

# NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CABINET

**Monday, 5 November 2007**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Woods (Chair); Councillor Glynane (Deputy Chair); Councillors Beardsworth, Church, Hoare and Mildren

### **1. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Crake.

### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the proceedings of the special meeting held on 18 October 2007 were signed by the Chair.

### **3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That Mr Chris Grethe, Councillor Hadland and Councillor Tavener be granted leave to address the Cabinet in respect of item 6 "Notice of Motion regarding the Sea Cadet Corp.
  - (2) That Mr Steve Winder be granted leave to address the Cabinet in respect of items 8 "All Saints Conservation Area Reappraisal and Management", 9 "Transfer of Void HRA Properties to Nottingham Community Housing Association" and 12(A) "Capital Programme CASPAR Plus Projects".
  - (3) That Mr Norman Adams be granted leave to address the Cabinet in respect of item 9 "Transfer of Void HRA Properties to Nottingham Community Housing Association".

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

### **5. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

There were none.

### **6. NOTICE OF MOTION REFERRED FROM COUNCIL MEETING 27 SEPTEMBER 2007 FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET**

Mr Chris Grethe then addressed the Cabinet on the Notice of Motion as printed on the agenda regarding Northampton Sea Cadets Unit commenting that he hoped the unit would get help with its funding as it was a very valid body for the town which did a lot for young people. He therefore urged Cabinet to assist the Sea Cadets in whatever way it could.

Councillor Hadland then addressed the Cabinet stressing the importance of the Sea Cadets and their role within the community. He briefly outlined the background leading to the submission of the emergency motion to Council in September. He stated that what the Sea Cadets needed was a 25 year lease as this was one of the preconditions of their being able to obtain funding. Without this condition they would experience difficulties in being able to obtain committed funding. Therefore what was required from Cabinet was a clear indication that it would support the Sea Cadets. Councillor Hadland added that there were many ways of providing the 25 year security and that it need not necessarily be a case of 25 years at the current premises occupied by the Sea Cadets.

Councillor Tavener then addressed the Cabinet stating that she understood that there had been a meeting between the Leader and Deputy Leader and the Sea Cadets the previous week when it had been indicated that the Council would be willing to grant a ten year lease. She stated that she was pleased that this meeting had taken place but urged that Cabinet find a way by whatever means it could to achieve the 25 year security.

Consideration was then given to the Notice of Motion as printed on the agenda. Councillor Woods confirmed that he and Councillor Glynane had met with the Sea Cadets and that they clearly did a lot of good work and had a high profile in the town. He stated that they had been advised of various improvements that the Sea Cadets wished to carry out to their existing premises including installation of pontoons and the fact that they would need to find ways to fund these improvements. At this stage the Sea Cadets would be looking at ways of raising funding to do the improvements and it was up to Cabinet also to look at innovative ways to improve the existing facilities. It was stressed that Cabinet was fully supporting the Sea Cadets to achieve what was best for them and what was best for the town. Councillor Woods stressed that the Sea Cadets were not at risk and that Cabinet would be trying to assist them to achieve their goals acknowledging that they were doing a fantastic job with a very impressive Sea Cadet Unit and that Cabinet must do all it could to support them.

**RESOLVED:** That the Notice of Motion be received and the position be noted.

**7. GRANT OF LEASE OF MAGISTRATES COURT PREMISES AT CAMPBELL SQUARE TO HER MAJESTY'S COURTS SERVICE**

This item was withdrawn.

**8. ALL SAINTS CONSERVATION AREA REAPPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Mr Steve Winder addressed the Cabinet commenting that this was basically a good initiative which removed a few of the previous anomalies. However he stated that he had a slight concern with regard to Gold Street. He stated that Gold Street in its present form was quite important in providing a service for nearby residents such as Spring Boroughs. He stated that the residents of the surrounding areas got a lot of benefit from the particular mix of shops in Gold Street and that it would be of less benefit to the community should the Gold Street area become predominantly a restaurant area.

Councillor Church as the Portfolio Holder submitted the report which outlined the process in carrying out a reappraisal of the All Saints Conservation Area, the writing an accompanying Management Plan, consideration of a boundary amendment, and encouraging and incorporating public involvement in the reappraisal process. He stated that page 17 showed the current boundary and proposed extensions. He referred to Mr Winder's address and stated that it was a valuable comment that affordable shops were needed for the people of the area and that Mr Winder might wish to direct his comments to the Central Area Action Plan Consultation.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the responses to the consultation process for the All Saints Conservation Area Reappraisal and officer responses be noted.
  - (2) That the Conservation Area boundary be amended as shown on the plan attached to the reappraisal (at Appendix 1).
  - (3) That the reappraisal document and accompanying management plan be adopted (at Appendix 2).
  - (4) That the report be referred to the Planning Committee for information.

**9. TRANSFER OF VOID HRA PROPERTIES TO NOTTINGHAM COMMUNITY HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

Mr Steve Winder addressed the Cabinet stating that he was against the transfer of Northampton Borough Council properties in general but could understand why in this instance this particular transfer would take place. He referred to the need for a common service standard highlighting the difficulties that could occur when properties under different management operated different management standards. A general set of standards would make more sense.

Mr Adams then addressed Cabinet agreeing with Mr Winder regarding common service standards. In referring to the report he noted that Option 2 was being recommended for approval. However he urged that Option 3 be considered very carefully as an alternative.

Councillor Beardsworth as the relevant Portfolio Holder then presented the report responding to the issues raised in the addresses. She stated that she was in agreement with the benefits of a common service standard and that this was in fact being pursued. She then explained the reasons for choosing Option 2 over Option 3 and the repercussions of going with Option 3. She then referred to the report which advised that Nottingham Community Housing Association had been allocated Housing Corporation National Affordable Housing Programme funding for the purpose of refurbishing five properties in the Borough. The options available were outlined in the report with the preferred option being Option 2.

**RESOLVED:** That Option 2 be the confirmed option and that approval be given to transfer the five properties to Nottingham Community Housing Association (NCHA) for a total of £75,000 in return for nomination rights of 100% for the first lettings and 75% thereafter for homeless families and those on the Council's Housing Register.

## **10. RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY**

Councillor Mildren as the relevant Portfolio Holder submitted a report advising of improvements in the Council's risk management processes and seeking approval to the present risk management policy and revised strategy as set out under Appendices 1 and 2 of the report. It was noted that the Risk Management Policy and Strategy was reviewed annually.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be received and noted and the Council's Risk Management Policy and Revised Strategy be approved.

## **11. INTEGRATED PLANNING SERVICES AND ALLOCATION OF PLANNING DELIVERY GRANT (PDG)**

Councillor Church as the relevant Portfolio Holder submitted a report regarding the establishment of an integrated planning service and use of the Planning Delivery Grant for 2007/2008. The report outlined the results of the staff consultation regarding the indicative structure that had been presented to Cabinet on 30 July 2007 and detailed the amendments proposed as a result of this consultation. In addition the report advised of how the Planning Delivery Grant for 2007/2008 was proposed to be allocated. It was noted that the next stage was for the detailed structure to be financially appraised. It was further noted that the selection phase for appointments to the three posts had already commenced.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the results of the formal staff consultations set out in Appendix 1 and the amended structure set out in Appendix 3 be noted.
- (2) That the progress and key dates in the appointment process for Head of Planning, Development Control Manager and Building Control Manager be noted.
- (3) That approval be given to allocate £224,620 of the 2007/2008 Planning Delivery Grant to support the implementation of the indicative structure in 2008/2009.

- (4) That the proposed allocation of the balances of Planning Delivery Grant for 2007/2008 of £220,000 and £148,000 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report be noted.
- (5) That the authorisation of specific allocations against the £220,000 and the £148,000 capital be delegated to the Corporate Director (People Planning and Regeneration) in consultation with the Director of Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration.
- (6) That approval be given to appoint a Head of Planning, Development Control Manager and Building Control Manager posts within existing budgets and Planning Delivery Grant.
- (7) That the financial implications of the indicative integrated planning structure as part of the budget process for 2008/2009 and beyond be noted.

## **12. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007-08 ADDITIONS AND AMENDMENTS**

Councillor Mildren as the Portfolio Holder submitted a report seeking approval for additions and amendments to the Council's Capital Programme for 2007-08 in terms of improvements to Corporate buildings and the implementation of a Legal Case Management System.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the proposed additions to the Council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2007-08 listed at paragraph 3.2.6 in terms of improvements to Corporate buildings and 3.2.7 in terms of the implementation of a Legal Case Management System be agreed.
  - (2) That the funding sources for the proposed additions to the Council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2007-08 listed at paragraphs 3.2.6 and 3.2.7 be approved.

### **12A CASPAR PLUS PROJECTS**

Mr Steve Winder addressed Cabinet stating that he was pleased to have the information contained in this report as difficulties were being encountered in getting information about the CASPAR project as residents and members of the public could not attend or address the CASPAR meetings. He had also encountered difficulties in trying to access the minutes from these meetings. He stated that essentially there appeared to be a basic lack of public information generally regarding this particular CASPAR project and that this was of some concern.

Councillor Mildren as the Portfolio Holder submitted a report seeking approval for further additions and amendments to the Council's Capital Programme for 2007-08 in terms of disabled access for the Spring Boroughs Café and for various other schemes requiring Cabinet approval under the externally funded CASPAR programme. These included designing out crime and various environmental and recreational improvements as set out under paragraph 3.2.7 of the report.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the proposed additions to the Council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2007-08 listed at paragraph 3.2.6 (Spring Boroughs Café Disabled Access) and 3.2.7 (Designing Out Crime and Environmental and Recreational Improvements) be approved.
  - (2) That the funding sources for the proposed additions to the Council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2007-08 listed at paragraphs 3.2.6 and 3.2.7 be approved.
  - (3) That approval for the scheme for improved car parking provision in communal areas for flats, a sub-project of the Designing Out Crime project, be subject to a consultation exercise.

## **13. CAPITAL OUTTURN 2006/2007**

Councillor Mildren as the Portfolio Holder submitted a report advising of the Outturn Expenditure and Funding Position for the Council's Capital Programme for 2006-07. It was noted that the amount of slippage required to complete capital schemes started in 2006-07 or before was still being determined by officers and that this would be reported back to Cabinet at its next meeting on 3 December. The report would also indicate how the slippage was to be funded.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the outturn position for the Council's capital programme for 2006-07 and how this was funded be noted.
  - (2) That a report on capital programme slippage be submitted to the next meeting of Cabinet on 3 December 2007.

## **14. PERFORMANCE**

### **14A BUDGET MONITORING 2007/08 PERIOD 6**

Councillor Mildren as the relevant Portfolio Holder submitted a report which identified the projected outturn position for the current financial year. It was noted that Appendix 1 of the report provided further background information. The report also referred to the management action being taken in response to the forecast and to minimise the impact on the Council's General Fund Reserves at the end of the financial year. It was noted that Appendix A presented the identified variations from the approved budget that were giving rise to a forecast net overspend of £379,000 compared to £272,000 as forecast at the end of August 2007. This would reduce down to £77,000 should an application to capitalise severance costs to the DCLG be agreed.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the report and the actions being taken to manage the forecast overspend be noted.
  - (2) That Cabinet approve the virements as detailed in the annex attached to realign the street scene budgets.
  - (3) That approval be given to a virement of £30,000 from the Corporate Initiatives (LABGI) earmarked reserve for the Christmas lights.
  - (4) That approval be given to the virement of £50,000 for the Sheep Street Public Conveniences.
  - (5) That approval be given to a virement of £10,000 from the Corporate Initiatives (LABGI) earmarked reserve for the Northamptonshire Rape Crisis Centre.
  - (6) That Cabinet approve that the additional LABGI funding allocation notified to the authority be added to the Corporate Initiatives earmarked reserve when it is received.

### **14B PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

Councillor B Hoare as the relevant Portfolio Holder presented the monthly performance monitoring report advising of the Council's performance for September 2007 against monthly performance indicators and quarterly reported indicators for the period July to September 2007. He stated that this was the first time that some of the quarterly indicators were being brought before Cabinet. In discussing the report particular mention was made to the crime figures and to the turnaround time with regard to void properties.

**RESOLVED:** That the contents of the report be received and noted.

## **15. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Chair moved that the public and Press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that there was likely to be disclosure to them of such categories of exempt information as defined by Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 as listed against such items of business by reference to the appropriate paragraph of Schedule 12A to such Act.

The Motion was Carried.

## **16. EQUAL PAY REVIEW/ AUDIT PAY AND GRADING (3)**

Councillor B Hoare as the relevant Portfolio Holder submitted a report advising on the progress to identify and resolve potential equal pay claims and to recommend for subsequent decision by General Purposes Committee the process for settling any proceedings judged to be necessary.

**RESOLVED:**(1) That the current progress and the delegated authority under the Constitution for the Solicitor to the Council to settle proceedings be noted.

(2) That the position be referred to the General Purposes Committee to confirm or amend the approach being taken

The meeting concluded at 7.30pm.