



Democratic Services
County Hall
Northampton
NN1 1AT

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2013 at 3:00pm

Venue: The Blue Room, County Hall, Northampton (Meeting held in public)

PRESENT (FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING):

Cabinet Member

Councillor Catherine Boardman
Councillor Robin Brown
Councillor Andre Gonzalez de Savage
Councillor Andrew Grant
Councillor Jim Harker

Councillor Joan Kirkbride

Councillor Andrew Langley
Councillor Bill Parker
Councillor Ben Smith
Councillor Heather Smith

Portfolio

Children's Social Care
Health & Adult Social Services
Infrastructure and Public Protection
Children Learning and Skills
Leader of the Council and Community
Leadership (Chairman)
Deputy Leader and Business Intelligence,
Performance and Democracy
LGSS
Finance
Environment
Customer and Community Services

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT (FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING):

Councillor Julie Brookfield
Councillor Michael Clarke
Councillor Chris Long
Councillor Suresh Patel
Councillor Bob Scott

Councillor Richard Church
Councillor Graham Lawman
Councillor John McGhee
Councillor Alan Pote
Councillor Michael Tye

ALSO PRESENT (FOR ALL OR PART OF THE MEETING):

Officer

Paul Blantern
Tony Ciaburro
Art Conaghan
Martyn Emberson
Barbel Gale
Laurie Gould
Paul Hanson
Patrick Murray

Role

Chief Executive
Director of Environment, Development & Transport
Political Assistant – Conservative Group
Chief Fire Officer
Democracy Officer (Minutes)
Monitoring Officer
Cabinet and Executive Manager
Political Assistant to Liberal Democratic Group

There were 2 members of the public in attendance.

47/13 Apologies for non attendance

There were none.

48/13 Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting

There were none.

49/13 Minutes of the meeting held in public on 12 March 2013

RESOLVED: that the minutes of meeting held in public on 12 March 2013 were agreed and signed as a true record.

50/13 Declarations of Interest by Councillors

There were none.

51/13 Announcements

The Chair expressed sorrow to hear about the death of Baroness Thatcher who was very courageous and determined.

A moments silence was held and condolences were passed to Baroness Thatcher's family.

52/13 Highway Asset Management Strategy 2013/14 to 2016/17

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Infrastructure and Public Protection, Councillor Gonzalez de Savage, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and made the following points:

- In 2010 the Council implemented the Highways Maintenance Initiative (HMI) which was primarily aimed at carriageways to help address the short term pressures in dealing with the increasing numbers of potholes on the network;
- The HMI strategy changed the way the Council carried out maintenance works and ensured that road repairs were affordable. Rather than deal with the worst-first priorities were determined on a whole-life cost basis; and
- The scheme had been a success however there were still many roads that would require significant investment.

Councillors made the following points:

- Some people had a differing view of the state of the roads in the county and it wasn't just the amount of potholes but the fabric of the road was bad in areas of Corby;
- Concern was raised about the state of the footways in the county;
- The prioritisation of road resurfacing was queried as some roads had been reported as having issues but had not been repaired;
- It was felt that there was little money in the budget for road maintenance previously and the Council was doing all they could with the amount of money available and the repairs were being carried out at a higher standard than previously;
- It was felt that everything with the roads was not perfect;

- It was felt that the state of the counties roads had improved recently and officers should be congratulated for their work;
- Thanks was given to David Farquhar, Assistant Director Highways, Transport & Infrastructure, Tony Ciaburro, Director of Environment, Development & Transport and Debbie Thorne, Head of Transport & Highways for their hard work in this difficult area; and
- It was clarified that roads in urban areas were being repaired.

Councillor Gonzalez de Savage made the following points in response:

- He thanked members for their support for the work that was being done;
- There was a need to develop a consistent approach for repairing footways going forward; and
- He explained that the Council was not the only authority that had responsibility for this and it was working with partners.

RESOLVED That Cabinet:

- 1. Agreed the proposed further development of the Northamptonshire Highway Asset Management Strategy as outlined in section 5 of this report.**
- 2. Noted the impact of the existing Highways Maintenance Initiative.**
- 3. Approved the submission of a future business case detailing how further investment could be used to improve the condition of the asset**

53/13 To replace Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Services (NFRS) Firefighting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by 14 June 2014

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Infrastructure and Public Protection, Councillor Gonzalez de Savage, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and explained that the report was seeking agreement to following the procurement process to ensure all personnel were supplied with safe and suitable equipment.

RESOLVED That Cabinet:-

- 1. Approved a project to replace the current PPE and associated lease and maintenance agreement, and seek opportunities for collaboration with other Fire and Rescue Services**
- 2. Agreed that a solution is sought which provides value for money and a robust maintenance to provide operational assurance.**
- 3. Delegated authority to the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder with responsibility for infrastructure and public protection, to carry out the most appropriate procurement process and the award of contract to the preferred supplier, and if necessary to further agree any additions and/or alterations to the outlined process. (Section 5 and 8 of the main report)**

54/13 HS2 Draft Environmental Statement and Code of Construction Practice including Small Claims Scheme Consultations

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Environment, Councillor Ben Smith, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and made the following points:

- In the spring the Department for Transport/HS2 Ltd were expected to carry out consultation on the draft Environmental Statement and draft Code of Construction practice including a small claims scheme in relation to the London to West Midlands route;
- The report explained that the timescales of this consultation would mean that it may not be possible for the draft response to be approved by Cabinet; and
- He felt it was important that the Council move on from protesting about HS2 and hoped that the new Council after the elections in May 2013 would focus on compensation for residents and to identify appropriate mitigation measures.

Councillors made the following points:

- The Council was urged to stick to the agreed line even though there were doubts regarding the financial viability of the project;
- It was felt that HS2 was a waste of money which would be better spent elsewhere; and
- It was suggested that when preparing the draft response that officers also consult with Councillors of adjacent wards to those affected.

In response Councillor Ben Smith noted that there was doubt about the viability of the project and explained that consultation would be carried out with as many people as was possible.

RESOLVED That Cabinet agreed that:

- 1. In the event that the timescales of the consultation did not allow a draft response to be submitted to Cabinet, that the Director of Environment, Development & Transport is given delegated power to respond to the consultations in consultation with the Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Infrastructure & Public Protection and Environment together with the councillors whose wards HS2 passes through.**
- 2. In the event that recommendation 1 was not implemented, then a further report will be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet highlighting the details of the response of the consultation for consideration.**

55/13 Update on School Funding Arrangements

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children Learning and Skills, Councillor Grant, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and explained that the report and table one outlined the Northamptonshire Schools funding formula for 2013/14.

Councillors made the following points:

- It was felt that the decision had already been taken;
- No provision had been made for pupils who needed teaching in English as an additional language therefore placing additional work on the schools;
- As corporate parents it was queried what representations had been made for the provision for Looked After Children in these arrangements;
- It was felt that these arrangements should have been discussed by scrutiny;
- It was felt that there was a lot to look at regarding consistency of funding across the schools; and
- There were too many unknowns associated with the formula and there was no indication of how much top up funding would be required.

Councillor Grant made the following points in response:

- He explained that the central provisions had been agreed by the schools forum;
- He clarified that more funding was going into schools and less being put by for the rainy days;
- He explained that a schools debt couldn't be passed on when it became an academy;
- He clarified that personal education plans were still being completed; and
- There were a number of ways that extra provision could be provided for Looked after Children.

The Chief Executive explained that more funding now sat with the schools themselves and that the whole nature of schools was changing. He gave his thanks to Jon Lee, Strategic Finance Manager – CYP for his work on this with the Schools Forum.

RESOLVED that Cabinet: noted the final school funding arrangements for 2013/14 in response to the Department for Education's (DfE) school funding reforms, which covered:

- a) The school funding formula for Northamptonshire primary and secondary schools and academies;**
- b) Northamptonshire's funding arrangements for pupils with high needs; and**
- c) Changes to the early year's single funding formula for Nursery schools and Nursery units.**

56/13 Proposal to change the age range of Easton Garford CE Endowed School from 4-9 to 4-11

Please note the 'General Exception Rule had been applied to this decision.

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children Learning and Skills, Councillor Grant, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated).

Councillors felt that the proposals were what was best for the schools and would make it more viable.

RESOLVED that Cabinet supported the proposal to extend the age range of Easton Garford School from Lower to Primary School status, following a formal consultation process carried out by the school, in conjunction with the Church of England Diocese.

57/13 Northamptonshire County Council Monthly Capital Programme Report (MCR) – Period 11 Ending February 2013

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, Councillor Parker, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and sought approval for the 7 capital schemes listed in the report.

Councillors noted that a lot of changes had taken place and thanks were given to Mark Walker, Group Accountant for his work with these.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- 1. Noted the detailed expenditure and funding levels of the Capital Programme for the financial year 2012-13 and subsequent financial years.**
- 2. Approved seven new capital schemes (detailed in Appendix 1) into the Council's Committed Capital Programme following Capital Investment Board (CIB) recommendation.**

58/13 Monthly Financial Report as at the end of March for the financial year ending 31 March 2013

At the Chairman's invitation the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, Councillor Parker, introduced the report (copies of which had previously been circulated) and made the following points:

- There was a projected under spend of £0.5m for the year; and
- The report sought approval for the budget and grants carry-forwards and earmarked reserve requests listed in appendix B of the main report.

Councillors made the following points:

- It was noted that LGSS had managed a £1m saving which was a reflection of the entrepreneurial skill shown by the Council. It was felt that the Council would be looking for LGSS to keep delivering savings of this scale going forward;
- The additional funds for safeguarding children were welcomed but it was queried if these would be included year on year and if the budget for that would be robust;
- The work of the Adult Social Services team was praised and the way the budget had been managed; and
- It was a credit that the way the services were being provided had ensured that more people had access to services.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- 1. Noted the current financial position.**
- 2. Approved the budget and grant carry-forwards and earmarked reserve requests as referred to in Section 12 and set out in detail at Appendix B.**

The Chairman passed on his thanks to Paul Blantern, Chief Executive and to many other colleagues for their help along with Paul Hanson, Cabinet and Executive Manager and Barbel Gale, Democracy Officer for their support.

The Chairman also thanked Councillor Ben Smith and Councillor Andrew Langley for their support over the years.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 4.10pm

Barbel Gale
Democracy Officer
Leadership Support and Democracy

Signed: _____ Dated: _____