

CABINET27 OCTOBER 2010

Present:- Councillor N R Stock (Chairman)!Councillor P Halliday (Finance)!Councillor G V Guglielmi (Planning)!Councillor S R Henderson (Portfolio Holder)!Councillor J M Hughes (Portfolio Holder)!Councillor S S Mayzes (Portfolio Holder)!Councillor L A McWilliams (Portfolio Holder)!Councillor N W Turner (Portfolio Holder)!Councillor G F Watling (Portfolio Holder)

Also Present:- Councillors Goggin, Talbot

In Attendance:- Acting Management Board Member (MBK), Head of Financial Services (except items 74-76), Head of Legal and Monitoring Officer, Assistant Head of Legal Services (Democratic Services), Project Manager, Communications and Public Relations Manager.

Also in Attendance:- Mr Ian Davidson

(Noon - 12.24 p.m.)

74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Candy and S S Mayzes.

75. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MENTIONED MINUTES

The minutes of the public meeting of the Cabinet held on 29 September 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the substitution of the word "Wednesday" for the word "Monday" in minute 69.

76. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE LEADER

(1) New Chief Executive

The Executive Leader (Councillor Stock) welcomed to the meeting Mr Ian Davidson who, at the last meeting of the Council had been appointed Chief Executive Designate with effect from 1 December 2010 and would formally take up his role as Chief Executive on 4 January 2011.

(2) Executive Decisions List

The Executive Leader announced that he had requested the Chief Executive to consider whether it would be possible for the Executive Decisions List to be produced earlier to speed-up the decision-making process. The Chief Executive had advised that the list could be produced to go out on Thursdays, with the call-in period then expiring at midnight the following Thursday. This would be done from today's meeting and would enable Executive decisions to come into effect four days earlier than previously. All Councillors and staff would be notified of the change.

77. CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) Spending Review 2010

The Finance Portfolio Holder (Councillor Halliday) reported that on 20 October the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced the outcomes of the Spending Review 2010.

The headline figures in relation to Local Authorities were for average reductions in grant funding in real terms of 7.25% in each of the next four years. However, the Spending Review significantly front-loaded the reductions in 2011/12.

He reported that there were still some questions about the total amount of grant that would be available for distribution:-

What amount, if any, would be top-sliced from the headline grant figures?

What would be the impact on re-distribution of rolling an additional £4 billion of revenue grants in the formula grant?

What impact would data changes for areas such as coast protection and concessionary fares have on the distribution of grant?

Those questions would only be answered once the detailed funding figures were released to all individual Local Authorities. That was expected to be at the end of November/beginning of December.

The Cabinet were aware that the Government had also confirmed as part of the Spending Review that they would fund a Council Tax freeze in 2011/12. The additional grant would fund the difference between a 0% and a 2.5% Council Tax rise in 2011/12 in each of the four years.

In the meantime and being mindful of those outstanding questions, an assessment had been made of the likely impact on the Council's budget taking into account the headline grant reductions and assuming a 0% tax rise in 2011/12 but with Government funding and that there will continue to be upward pressure in some areas of budget.

On that basis the assessed funding gap was between £3 million to £5 million over the four years of the Spending Review. That was consistent with the forecast set out in the Initial Financial Strategy and did not deviate the Council from the approach adopted to address the reductions. To that end the Finance Portfolio Holder reported that the Council had:-

- Set up an austerity reserve to support the budget in 2011/12 and beyond;
- Undertaken detailed budget reviews to identify reductions from the 2010/11 budget.

That had delivered £625,000 in 2010/11 with a further £460,000 ongoing.

- Formulated longer-term actions to address both the funding gap and strengthen the structure and operation of the Council and those would shortly be presented in the Delivery Plan. The Spending Review announced a number of other headlines alongside details of reduction in Local Government funding. Further details were anticipated over the coming weeks. However, it was clear that the Council would be facing some very difficult decisions sooner rather than later about staffing levels and which Services the Council could afford to deliver and to what standard. All Members would need to engage in those discussions so that actions could be taken to ensure that the Council could remain financially stable over the longer-term.

(3) Member Training

The Housing Portfolio Holder Councillor Henderson and the Environment Portfolio Holder Councillor McWilliams commented on recent Member training which had been held and

had been most beneficial.

78. PROPOSED LEASE OF DOVERCOURT SKATING RINK AND CLUBHOUSE

The Cabinet had before them a confidential report which sought their approval to enter into a seven year lease with the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes Grand Lodge of England (RAOB) for the Dovercourt Skating Rink and Clubhouse.

Members had also had circulated to them an Addendum to the Report of the Head of Leisure Services and Acting Head of Corporate Performance which provided them with additional information about the proposed Community use of the site by the ROAB and informed them of an additional option for the future of the site following receipt of proposals from a local businessman.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting Members had circulated to them a document which contained a public executive summary of both the confidential report and confidential addendum report as referred to above.

The Cabinet gave consideration to the alternative proposal which had been received and took into account of advice on such proposal.

It was moved by Councillor Stock, seconded by Councillor Halliday and:-

RESOLVED - (a) That the Dovercourt Skating Rink and Clubhouse be leased to the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes Grand Lodge of England at an initial annual rent of £2,888 for a period of seven years with rent reviews every three years based upon the open market rental value at the time of the review.

(b) That the Head of Leisure Services in consultation with the Head of Legal Services be authorised to prepare the lease of the site on the terms as set out in the Joint Report of the Head of Leisure Services and Acting Head of Corporate Performance and on such other terms and conditions that the Head of Legal Services considers necessary.

Chairman