the next financial year. The report sought Cabinet approval to add £385,000 to the BSN Capital budget for this 2005/06 and £400,000 to the budget for 2006/07.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves the addition to the capital programme of £785,000 externally funded capital expenditure for the Building Sustainable Neighbourhoods initiative:-

£385,000 to be added to the programme for 2005/06.

£400,000 to the programme for 2006/07.

12. Stratford Park and Ride

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy which informed the Cabinet of a £181,000 increase in the costs for the Stratford-upon-Avon Park and Ride facility.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the estimated cost of the Stratford Park and Ride facility in the 2005-06 capital programme be increased from £4.144m to £4.325m.
- (2) That the extra funding required of £181,000 be met from the Integrated Transport Block.

13. Any Other Items

There were no urgent items to consider.

16. Approval to Consult on a New Arrangement for Mental Health, NHS Learning Disability and Substance Misuse Services in Warwickshire

The report of the Director of Social Care & Health was considered in **the public part of the meeting.**

The report sought approval from Cabinet to support the Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authority to obtain from the Secretary of State, agreement to consult on proposed changes to the delivery of services that support adults and children who have mental health problems, a learning disability or drug and alcohol addictions.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse reported that the Mental Health Panel had met very recently and had received a presentation about the future arrangements for the Mental Health Trust for Coventry and Warwickshire. He added that wide consultation would be undertaken in the near future.

Resolved:-

- (1) That the Cabinet supports the Primary Care Trusts and the Strategic Health Authority in seeking approval from the Secretary of Health to consult locally on proposed changes to the configuration of the delivery of services that support adults and children who have mental health problems, a learning disability or drug or alcohol addictions. The proposals are laid down in Appendix One of the report.
- (2) That the report be referred to the Mental Health Panel and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

14. Reports Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

Resolved:-

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in paragraphs 7,8, 9 and 10 of the Local Government Act 1972'.

15. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th November 2005 and Matters Arising.

Resolved:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 17th November, 2005 be approved as a correct record and the minutes be signed by the Chair.

17. Kingsbury Water Park – Proposed Outdoor Education Centre

The Cabinet considered the joint report of the County Education Officer and the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy.

The Cabinet considered a report which sought support for the development of an Outdoor Education Centre at Kingsbury Water Park including the authorisation of negotiations and consideration of the earmarking of capital receipts.

18. Rugby: Harris School

The Cabinet considered the report of the Acting Director of Property Services which provided an update of the Cabinet Report dated 1 April 2004 and requested approval for surplus land at Harris High to be sold to enable a new Sports Hall to be constructed. Approval was also requested for advance funding of the design works for the new Sports Hall.

19. Stratford-upon-Avon: Suite 1, Arden Court, Arden Street - Lease

The report of the Acting Director of Property Services was considered.

The Cabinet considered the acquisition of office accommodation at Arden Court Stratford on terms acceptable to the Acting Director of Property Services and the County Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive.

20. Atherstone: Warwick House - Rent Revision

The report of the Acting Director of Property Services was considered.

The Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to a revised rent with effect from 5 May 2004 for the first and second floor offices at Warwick House, Atherstone.

21. Street Column Advertising

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy, which recommended the award of a seven year contract for maintenance, installation and advertising on up to 225 street columns in Warwickshire to generate a new source of revenue.

The Cabinet rose at 3.05

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Chair of Cabinet