

CABINET26 JANUARY 2011

Present:- Councillor S Candy (Community, Partnerships and Renewal)!Councillor G V Guglielmi (Planning)!Councillor P Halliday (Finance)!Councillor S R Henderson (Housing)!Councillor M J Hughes (Benefits and Revenues)!Councillor S S Mayzes (Leisure)!Councillor L A McWilliams (Environment)!Councillor N R Stock (Executive Leader)!Councillor N W Turner (Technical Services)

Also Present:- Councillors Bucke, Callender, Chapman, De-Vaux Balbirnie, Fawcett, Goggin, P B Honeywood (except items 115 (part) - 123), Mitchell (except items 122 and 123), Johnson (except items 120 (part) - 123), McLeod, Talbot.

In Attendance:- Chief Executive, Acting Management Board Member (DA), Acting Management Board Member (MBK), Head of Financial Services, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, Assistant Head of Legal Services (Democratic Services), Communications and Public Relations Manager.

(Noon - 1.22 p.m.)

110. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor Watling.

111. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15 December 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

112. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE EXECUTIVE LEADERIMPROVEMENT EAST FUNDING

The Executive Leader (Councillor Stock) announced that on 24 January 2011 the Council had received notification that it had been successful in obtaining funding of £50,000 from Improvement East to fund the employment of a Change Manager.

The Change Manager would be employed for a fixed term to work with the Management Team and Heads of Service to undertake a range of projects and Fundamental Service Reviews across the Council's services and to have a key role in supporting the delivery of efficiencies and budget reductions.

113. CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) Free Parking Scheme

The Deputy Executive Leader (Councillor Halliday) announced that from today the Council's free parking in the afternoon scheme would be extended from 2.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. to provide free evening parking. Wellington Road car park, Harwich was also to be included in the scheme for the first time.

(2) Disabled Facilities Grant

The Environment Portfolio Holder (Councillor McWilliams) reported that the Department for Communities and Local Government had announced details of the allocation of Disabled Facilities Grant for the financial year 2011/12.

In 2011/12 there was £180m available to be distributed as Disabled Facilities Grant to Local Authorities – £11m more than was available in 2010/11. All Local Authorities would, as a minimum, receive what they were allocated in 2010/11. The extra £11 million would be shared between the Local Authorities using a relative needs weighted index developed by the Building Research Establishment.

114. THE RESPONSE TO THE CABINET ON THE REVISED FINANCIAL STRATEGY FOR 2011/12 AND BEYOND AND INITIAL BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR A REVISED BUDGET 2010/11 AND ORIGINAL BUDGET FOR 2011/12 BY THE CORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Cabinet had before them a report which provided them with feedback on the views of the Corporate Management Committee on the Revised Financial Strategy for 2011/12 and Beyond and Initial Budget Proposals for a Revised Budget for 2010/11 and Original Budget for 2011/12.

Having regard to the comments of the Corporate Management Committee:-

It was moved by Councillor Halliday, seconded by Councillor N W Turner and:-

RESOLVED – That the responses of the Finance Portfolio Holder to the comments of the Corporate Management Committee, as set out in Appendix 'A' to item A.1 of the Reference from the Corporate Management Committee, be agreed subject to the addition of the following words to the response to comment number 2:- “Cabinet asks the Community Leadership and Partnerships Committee to identify the real need of voluntary organisations in the District.”

115. FINAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12

The Cabinet considered a report which sought their approval of the final budget proposals for 2011/12 (including the Council Tax proposals) for recommendation to Council on 8 February 2011.

The Finance Portfolio Holder (Councillor Halliday) addressed the Cabinet in respect of the budget proposals and, in particular, in relation to reduced expenditure. Members extended their thanks to Karen Neath, Head of Financial Services and her team for the work which they had undertaken.

Members were made aware that the proposed charge for change of beach hut ownership should read £300 plus VAT and the charge for the use of a grave or cremated remains plot – second internment should read £540.

Councillor Candy, during her speech on the budget proposals, declared an interest as a Director of Tendring Regeneration Limited.

To enable the Cabinet's final proposals to be submitted to the meeting of the Council to be held on 8 February 2011:-

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

RESOLVED – (a) That having considered the comments from the Corporate Management Committee and responses from the budget consultation activities undertaken, Cabinet makes the following final budget proposals to Council (based on a 0.5% reduction in a Band D Council Tax for District services):-

(i) That the detailed budgets as per the Cabinet's Initial Budget Proposals of 15 December 2010 as amended by the budget changes set out in Appendix 'A' to item A.2 of the Report of the Head of Financial Services be approved, which provide for a total net budget for 2011/12 of £18.787m and revised net budget for 2010/11 of £21.924m and a Capital Programme totalling £6.650m for 2011/12.

(ii) That Council agrees and formally approves:-

(a) The specific recommendations, calculations and other matters in respect of the Council's requirements, special expenses and Parish/Town Council precepts as set out in Appendix 'C' to the above report (this includes but is not limited to the contrary resolution in paragraph (b) of that Appendix).

(b) The Council Tax for District and Parish/Town Councils as set out in Appendix 'E' of the above report.

(iii) That approval be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Leader to incur costs against the Fit for Purpose budget to support actions related to the implementation of organisation and service reviews.

(b) That if the financial position changes prior to Council considering the budget on 8 February 2011, any change in funding is set against the Fit for Purpose budget in 2011/12.

(c) That in consultation with the Executive Leader and the Finance Portfolio Holder, the Head of Financial Services reports directly to Council in respect of the formal draft resolutions necessary to implement the Cabinet's budget proposals together with any late information or notifications received from Communities and Local Government etc. as may necessarily affect the budget.

(d) That the Independent Remuneration Panel budget be reduced to £500 per year and that the Panel be requested to make recommendations on a four year basis to cover a whole electoral cycle.

(e) That one-off funding of up to £500k on a one-off basis be earmarked within the Regeneration and Communities budget to create a Big Society Fund whereby local voluntary groups, organisations, schools, Town and Parish Councils and neighbourhood communities are able to bid for funds to enable them to work with the Council to deliver a direct saving (on a one-off or ongoing basis) or a measurable significant community project.

Officers are therefore asked to prepare a proposal for the operation of the Scheme in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder and the Community, Partnerships and Renewal Portfolio Holder and furthermore prepare a briefing to Cabinet on the Social Impact Bonds being proposed by Central Government.

116. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET PROPOSALS - REVISED BUDGET 2010/11 AND ORIGINAL BUDGET 2011/12

The Cabinet's approval was sought in respect of:-

- (i) A revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2010/11
- (ii) An original HRA budget for 2011/12
- (iii) The level of rents and fees and charges for 2011/12

Having considered the information submitted:-

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

RESOLVED - (a) That the 2011/12 Scale of Charges, shown in the VAT exclusive column of Appendix 'B' to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing Services and Head of Financial Services, be approved and subject to any wider changes being made by Essex County Council, any amendments required to the charge for supporting people be delegated to the Head of Housing Services in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.

(b) That the level of rents for 2011/12, based on an increase in the average rent of 7.07% with no tenant bearing an increase of more than the limit set out in the Government's rent setting policy of RPI (4.6%) + 0.5% plus £2.00 per week, be approved.

(c) That the Housing Revenue Account revised estimates for 2010/11 and original estimates for 2011/12, as set out in Appendix 'C' to the aforementioned report, be approved and that the corporate financial system be amended accordingly to reflect those changes together with any amendments arising from the new International Financial Reporting requirements.

(d) That when the specific subsidy determination relating to supported borrowing for 2011/12 is issued by the Government, if the financial position is more or less advantageous to the Council then any increase or decrease is adjusted against the transfer to/from HRA Balances and the HRA Capital Programme is adjusted accordingly in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.

(e) That when the final supporting people grant is issued by Essex County Council, if the financial position is less advantageous to the Council then any decrease is adjusted against the transfer to/from HRA Balances to enable a balanced budget to be set with a review of the service provision including fees and charges to be undertaken in 2011.

117. CAPITAL STRATEGY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2011/12

The Cabinet considered the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan for 2011/12 for submission to Council.

To enable the Plan to be considered by the Council:-

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

RECOMMENDED – That the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan 2011/12, attached as Appendix 'A' to item A.4 of the Joint Report of the Head of Financial Services and Acting Head of Corporate Performance, be approved.

118. PROPOSED RENEWAL OF LEASE: GOLF GREEN HALL, GOLF GREEN ROAD, JAYWICK

The Cabinet considered the renewal of the existing lease to the Trustees of Golf Green Hall, Golf Green Road, Jaywick for a new 21 year term for continued use as a public hall.

The Leisure Portfolio Holder (Councillor S S Mayzes) informed the meeting that Part 2.1 of the report should have read "The Corporate Plan identifies the need to work in partnership with local organisations."

Having considered the information submitted:-

It was moved by Councillor S S Mayzes, seconded by Councillor Stock and:-

RESOLVED – That, subject to consideration of terms later in the meeting, the lease of Golf Green Hall be renewed for a period of 21 years.

119. PROPOSALS FOR REVISED ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROVISION OF ON AND OFF STREET CAR PARKING (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Cabinet considered a report to determine revised arrangements for the provision of both on and off street car parking administration following the termination of the existing Agency arrangement with Essex County Council on 31 March 2011 in respect of on street parking.

To enable revised arrangements to proceed:-

It was moved by Councillor N W Turner, seconded by Councillor Stock and:-

RESOLVED – ((a) That the Technical Services Portfolio Holder and an appropriate Officer attend the shadow board meeting for the Parking Partnership and seek acceptable terms for joining the Partnership.

(b) That subject to acceptable terms being agreed authority be delegated to the Head of Technical and Procurement Services, Head of Financial Services and Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Executive Leader to agree the terms and conditions of the final agreement.

120. POTENTIAL LEASE OF LAND AT GAS HOUSE QUAY, HARWICH (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Cabinet considered the principle of leasing Council owned land at Gas House Quay, Harwich either as a whole or in two parts.

Members had submitted to them as Appendix 'B' to item A.7 of the Report of the Acting Head of Corporate Performance a letter which had been received from the High Steward of Harwich. The Cabinet were also aware of a petition which had been received calling on the Council to create a car park at Gas House Quay. The full petition was available at the meeting.

The Executive Leader expressed his disappointment that the confidential report on this matter, to be considered later in the meeting, had been leaked to the press.

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

RESOLVED – That, having considered both correspondence received from the High Steward of Harwich and the petition, the land be let for commercial use, subject to consideration of terms later in the meeting.

121. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Chairman