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NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Call-in expires on:
19th July 2007
at 5.00pm

Monday, 9 July 2007

PRESENT: Councillor Woods (Chair); Councillors Beardsworth, Church, Crake, B Hoare and Mildren

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Glynane.

MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 28th June were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.

2. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

RESOLVED:

1. That Messrs Winder, Collett and Stiff and Councillor Paul Varnsverry be granted leave to address the Cabinet in respect of Item 5, Upton Interpretation Centre.
2. That Councillors Paul Varnsverry, J Hawkins and T Hadland be granted leave to address the Cabinet in respect of Item 6, Delapre Park Conservation Area.
3. That Mr Winder be granted leave to address the Cabinet in respect of Item 7, Housing Management Partnership Arrangements with Housing Associations.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

4. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were none.

5. UPTON INTERPRETATION CENTRE

Mr Winder addressed the Cabinet with regard to the proposed wind turbine on the site and requested that, once it was operational, information be published as to its ecological effectiveness.

Mr Collett, representing Northampton Town Football Club Supporters Ltd and Football in the Community, addressed the Cabinet asking why the NTFC's proposal to manage the sporting facilities had not been included in the report. He commented on the large number of community projects the Club undertook with local children and that currently the Club was having to hire pitches in the town. Councillor Church pointed out that the use of the sporting facilities was tied in with the pledge to build the £1.7m Interpretation Centre on the site and asked whether NTFC had sufficient funds for this. Mr Collett responded that if necessary, the Club could bid for various grants to achieve the necessary funding.

Mr Stiff, a resident of the Upton development, addressed the Cabinet and expressed his concern at the lack of community facilities on the estate and the subsequent anti social behaviour of some of the younger residents. His opinion was that what had once been commended as a showpiece development in design and ecological value had now become a place where residents had become very disillusioned. His view was that the English

Partnership was more likely to make good community use of the site and would therefore be addressing the rising problems of crime and disorder that had developed recently. He felt that NTFC would be looking at the area as a commercial venture and not necessarily for the good of local residents.

Councillor Varnsverry addressed the Cabinet with his broader concerns regarding the proximity of the land to an ancient Saxon village site, although he appreciated that the final design of the Interpretation Centre would be subject to planning regulations. He commented that the English Partnership and Residents Association were opposed to the NTFC proposal owing to concerns about issues of open access to the facilities.

Councillor Church presented the report, which recommended solutions to the long-term outstanding issue of providing a facility for the community of Upton Park. He explained that one of the purposes of the Interpretation Centre was to give details to residents about the ethos of the development, including reporting on the effectiveness of the wind turbine. The Council was required to meet its promises for the provision of the Centre and needed to ensure that sporting facilities were made available for residents' use. He invited NTFC to submit their proposals without delay and assured the meeting that public opinion would be listened to.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the report be received and the recommendations contained therein be adopted and that it be agreed in principle to commence discussions with English Partnerships regarding their proposal to construct and maintain the Interpretation Centre at Upton Park.
 2. That delegated powers be given to the Director of People, Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, the Director of Finance and the Solicitor to the Council to negotiate with English Partnerships a Deed of Variation to the Section 106 Agreement.
 3. That a further report be made back to Cabinet accordingly.

6. DELAPRE PARK CONSERVATION AREA

Councillor Varnsverry addressed the Cabinet, describing a visit to Delapre Park as "a walk in the country in the middle of town". He commented on the woodland and areas of historic interest in the park and was of the opinion that these areas and the golf course should be incorporated into the conservation area. Whilst he was in support of the concept of the report, he would like to see a larger section of the open space included in the conservation area.

On behalf of the Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust, Councillor Hawkins addressed the Cabinet, expressing surprise that there had not been more comment about the location of Neolithic sites of archaeological importance adjacent to the proposed conservation area, which should be included in it. As an area of importance in terms of regional and national heritage, Councillor Hawkins supported the option to designate a conservation area that encompassed a wider area to include these sites of historical interest.

In addressing the Cabinet, Councillor Hadland felt that as only a hazy description of the proposed area had been provided with the report, it was difficult to ascertain the exact boundaries and he was concerned that if the area to the front of the Abbey was included, it might inhibit community use. However, he was in favour of the wider area being adopted within the proposal.

Councillor Church then submitted the report and recommended that the conservation area be designated as proposed but that a further assessment be carried out with a view to

extending the area in due course. To achieve this, he suggested that the wording of option 4.1.3 in the report be amended to read that the Council should: "Designate a conservation area as proposed and draw up an appraisal and management plan following further appraisal of the wider landscape for a conservation area based on wider boundaries to be consulted on and presented to Cabinet within a year". He further recommended that a Conservation Area Committee be created to manage the project.

RESOLVED: 1. That the report be received and the recommendations contained therein be agreed:-

- a) Delapre Abbey, the adjacent buildings, part of the gardens and parkland be designated as a conservation area pursuant to Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and be known as Delapre Park Conservation Area.
- b) The Delapre Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal be adopted.
- c) The Delapre Park Conservation Area Management Plan be adopted.

as outlined in the report.

2. That it be further agreed that an appraisal and management plan be drawn up following further appraisal of the wider landscape for a conservation area based on wider boundaries to be consulted on and presented to Cabinet within a year.
3. That a Conservation Area Committee be established to support this conservation area.

7. HOUSING MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS WITH HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

Mr Winder addressed the Cabinet requesting that housing association tenants be consulted before further decisions were made. He also advised caution in dealing with housing associations asking that assurances be made to ensure common service standards. This was particularly pertinent in view of the fact that housing associations were not bound by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder act when designing and managing their properties.

Councillor Church submitted the report proposing a restriction on the number of Registered Social Landlords that carry out the housing management and maintenance role of RSL stock. He commented that the proposal to rationalise housing association involvement in social tenancies and to encourage organisations with local connections to bid for selection by the Council would provide a better service to RSL tenants. It was pointed out that the process was being carried out in partnership with neighbouring district councils. Councillor Hoare requested that robust criteria be applied to the selection process. Councillor Mildren asked for details of the process for consultation with RSL tenants and was informed by Councillor Church that the Council had no direct access to RSL tenants but could ask RSLs to provide evidence of good service.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and that delegation be given to Councillors Beardsworth and Church to select partner RSLs to carry out the housing management and maintenance role for new affordable housing in the Borough.

8. THE APPOINTMENT OF A NEW ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER FOR THE GAMBLING ACT 2005

Councillor Hoare submitted the report asking for approval for the appointment of a new administration officer to deal with additional work arising from the Council's management of the Gambling Act 2005, which was introduced in May 2007 with full implementation from 1 September 2007. The post would be self-financing with the cost of a new appointment being met from revenue income raised from fees collected from licence applicants. He recommended that the new officer be appointed as soon as possible for the short term, with consideration being given to the development of centralised licensing activity in the longer term.

RESOLVED: That the report be received and approval be given to the appointment of a new administration officer to deal with additional work arising from the Gambling Act 2005.

The meeting concluded at 18:57