

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

**Meeting held at Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City
on 17 January 2006**

Minutes

PRESENT: *Councillors F.J. Smith (Chairman), Mrs A.G. Ashley, W.M. Davidson, Tricia Gibbs, T.W. Hone and R.A.C. Thake.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Chief Executive, Strategic Director of Financial and Regulatory Services, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Leisure & Environmental Services, Local Development Framework Manager, Legal and Democratic Manager, Housing Needs Manager, Planning Officer, Project Manager and Committee and Member Services Officer.*

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors M.E. Paterson (Chairman of Letchworth Committee) and David Kearns (Letchworth Grange Ward Member).

148. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I.J. Knighton and A.D.Young.

149. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 20 December 2005 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

150. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman of Cabinet advised the meeting that:

- agenda items 10 and 11 had been withdrawn;
- there was an additional item entitled 'North Hertfordshire District Council's Public Conveniences';
- there was an addendum to agenda item 7 entitled 'The Draft East of England Plan' to be considered.

151. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport, Councillor R.A.C. Thake, declared a personal interest in agenda item number 7, as he lived in the area that could be affected by the proposals in the Draft East of England Plan.

152. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No items were presented for consideration by Cabinet under public participation.

153. ITEMS REFERRED FROM COMMITTEES

There were no items referred from committees.

154. REGIONAL AND STRATEGIC PLANNING ISSUES

The following document was appended to the report:
Appendix A – Comments on the London Luton Airport Master Plan – Project 2030.

The following addendum, to the report, was tabled at the meeting:
The Draft East of England Plan.

The Local Development Framework Manager then presented the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control that updated Cabinet about the positions regarding:

- West of the A1(M) at Stevenage;
- The draft East of England Plan;
- Growth Area Liaison for the Luton conurbation;
- Luton & Dunstable Northern Bypasses;
- London Luton Airport and Stansted Airport.

The Local Development Framework Manager advised Cabinet that at 4.1 of the report, 'West of the A (M) at Stevenage', the deadline for the Section 106 agreement had been put back to 20 April 2006, with the agreement of the Secretary of State. He further added that at 4.10 of the report, 'Luton Northern Bypass', a Stakeholder meeting would be arranged for week commencing 20 February 2006 and requested that Members let him know if they wished to attend the meeting by 18 January 2006.

The Planning Officer introduced Appendix A to the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control that advised Cabinet about North Hertfordshire District Council's proposed comments on the London Luton Airport Master Plan – Project 2030.

During a discussion that took place, the following comments were made:

- Cabinet supported the view that Option D as set out in of the Air Transport White Paper was not a replacement runway, but in effect a second runway;
- Concern was expressed at the increase in air noise that would result from the proposals for the residents of North Hertfordshire;
- Cabinet was advised that there was not statutory noise control on night flying at Luton Airport as it was not a designated airport.

The Local Development Framework Manager presented an addendum to the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control that updated Cabinet about the Draft East of England Plan and drew Cabinet's attention to paragraph 5 of the addendum.

During a discussion that took place regarding the addendum, the following comments were made:

- Concern was expressed at the potential effect the proposed housing development would cause to Gosmore and to Priory ward;
- That the area to the south west of Hitchin was of a particularly high quality and was also greenbelt land;
- That the scale of the proposal to build 8,000 dwellings to the south west of Hitchin would equate to more than double the level currently proposed of 3,600 dwellings West of the A1(M) at Stevenage;
- That whilst the traffic congestion in Hitchin was recognised as a major problem, a bypass should not come at the expense of thousands of additional dwellings.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the view that major growth of Hitchin should not be allowed as a reason to fund a Southwestern bypass for the town be agreed;
- (2) That in Appendix A, the following words be deleted

page 12 'Air Transport White Paper' second paragraph, second sentence - the word 'full-length' ;

page 14 the paragraph that commenced 'Another concern', - the whole of the second sentence

And that the following words be inserted:

'If the development at West of Stevenage is built, this would create more congestion on the A1(M) around Stevenage';

page 18 at 'Housing', the sentence that commenced 'North Hertfordshire',

And that the following words be inserted:

'North Hertfordshire is already potentially having to accommodate at least 2,600 extra dwellings in its Green Belt to support the growth of Stevenage'.

- (3) That the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport and the relevant officers review the wording of Appendix A and make any other appropriate alterations to the text;
- (4) That, subject to the amendments, officers be authorised to respond to the London Luton Master Plan - Project 2030 as set out in the report and Appendix A to the report.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure that the views of the Council on matter 8J – Stevenage Sub-Area, were taken into account by the Panel at the Examination in Public of the East of England Plan;
- (2) To ensure that the views of the Council on the London Luton Airport Master Plan were taken into account by the airport operator.

155. REVIEW OF GATEWAY ALLOCATION SCHEME (HOUSING) PLAN

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Health presented a report of The Head of Housing and Environmental Health that sought endorsement for minor changes to the Gateway Allocation Scheme. The Scheme had been in operation for almost a year and had been working well. The proposed changes would ensure that the scheme operated as efficiently as possible.

The following documents were appended to the report:
Appendix 1 – Table of proposed changes;
Background Paper – The Gateway Allocation Scheme.

The Housing Needs Manager advised Cabinet that the report had been presented to the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 10 January 2006 and that the subsequent comments had been incorporated into Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That the proposed changes attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION: To ensure that any ambiguous areas were clarified, to avoid confusion and possible challenge.

156. WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS TO ENGAGE GROUNDWORK HERTFORDSHIRE

The Head of Housing and Environmental Health presented a report that sought approval for a single tender to engage Groundwork Hertfordshire to develop and manage enhancements to play and outdoor youth provision on the Grange Estate in Letchworth.

The Head of Housing and Environmental Health also sought approval for a waiver of contract standing orders to allow Groundwork Hertfordshire to use their procurement procedures in engaging sub-contractors to carry out the works, rather than this Council's. He further added that this was a partnership project between North Hertfordshire Homes (NHH) and North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC).

The following document was appended to the report:
Appendix 1 - Draft Project Scope.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That under Standing Order 6.1, the use of a single tender to engage the services of Groundwork Hertfordshire be endorsed;
- (2) That, subject to the conditions listed at 6.4 in this report, under Standing Order 10.2 (d), the requirement to abide by paragraph 9 of the CSO's be waived and the approved procurement procedures of Groundwork Hertfordshire be used instead.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To provide the framework for partnership working with NHH.
- (2) To secure significant external funding for the provision of a Community Park.
- (3) To meet the Council's strategic objective to: 'Promote first class leisure and cultural facilities to contribute to healthy living for all our citizens'.

157. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

158. ASSET STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

159. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 7 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

160. REVENUES – COUNCIL TAX, BUSINESS RATES & SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE OFFS

RESOLVED: That the accounts detailed in Appendix 1 be written off as irrecoverable.

161. NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

RESOLVED: That the recommendations contained at paragraph 8 of the report of the Head of Leisure and Environmental Services be approved.

The meeting ended at 8.25 p.m.

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Chairman