

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Wednesday, 14 September 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Palthorpe (Chairman) Councillors Hadland, Yates, Malpas and Bottwood.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Hill.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 27th July 2011 were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

None.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

5. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

None.

6. MINUTES OF WEST NORTHANTS JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE 31ST JANUARY 2011

The minutes of the West Northants Joint Strategic Planning Committee on the 31st January 2011 were noted.

7. NORTHAMPTON SKATEPARK LOCATION

Councillor Mason addressed Cabinet and expressed her pleasure with the report. She stated that the proposed location of the Skatepark on Midsummer Meadows was excellent especially in regards to other activities that were available in the area. She commented that she was very glad that the location and establishment of the Skatepark had moved on and progressed.

Councillor Palethorpe submitted a report on behalf of Councillor Hill. He reported that the Skatepark location had been before Council in February 2011. He commented that it was important to find a location that was sustainable, accessible and visible thus encouraging members of the public to recognise the value of the Skatepark. Referring to recommendation 2.2 of the report, Councillor Palethorpe reported that alongside the £250,000 capital budget set aside to deliver the project, a further £5,000 had been committed for ongoing revenue costs.

RESOLVED:

1. That Midsummer Meadow was the preferred location as a key component of the emerging Nene Meadows Masterplan (CAAP Policy 31 - 2011).
2. That the committed ongoing revenue costs of £5,000 be included in the revenue budget for 2012/2013 onwards be agreed,

8. NORTHAMPTON WATERSIDE ENTERPRISE ZONE

Councillor Mason addressed Cabinet and stated that she welcomed the Enterprise Zone status that had recently been awarded to Northampton and reported that it would be a big success for Northampton as a whole. She commented that it may pose challenges to the Council but she supported the efforts and activity that would be needed to ensure its success.

Councillor Hadland, as the relevant Portfolio Holder, submitted a report and commented that the award of Enterprise Zone status awarded to Northampton from the Department of Community Local Government (CLG) was excellent news. He reported that extensive activity and work would need to be undertaken, in particular in respect of the current financial situation but that support had been offered from across the region including the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMPLEP). It was noted that the preliminary step was to put the governance process into place with final guidance coming from Government within the next week.

Councillor Hadland reported that there was a need to ensure that measures put in place would be made as simple and as straightforward as possible for interested businesses and industries by having a 'holiday' period on business rates for firms moving into the area before 2015, 'superfast' broadband and simplified planning. He commented that the status of the zone had gathered momentum and exciting opportunities, development and the prosperity of Northampton would be enhanced by the Enterprise Zone status.

Councillor Malpas stated that the award was great news for the Northampton. The Chairman offered his congratulations to those who had been involved in the project and successful bid.

RESOLVED:

1. That the award of Enterprise Zone status for the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone following the bid submitted by and endorsed by the South East Midlands Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) be welcomed.
2. That the extensive activity needed from the Borough Council and partners to implement the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone, as set out in the report be noted.
3. That the Chief Executive and the Director of Planning and Regeneration to take such action as is necessary in consultation with the portfolio holder for Regeneration and Enterprise, and the Leader of the Council, progress the workstreams identified in the report.

9. LAND AND BUILDINGS AT CAMPBELL SQUARE - PROPERTY OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPATION

Councillor Hadland, as the relevant Portfolio Holder, submitted a report. He commented that it was further good news for the Council. He referred to the building at Campbell Square that the Police and the Magistrates Court have occupied for many years. He explained that there had been a lengthy and on going dispute with regards to the ownership of the freehold, which was now resolved. The Council would be registered as the freeholder and the grant of 999 year leases to the other two parties would resolve their occupational rights. As a result of the arrangements to be documented, Northampton Borough Council would continue to have no liabilities for the day-to-day running costs of the property. Should either of the two current occupiers decide to vacate the building in the future, the Council would have then have the opportunity to gain control of those parts and generate income.

Councillor Yates reported that he welcomed the report, which would put to rest any previous disputed and offer complete clarity.

The Chairman thanked the officers involved, for their continued work.

RESOLVED:

1. That authority for the Council to grant a 999 year lease to the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) of those parts of the premises known as Campbell Square Police and Magistrates Court complex (shown edged red on the attached plan at Appendix 1 of the report) presently occupied and used by the Courts Service be given. The terms of this lease be generally consistent with the principles set out in the body of the report and have regard to the obligations of the Council under the Courts Act 2003.
2. That authority for the Council to grant a 999 year lease to Northamptonshire Police Authority of those parts of the premises described above that are presently occupied and utilised by the Police Service be given. The terms of this lease to be generally consistent with the approach and principles set out in the body of this report.
3. That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning and Regeneration to approve the precise terms of the leases (and any necessary ancillary documents) to give effect to the above.

10. FINANCE & PERFORMANCE - REPORT TO END OF JULY 2011

Councillor Bottwood, as the relevant Portfolio Holder, submitted a report. He commented that the report was in two parts – Performance and Finance. With regards to Finance, it was noted that there was a £525,000 underspend but that this would be amended through the year as the report only included information up to the end of July 2011. He also reported that there was an HRA underspend of £159,000, which was mainly accredited to savings on vacant posts.

The Chairman commented that the report was ongoing and that further updates would be bought to future Cabinet meetings due to the fact that the report only reflected the figures of the first quarter. He thanked officers for the report and congratulated staff on savings made.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

11. 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.

The meeting concluded at 18.25