

CABINET

THURSDAY, 19 JULY 2018 - 2.00 PM



PRESENT: Councillor C Seaton (Chairman), Councillor D Oliver (Vice-Chairman), Councillor M Buckton, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor A Hay, Councillor D Laws, Councillor D Mason and Councillor P Murphy

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Mrs S Bligh, G Booth, Mrs J French, Mrs K Mayor and W Sutton

CAB5/18 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 14 June 2018 were confirmed and signed; subject to the following amendment that Minute CAB2/18 should read “that events are run four times a year”.

CAB6/18 HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Members considered the Housing Enforcement Policy presented by Councillor Mrs Laws.

Cabinet AGREED:

- **To approve the Council Housing Enforcement Policy set out in Appendix A of the Agenda Report.**
- **To refer the policy to Council for adoption.**

CAB7/18 CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT POLICY

Members considered the Corporate Enforcement Policy presented by Councillor Mrs Hay.

Cabinet AGREED to:

- **Approve the Council’s Corporate Enforcement Policy set out in Appendix A of the Agenda Report.**
- **Refer the policy to Council for adoption.**

CAB8/18 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Members considered the report on the update of Economic Development in Fenland and the amended recommendations presented by Councillor Mason.

The amended recommendations were:

- **Approve the referral of this matter to Council’s Overview & Scrutiny Panel, to conduct a review into the Economic Development function to help shape & inform the future Economic Development objectives, scope and the method of delivery.**
- **That Cabinet endorse the commitment of the existing staffing budget of £47,000 and the additional £43,000 (totalling £90,000) as sought in the report to provide temporary staffing**

resources to supplement the remaining 0.5FTE as currently employed, until the conclusion of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel Review and such time as a future proposal has been agreed by Cabinet and new resourcing proposals are in place.

Councillor Hay seconded the amended recommendations.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Oliver stated that the amendment does not say if Overview & Scrutiny would be looking to seek or identify additional funding if they feel that additional officers are required, but just says that they will review it. If there is a cost implication members need to know where that funding will come from and how much it would be. Councillor Seaton agreed it was a valid point as it was something not yet agreed.
- Councillor Buckton asked what timescale will be set for the Overview & Scrutiny review. Councillor Mason advised that it does not actually say in the report, but envisaged the end being January 2019; it was hoped to bring it forward, but it is still at the strategic assessment stage, so aiming for six months. Councillor Buckton said that if we are seeking to employ temporary staff, once the advertising and selection of someone is put in place, if it is only six months, then that does not leave any time and it will be a very temporary contract.
- Councillor Seaton commented that members had not discussed fully about taking on temporary staff, and did not support taking the second recommendation forward.

Following a vote, the majority of members did not support approval of the amended second recommendation.

Cabinet AGREED to approve the referral of Economic Development Activity in Fenland to the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Panel, to conduct a review into the Economic Development function to help shape and inform the future Economic Development objectives, scope and the method of delivery.

CAB9/18 PARISH STREET LIGHTING

Members considered the Parish Street Lighting report presented by Councillor Mrs Hay, with revised recommendations.

The amended recommendations were:

- Cabinet endorse the proposal for FDC to provide management and street lighting repair & maintenance services to those Parish Councils that agree to the arrangements as outlined in this report with effect from 1 August 2018.
- Parish Councils are to be responsible for funding repairs and maintenance costs during the term of the agreement.
- FDC agree to fund energy costs for a period of 12 months starting from 1 August 2018. Those costs will be covered in full for those Parish Councils agreeing to FDC managing their Parish street lights. For those Parishes who assume responsibility for their own Parish street lighting a grant will be paid by FDC of either the estimated cost of annual energy as presented to the Parish in their 'Parish Estimate' or the actual cost paid by the Parish Council whichever is the lesser amount. Where based on the FDC estimate the figure will be proportioned for part year

as appropriate.

- Amended Service Level Agreements will be prepared taking into account the above with effect from 1 August 2018.
- Authority to implement the proposals with the Parish Councils is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Corporate Director Growth and Infrastructure, including updated Service Level Agreement and transfer arrangements for those Parishes opting out.

Councillor Gavin Booth was invited to address the Cabinet. He stated this has been a long running issue and the parishes are annoyed with the way the whole situation has occurred. Fundamentally there are some issues that have not yet been discussed or acknowledged going back to 1974 wherein the assets were divided between the rural and district councils. Now we have this report coming to Cabinet that has not been discussed with the whole Council. The whole issue is around equitability, as parishioners are now going to have to pay for district council lighting stock through Council Tax as well as their own parish lighting stock through precepts. There is anger that everything is being foisted on the Parish Councils to pay because there is no cap on precept setting. By going ahead with this proposal, we are doing a disservice to those parishes and villages of this district and we are here to represent the whole of Fenland to make sure the whole of Fenland gets a good deal.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Mrs Hay made a statement in response to Councillor Booth. Regarding the issue of 1974, lights were transferred to the parishes as prescribed by legislation that abolished the urban and rural councils. Most Parish Councils have accepted that they are responsible for the assets on their register.

Cabinet AGREED that:

- **The proposal for FDC to provide management and street lighting repair and maintenance services to those Parish Councils that agree to the arrangements as outlined in this report with effect from 1 August 2018 be endorsed.**
- **Parish Councils are to be responsible for funding repairs and maintenance costs during the term of the agreement.**
- **FDC to fund energy costs for a period of 12 months starting from 1 August 2018. Those costs will be covered in full for those Parish Councils agreeing to FDC managing their Parish street lights. For those Parishes who assume responsibility for their own Parish street lighting a grant will be paid by FDC of either the estimated cost of annual energy as presented to the Parish in their 'Parish Estimate' or the actual cost paid by the Parish Council whichever is the lesser amount. Where based on the FDC estimate the figure will be proportioned for part year as appropriate.**
- **Amended Service Level Agreements be prepared taking into account the above with effect from 1 August 2018.**

- **Authority to implement the proposals with the Parish Councils is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Corporate Director Growth and Infrastructure, including updated Service Level Agreements and transfer arrangements for those Parishes opting out.**

CAB10/18 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Members considered the Statement of Community Involvement presented by Councillor Mrs Laws.

Cabinet AGREED to adopt the Statement of Community Involvement.

CAB11/18 CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

Members considered the Capital Programme update presented by Councillor Mrs Hay.

Cabinet APPROVED the updated capital programme and funding schedule at Appendix A of the Report.

CAB12/18 CABINET DRAFT FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Seaton presented the draft Cabinet Forward Plan for information.

2.35 pm

Chairman