



**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET
TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2009**

Held at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

J N Clarke - Chairman

Councillors D G Bell, J A Cranswick, J E Fearon, R Hetherington, and Mrs D J Mason

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Mrs D M Boote, S J Boote, C J Evans, A MacInnes, G R Mallender and B Venes

OFFICERS PRESENT:

C Bullett	Deputy Chief Executive (CB)
A Graham	Chief Executive
S Griffiths	Deputy Chief Executive (SG)
D Mitchell	Head of Partnerships and Performance
N Morton	Head of Finance
D Swaine	Head of Corporate Services
P Wigginton	Member Services Manager

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

There were no apologies for absence

39. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

40. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 October 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41. Housing Strategy 2009 - 2016

Councillor Bell presented the report of the Head of Community Shaping together with a draft strategy for the period 2009 to 2016. He explained that although there was no longer a statutory requirement to produce a new strategy it was felt desirable as housing continued to provide a central role to the Council's success growth and prosperity.

Councillor Bell referred to the three key strategic themes contained in the strategy of supply, quality and inclusion. In addition there were six priorities for the Borough as follows –

- I. Population and Economy – provide a range of affordable and market housing for a growing and ageing population

- II. Housing Condition – make best use of existing stock whilst protecting the environment
- III. Sustainable Communities – plan and deliver sustainable growth, infrastructure and affordable housing to meet local needs
- IV. Vulnerability – tackle and prevent homelessness whilst providing support to assist people to live independently in the community
- V. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Housing Issues – target help and assistance for minority groups to meet diverse needs
- VI. Environmental Sustainability – develop sustainable homes to reduce carbon footprint and increase local bio-diversity

Councillor Bell indicated that when published, it was intended to review the document every two years to take account of any changes in the economic or political environment. The document had been subject to extensive consultation and comments had been incorporated into the strategy to reflect this as well as taking account of the Council's strategies on Sustainable Communities, Equality and Diversity and also ongoing issues around the Local Development Framework. Subject to any comments from Cabinet, the strategy would be referred to Council in December for approval.

Councillor Mrs Mason supported the strategy and suggested that for clarity on page 22 of the document under the heading 'Population and economy', bullet point 4, the word 'region' be replaced by the word 'area'. Cabinet supported this amendment and asked officers to make the necessary arrangements to facilitate this.

RESOLVED that

the draft strategy and action plan be endorsed and referred to Council in December, for approval.

42. Community Hub and Associated Initiatives

Councillor Mrs Mason presented the report of the Head of Partnerships and Performance. She indicated that following the decision of the County Council to not proceed with the joint community hub and conversion of the stable block for youth facilities, the Council had investigated other options to deliver a West Bridgford Community Hub.

Councillor Mrs Mason stated that upon receipt of information from Nottingham County Council she had requested officers to investigate the availability of other locations in West Bridgford. She had been informed that due to their size, availability and possible rental they had been discounted at present. Initial discussions had been held with Nottinghamshire Police to provide an integrated customer service facility within the existing West Bridgford Police Station. As part of this initiative discussions had also been held to explore the carrying out of improvements to the West Bridgford Community Hall, which had previously been earmarked as a temporary home for the Library whilst

work was underway. Discussions had also been held to look at developing the stable block and to provide good quality public conveniences within central West Bridgford.

Commenting further Councillor Mrs Mason stated that the proposal to provide an integrated customer service centre would require the reallocation of the amount contained in the capital programme earmarked for the West Bridgford Community Hub to the development of the shared facilities at West Bridgford Police Station. At this point she invited the Chief Executive to give a presentation to Cabinet setting out the background to the initiative.

The Chief Executive outlined the history of the project, its development and the current work of the Customer Service Centre. He stressed that the concept of a 'Community Hub' facility within Rushcliffe dated from 2007 when the development of the hub and spoke model had commenced, which had been supported by a decision of Cabinet (Minute 67 January 2007 Refers).

As part of his presentation the Chief Executive set out information detailing the types and volume of enquires dealt with and the key dates in the implementation and development of the Telephone Call and Contact Centres as follows:

- 2001 - Telephone Call and Contact Centres opened
- 80% of services delivered at first point of contact
- 120,000 Calls taken per year
- 15,500 Face to face enquiries per year
- 2007 - Commenced development of hub and spoke model for future Customer services
- 2008 – Partnership with Spirita commenced delivering housing services
- 2009/10 – Still aspiration to work more closely with a public service partner

He went onto to outline the success of the rural contact points and the proposals to enhance these services as part of the community hub initiative. Furthermore, he stated that the opportunity to work in partnership with the Police had produced some key benefits which could be summarised as follows:

- Presence in West Bridgford town centre for face to face enquiries
- Improved level of service being delivered
- Improved image of front desks
- Consistent opening hours
- Efficient use of current buildings and resources

In respect of rural contact points it was anticipated that these would increase local accessibility to services thereby reducing the need to travel to West Bridgford. Furthermore a programme of enhancement for these facilities would underpin improved service accessibility through the use of new technology and the opportunity to develop partnership working and collaborative service delivery.

As a conclusion to his presentation the Chief Executive indicated that its purpose had been to bring Cabinet up to date on the key developments in respect of the community hub and associated activities. He emphasised that the development of proposals had remained consistent with the original concept of a 'Community Hub' facility within Rushcliffe. Whilst a number of factors had influenced how the proposals had developed they remained consistent with the principle of a hub and spoke model which was fundamental to the provision of excellent and accessible customer services in Rushcliffe.

Members of the Cabinet thanked the Chief Executive for his comprehensive and detailed presentation setting out the development of the Customer Service Centres and the rural contact points and the exciting and ambitious proposals for their enhancement and future development.

Councillor Cranswick supported the initiative and indicated that in his view customer service would be delivered in a more efficient way from premises provided on an equitable and economic basis with the Police. He welcomed this partnership approach and believed it would ensure customer services were provided in a way that was accessible to users. Additionally he anticipated that a collaborative approach would help to identify more efficient ways of working ensuring the best use of Council resources.

The Chairman welcomed these comments and reminded Cabinet Members that the Council's ratings for the delivery of Customer Services were high and this needed to be maintained by looking at all options for delivering services from modernised, accessible premises. Therefore as part of this work it was vital to consider an option for the continued use of the Civic Centre. By doing so this would help to ensure that any future decision was based on a properly costed business case, taking into account maintaining excellent service delivery, an acceptable customer environment, and value for money. In response to this the Chief Executive confirmed that officers would continue to look at all options and report back to Cabinet on this matter in due course.

RESOLVED that

- a) the proposal to work in partnership with Nottinghamshire Police to develop further detail and costings for an integrated customer services facility within the existing West Bridgford Police Station be agreed and to prepare a detailed comparative costing for a similar hub facility within the existing Civic Centre building.
- b) the reallocation, in principle, of the £2m in the capital programme for the West Bridgford community hub to support the development of shared customer services facilities with the Nottinghamshire Police at the West Bridgford Police Station together with further development of customer services facilities at the rural access point sites be agreed
- c) capital improvement works to the West Bridgford Community Hall, estimated at a cost of £125,000 to enable the recommencement of bookings for community activities, be allocated from capital

contingency.

- d) the development of the stable block and public conveniences be supported and full proposals be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet.

43. Impact of Civil Parking Enforcement and Use of Borough Car Parks outside West Bridgford

Councillor Fearon presented a report setting out the recommendations of the Community Development Scrutiny Group relating to the findings of the Member Panel reconvened to look at car parking. He thanked both the Panel and the Scrutiny Group for their work and input. The Community Development Scrutiny Group had considered the report of the Member Panel and had referred two options to Cabinet for consideration.

However, Councillor Fearon indicated that in order for Cabinet to consider the matter fully and make an informed decision they should consider all three options that the Community Development Scrutiny Group had originally considered as follows:

- a. *that the Bingham Town Council and Radcliffe Parish Council be requested to consider ways of providing additional long stay parking for those working in their respective areas;*
- b. *that Keyworth Parish Council be requested to reconsider whether the Village hall car park could be used to assist with the parking problems associated with South Wolds School;*
- c. *that consideration be given to imposing a two hour restriction on the row of parking bays behind Budgens in Church Drive, Keyworth car park, with focused enforcement.*

In response to questions from Councillor Fearon about the displacement of cars and also how the two hours short stay parking would be enforced in relation to the parking behind Budgens, the Deputy Chief Executive (CB) indicated that it was anticipated that the displaced parkers would park on adjacent residential streets. He added that any enforcement would be undertaken within the existing arrangements for Wardens to monitor parking, as in other areas.

Having considered all three options proposed by the Panel, Cabinet formed the view that the best way forward was to support options 'a' and 'b' with the Council looking to work in partnership with the respective Town and Parish Council to identify ways of providing additional parking.

RESOLVED that

- a) the Council continues to work in partnership with Bingham Town Council and Radcliffe on Trent Parish Council to consider ways of providing additional long stay parking for those working in their respective areas.

- b) Keyworth Parish Council be requested to reconsider whether the Village Hall car park could be used to assist with the parking problem associated with South Wolds School.

44. Local Nature Reserves

Councillor Mrs Mason presented the report of the Head of Community Shaping relating to proposals to declare two further reserves at Sharphill Wood Edwalton and Meadow Covert Edwalton as local nature reserves.

She indicated that this provided a clear indication of the Council's commitment to nature conservation and this would help to protect wildlife habitats and natural features as well as increasing people's awareness of their environment.

RESOLVED that

Orders be made declaring the land at Sharphill Wood, Edwalton and Meadow Covert, Edwalton; shown on the plans attached to the report as local nature reserve's pursuant to Section 19 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

45. Shared Transactional and Back Office Services

Councillor Cranswick presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive (CB). He referred to the Member Group, which he chaired, which had received a report at its meeting on 29 September 2009 providing an update on events since the Council had decided to withdraw from the process.

Councillor Cranswick reported that although he was disappointed that the shared transactional and back office service solution was not able to proceed, much valuable knowledge and experience had been gained throughout the process. This had been used to review service processes and the use of 'lean thinking;' would also benefit the Council in identifying and eliminating unproductive tasks. Savings had been identified as a result of using this knowledge and it was hoped that this would continue.

Councillor Cranswick indicated that at present the market was not conducive to further partnership proposals but in view of the present economic climate this would be kept under review to ensure that all appropriate opportunities were investigated.

Councillor Cranswick reported that the final direct expenditure on the project was £286,000 against a budget figure of £450,000, which in his view was value for money.

RESOLVED that

the project be formally closed.

46. Nottingham Victoria Cross Committee

Councillor Cranswick presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive (CB) indicating that at Council in September 2009, a notice of motion was considered in relation to supporting the work of the Nottingham Victoria Cross Committee. Council agreed unanimously to request Cabinet to consider supporting this worthy campaign.

Councillor Cranswick indicated that there were four men from Rushcliffe who had been awarded the Victoria Cross and they were from Bingham, Plumtree, Radcliffe on Trent and Ruddington.

All members supported this worthwhile cause and it was suggested that an amount of £3,200 be donated to the fund.

Councillor Cranswick indicated that an amount of £20,000 was required to fund the monument and that £16,000 remained to be raised. He indicated that the suggested amount had been calculated by dividing the £16,000 of funds yet to be found by 20, which was the total number of Nottinghamshire Victoria Cross recipients, and then multiplying this by four, which was the number in Rushcliffe to arrive at the amount of £3,200.

The Chairman was very pleased to support this worthwhile cause which had been agreed unanimously at Council in September (Minute 29 Refers). He indicated that other districts should be advised about how the Borough Council had calculated the figure of £3,200 and officers agreed to action this.

RESOLVED that

- (a) a donation of £3,200 be made to the Nottingham Victoria Cross Committee and the Section 151 Officer make the necessary arrangements to facilitate this; and
- (b) the relevant Council officers be requested to continue to work with the Nottingham Victoria Cross Committee to assist with its work with Parish Councils on ways to acknowledge the four recipients of the Victoria Cross from Rushcliffe.

47. Local Government Act 1972

RESOLVED that

the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item of business pursuant to section 100A (4) of the above Act on the grounds that exempt information may be disclosed as defined in paragraphs 1,3 and 5 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Act.

48. Bingham Market Place

Councillor Cranswick presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive (CB) relating to the key issues arising from the decision to terminate a licence granted to a Market trader in Bingham Market Place. The report set out the

background to the decision, the risks associated with it and the methods for enforcement action should the trader continue to trade without a licence.

Councillor Cranswick explained that the licence had been granted in May 2009 and it enabled the trader to trade on non market days from a designated area within the Market Place. He stressed that a key factor in making the decision had been the sustainability of retail outlets within the proximity of the Market Place. In view of this Cabinet should recognise that the granting of rights in respect of the occupation of council owned land could set unforeseen precedents limiting flexibility of usage and unintentionally damaging the sustainability of nearby retail outlets.

Councillor Cranswick went on to explain that the licence contained within it express provisions requiring a one month notice period for termination. This was clearly an indication that the licence arrangement was flexible in order to provide the Council, or the licence holder, with the facility to terminate it should the circumstances change.

The report indicated that when the licence was granted it was on the basis that there was not another specialist vendor selling the same product within the immediate locality. However, since the granting of the licence a shop in the Market Place had opened selling fruit and vegetables. This meant that the circumstances had changed from when the licence was originally granted.

Due to this change in circumstances the licence was reconsidered by Council officers and discussions held with the Town Council and the Cabinet Portfolio holder. As a result it was felt that continuing the licence to trade on non market days would have a detrimental effect on the shops in the Market Place and more importantly the long term sustainability of the area.

Whilst it was recognised that the decision to terminate the licence had consequences for the individual involved it had always been clear that the arrangement could be terminated by serving a months notice. A letter had been sent to the licence holder on 20 July 2009 explaining the reasons for the termination of the licence. This letter stated that the licence holders last day of trading would be 31 August 2009, however this was extended until 30 September 2009 following correspondence with the licence holder and their legal representative. Councillor Cranswick confirmed that the trader was still allowed to trade on market days as part of the Market held in the Market Place.

Having considered the detailed information set out in the report Cabinet noted that requests had been received from the traders legal representative asking the Council to reconsider its decision. Furthermore Cabinet also recognised that the trader's legal representative had submitted a petition containing 331 signatures in support of the traders licence continuing. Whilst Cabinet recognised the apparent support for the licence holder it believed that the decision to terminate the licence had been made for the right reasons and in line with the provisions for notice within the licence conditions. However once Cabinet had considered the decision to terminate the licence, Council officers should respond to the licence holders legal representative indicating that the petition had been considered as part of the Cabinet decision making process.

Having considered all the information within the report Cabinet acknowledged that the trader was a valuable contributor to the Bingham Market held every Thursday but that their continued operation on other days would affect the viability and sustainability of retail outlets trading in and around the Market place. In view of this Cabinet affirmed the decision to terminate the licence..

RESOLVED that

- a) having considered all the relevant information, this Council affirms the decision taken to terminate Mr Kerry's licence to trade at Bingham Market and supports any appropriate enforcement action that may be necessary.
- b) the Head of Corporate Services be asked to address the issue of the granting of rights in respect of the occupation of council owned property as part of the review of delegation of authority to be undertaken.

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN