

MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD 2 FEBRUARY 2009

PRESENT

Councillor Peach - Leader of the Council, Councillor Collins, Councillor M Dalton, Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Lee, Councillor Murphy, Councillor Sanders and Councillor Scott.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Goldspink and Lamb.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 15 December 2008 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Leader.

4. CABINET MEMBER UPDATES

Cabinet Members provided the following updates relating to activities within their individual portfolios:

- Bridge Street was to be the focus of the second phase of the city's Streets, Squares and Spaces project to revitalise the city centre as part of Peterborough's Public Realm Strategy
- The City Centre Action Plan consultation into proposals that could shape the development of the city centre to 2012 and beyond had been hailed a success after hundreds of residents and business people attended feedback events.
- The Chief Executive and Mayor would be visiting customer service centre staff at Bayard Place as part of a wider tour of the city council's strategic resources department
- The property design and maintenance team had achieved an internationally recognised standard for quality management. The team had to demonstrate it had excellent process management systems in place to meet regulatory requirements and ensure customer satisfaction and continual improvement
- The city council's libraries had received glowing praise in a customer satisfaction survey. More than 1,000 people who belonged to city libraries had been questioned about the level of service provided at Peterborough City Council's 10 libraries and two mobiles, and 91% had rated it as good.
- Delegates from the Japan Local Government Centre had visited Peterborough to learn about Peterborough City Council's innovative business transformation programme.
- Peterborough City Council had recently submitted plans for new recycling and energy-from-waste facilities that would produce electricity and hot water using non-recycled household waste as fuel, and reducing the amount of waste going to landfill.

- Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was taking part in a pilot initiative which would benefit people in Cambridgeshire who suffered a heart attack. The pilot, introduced in partnership with Papworth Hospital, meant that patients who dialled 999, present at the Trust's accident and emergency department with a heart attack, or who suffered a heart attack whilst undergoing treatment at the Trust, would be transferred direct to Papworth Hospital, where they would receive immediate specialist cardiac treatment. Patient recovery was expected to improve where travelling time was less than two hours.
- Dr Will Cavendish from the Department of Health was to be the key speaker at the Healthy Weight Peterborough Celebration being held at the Town Hall on 12 February. The event was also to be attended by the Mayor of Peterborough, Councillor Pat Nash. The event would focus on reducing childhood obesity in Peterborough and on encouraging people to live healthier lives.
- A new survey had been launched by the NHS aimed at finding out what people in Peterborough thought about drink. The online survey was designed to stimulate debate about alcohol-related issues, to reflect how people living in the region thought, felt and behaved around alcohol.

5. ITEMS FROM SCRUTINY PANELS

5.1 Budget 2009/10 and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2011/12

At its meeting on 15 December Cabinet had approved for consultation purposes its draft budget. Cabinet received a further report on the budget proposals detailing comments made during the consultation exercise and also received further comments tabled at the meeting.

The new medium-term financial plan proposed council tax increases of 2.5% each year for the next three years whereas the previous medium-term financial plan had assumed 1.4% annual increases. The medium-term financial plan built on the council's successful business transformation programme, the recent senior management review and the council's improved financial management capability to provide a balanced budget across a three-year period in spite of the demanding financial climate. Some variations to service policy were proposed alongside a large number of efficiencies.

The council, along with all other local authorities and businesses, had been negatively affected by the credit crunch and its consequences. In 2009/10 income was projected to reduce by £2.6m whereas increased input costs and new government legislation had added £13.8m of pressure. The strength of the business transformation programme, however, significantly mitigated the negative impact of this combination of increased costs and reduced income. By the end of 2008/09, £10m cash savings had been achieved which had been re-invested in front-line services, and the capability the council had built would drive further savings of £4.8m during 2009/10.

The budget provided the resources to continue a programme of investment in service improvement and in the facilities and infrastructure needed to enhance Peterborough as a place to live, work, do business and enjoy leisure. The budget set out proposals to invest in:

- New secondary schools in the south of the city
- A sixth-form extension to Hampton College
- Facilities for waste recycling and the retrieval of energy from waste
- Better management of capital projects
- Better and less expensive facilities management across the council's buildings estate
- A Leisure Trust to operate the council's leisure facilities in a more tax-efficient manner
- Significant operations improvements within City Services
- The migration of City Services to an arms-length management organisation (ALMO) to deliver better value-for-money for local taxpayers by growing income streams through winning more business
- The introduction of a managed service through a commercial partner for the council's information and communications technology platforms
- An extension of the flagship co-location, flexible and agile working scheme

- Efficient, integrated, customer-focused team-working in localities through a new joint approach from the Children's Services and Operations directorates
- Better deployment of front-line staff through multi-skilling within Operations

The Council Tax implications from the proposals in the report were:

For 2009/10 an increase of 2.5%

For 2010/11 an indicative increase of 2.5%

For 2011/12 an indicative increase of 2.5%

These excluded the impact of other precepting bodies, i.e. Police, Fire and Parish Councils.

CABINET RESOLVED TO:

Having regard to the consultation comments and the statutory advice detailed in the report when determining the following budget recommendations;

1. Agree that the following be approved and recommended to Council on the 25th February 2009:
 - (a) That the MTFP is set in the context of the community strategy (attached at appendix 5 of the report)
 - (b) The budget monitoring report for Period 9 as the probable outturn position for 2008/09
 - (c) The revenue budget for 2009/10, indicative figures for 2010/11 and 2011/12 (including capacity and savings proposals)
 - (d) The capital programme for 2009/10 to 2011/12, associated capital strategy and asset management plan
 - (e) The medium term financial plan for 2009/10 to 2011/12
 - (f) The council tax increase of 2.5% for 2009/10 and indicative increases of 2.5% in 2010/11 and 2011/12
 - (g) To spend at the level of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2009/10 to 2011/12
 - (h) The proposals for reserves and balances
 - (i) The Prudential Code, Treasury Management Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy
 - (i) The proposed extent of delegation, (within the 'budget and policy framework procedures rules'), to be requested from council to ensure that the financial targets in the MTFP are delivered.
 - (k) the draft Annual Accountability Agreement with the Peterborough Primary Care Trust, with the authority to finalise the agreement following Council being delegated to the Director of Adult Social Care.

REASONS

- The Council must set a lawful and balanced budget.
- The Council is required to set a Council Tax for 2009/10 within statutory prescribed timescales.
- Before setting the level of Council Tax, the Council must have agreed a balanced budget.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Alternative levels of Council Tax increase and areas for growth/savings can be considered but this must be seen in the context of the Corporate Plan and other constraints. Each 0.1% change (increase or decrease) is equivalent to approximately £54,000.

6. STRATEGIC DECISIONS

6.1 Consultation from the Secretary of State for Energy on an Application under the Electricity Act 1989, Proposed Energy Park, Land off Storeys Bar Road, Peterborough

Peterborough City Council had been consulted by the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), in relation to an application by Peterborough Renewable Energy Limited (PREL) concerning a proposed Energy Park on land at Storeys Bar Road, Peterborough.

The Council was not the determining authority for this application, but was a consultee. An application such as this under the Electricity Act 1989 was an executive function.

The report was submitted to Cabinet for decision following formal consultation on the proposal with councillors, the applicant and members of the public at an extraordinary meeting of the Council on 13th January 2009.

Over 5,000 local business and local residents within 2km of the site had been notified by letter and there had also been site notices and press releases. Over 40 statutory consultees, as well as internal officers and Departments, had been consulted, and their advice sought in relation to the application. In all there had been approximately 70 consultation responses, the majority of which supported the proposal.

Objectors had raised the following concerns:

- The potential for health problems due to the burning of domestic and commercial waste products in large quantities, 24 hours a day – leading inevitably to the discharge of significant quantities of materials of unknown toxicity;
- Increased levels of traffic and the affect of diesel vehicles on residents' health and wellbeing;
- Risks relating to untested and unproven technology,
- Risk to the environment, e.g. land and water pollution and impact on climate change;
- Concerns regarding the true potential and benefit of selling energy produced

Supporters had raised the following points:

- Opportunity to help meet waste emissions and carbon targets, helping to promote Peterborough as a centre of environmental expertise;
- Potential to establish environmental leadership and to assist the Council in meeting its emissions and carbon targets;
- Proposal offers a host location for practical engineering, technology developments and information exchange needed to promote Peterborough as a centre of environmental expertise;
- Requires little or no financial input from local or central government;
- Potential to 'pull through' other green initiatives in wind and bio-energy which would benefit the local economy;
- Proposed location is in the correct quarter of the city to create a truly green industrial environment;
- Scheme would generate hydrogen as a by-product of the process – this would enable a significant step towards PP20 of the draft LDF DPDs: the realisation of a local Hydrogen Economy and support for distributed energy installations;
- Proposed scheme would reduce levels of waste going into landfill;
- Proposal would create employment opportunities and result in improvements to the local cycleway infrastructure;
- Proposal is unique in that it includes many innovative technologies to address environmental concerns. It will extract plastics for recycling which will reduce dioxin emissions and will include plasma enhanced melters which would atomise the waste normally produced by incinerators, turning it into useful material which can be reused.
- Production of power which would be from a genuine renewable source.

CABINET RESOLVED TO:

Inform the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change that the City Council does not object to the application made by PREL for an Energy park at Storey's Bar Road subject to:

1. the matters set out in Appendix D (annex 1) to the report being satisfactorily resolved;
2. the conditions in Appendix E to the report being attached to any permissions granted
3. a Section 106 obligation being agreed as part of any permission granted;
4. an independent review being commissioned of the applicant's traffic study and proposed traffic mitigation measures in the light of the significant concerns expressed during consultation;
5. the Secretary of State be advised that the highway contribution sought by the city council as part of the S106 obligation as contained in Appendix F to the report is £2000 per vehicle trip proposed, irrespective of the type of vehicle; and
6. given the significant concerns expressed, that the council's Planning, Transport and Legal officers clarify and resolve any ambiguities in the language used in the conditions set out in Appendix E to the report before the council's view is submitted to the Secretary of State.

Peterborough City Council will work expeditiously with the applicant to resolve the issues at Appendix D, but requires the assurance of conditions being applied to any permission in order to be able to protect local residents' amenity and interests and to align with the city's proposed Environmental Capital status.

REASONS

As Local Planning Authority, the recommendations were made in line with national, emerging regional, and adopted local planning policy. They also took into account the views expressed by the public at Council on 13 January 2009.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Alternative options would be to

- Object to the application on the basis of lack of information and policy conflicts (as outlined in Appendix D of the report to Council), or
- Recommend unconditional approval

Neither alternative course could be recommended having assessed the application under planning law and policy. A conditional recommendation was proposed due to the nature and extent of the planning issues that remained outstanding, as set out in Appendix D (Annex 1) to the report.

7. MONITORING ITEMS

Cabinet received a report following the Commission for Social Care Inspection's (CSCI) assessment of adult social care services in 2007-08, along with an action plan that had been developed to support key areas for development.

Social care services for adults were deemed to be "good" at delivering outcomes with "promising" capacity for improvement, and retained a two star overall judgement.

CABINET RESOLVED TO:

1. Note the Commission for Social Care Inspection's Performance Assessment letter and summary of Adult Social Care; and
2. Endorse the action plan that has been developed to support the key areas for development.

REASONS

The CSCI's performance assessment summary was required to be submitted to an open meeting of the authority.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The report was presented for monitoring purposes.

Meeting closed at 12.20 p.m.

Chair.....

Date.....