

Minutes

Cabinet



1st September 2008

Present:

Cabinet Members	Portfolio	Present
Councillor G Butland	Leader	Yes
Councillor N R H O Harley	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Culture & Leisure	Yes
Councillor Mrs J C Beavis	Customers & Communication	Yes
Councillor M C M Lager	Efficiency & Resources	Yes
Councillor Mrs J W Schmitt	Communities & Housing	Yes
Councillor R G Walters	Environment and Sustainability	Yes

Deputy Cabinet Members	Portfolio	Present
Councillor N G McCrea	Leader's Portfolio	Apologies
Councillor T S Wilkinson	Enterprise, Culture & Leisure	Apologies
Councillor D L Bebb	Customers & Communication	Yes
Councillor J McKee	Efficiency & Resources	Yes
Councillor Mrs E Edey	Communities & Housing	Yes
Councillor R G S Mitchell	Environment and Sustainability	Yes

The following Councillors were also present as invitees of the Leader

Councillor M G Gage, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Leader of Halstead Residents' Association

Councillor E R Lynch, Deputy Leader of the Labour Group (on behalf of Councillor Dr R L Evans)

Councillors M Dunn and D Mann were also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R J Bolton, Chairman of Halstead Local Committee; Dr R L Evans, Leader of the Labour Group; T J W Foster, Chairman of Witham Local Committee; and S M Walsh, Chairman of Braintree Local Committee.

52 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared.

53 **MINUTES**

DECISION: That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7th July 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader, subject to decision (2) at Minute 46, Chief Executive's report being amended as follows: -

- (2) That authority be delegated to Councillors Harley and Lager to agree the transfer of land and buildings at the John Bramston Sports Centre from Bramston School to Braintree District Council, and to re-negotiate a joint use agreement.

54 **QUESTION TIME**

There was no questions asked or statements made.

55 **ESSEX CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN**

Philippa Bull, Locality Group Manager for Mid Essex, Team Around the School, Child and Community (TASCC), Essex County Council presented the Plan for children and young people up to the age of 25, the links within the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and LAA2, and the aim to deliver locally through the Braintree Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP). The 'refreshed' Plan for 2006-09 displays progress against targets and additional new Priorities, for delivery with partners across Essex. Through the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) a 'scorecard' is produced for Essex and Braintree, to display what stage the Plan is at, with key areas for Braintree on: -

- supporting children's mental health and well-being, including school attendances
- achieving economic well-being, including those not in education, employment or training (NEET statistics)
- the ability to engage in education
- supporting parents and families
- funding and commissioning objectives, i.e. out of school activities
- taking young people beyond school

In response to the methodology of the scorecard, Ms Bull explained the process, close working with partner organisations, and the sharing of outcomes. Queries were addressed on unauthorised absences, relevant strategies, and coding that allows for educational functions, i.e. exams and visits. Earlier sessions with partners will be drawn together (from May/June) to focus and prioritise on future targets, e.g. vulnerable groups.

Cabinet noted that the next scorecard results are due to be published, and will be sent to the Chief Executive.

DECISION: That the Essex Children and Young People's Plan be adopted.

56 ****HOUSING AND PLANNING GRANT 2008/09**

Councillor Harley, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Culture and Leisure presented proposals for the expenditure of the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant 2008/09, including the Local Development Framework, planning, housing, enforcement and rural affairs.

The Leader requested that a report is presented to the next Cabinet meeting on 9th October 2008 regarding the additional enforcement resources and their expected output.

In response to a query whether the allocation to Development Control was sufficient to attract appropriate staff, the Cabinet Member advised that the allocation can be revisited, if necessary.

DECISION: That the proposed expenditure as set out in the report be approved.

ACTION POINT: That a report is made to 9th October 2008 Cabinet meeting on the expected output following recruitment of additional resources in enforcement.

57 **ASSET MANAGEMENT – 2008/09 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Councillor Lager, Cabinet Member for Efficiency and Resources, presented the Plan and its findings, and advised of intentions to produce the report earlier in 2009/10. Cabinet noted the corporate approach to property, the avoidance of loan costs, the current high cost of energy, and to focus on sustainability and the environment.

DECISION: That the 2008/09 Asset Management Plan be approved.

58 **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE FOR APRIL – JUNE 2008**

Cabinet received performance reports for the first quarter of the financial year 2008/09, including the emphasis to look forward, corrective actions, the increase in recycling initiatives, additional data on planning appeals, and the risks to income due to the current economic downturn affecting development, with fewer planning applications and building inspections.

DECISION: That the Quarterly Performance report for April – June 2008 be endorsed.

59 **BUDGET CONSULTATION PROCESS 2009/10**

Cabinet considered the proposed process and timetable for consultation on the Council's priorities, in preparation for the setting of budget, council tax and housing rent levels for 2009/10.

DECISION: That the process and timetable on the Budget Consultation 2009/10 be approved.

60 **BRAINTREE DISTRICT LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

Cabinet received the proposals for the future operation and management of the Braintree District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), formerly Partners and Communities Together (PACT), and the associated restructure. A consultation process with each of the Partnership Boards, the statutory partners and other key stakeholders has been undertaken, with final proposals to be presented to the LSP Executive on 9th September 2008.

Current and future membership on the LSP Steering Group was discussed, and Council

representatives on the Partnership Boards. It was proposed that, when the appointments are made to these Groups and Partnerships at the Council AGM, consideration is given to wider representation of the Council's representatives, irrelevant of their political allegiance. It was also recognised that some smaller committees had perpetuated their life span and received poor attendance. However, it as identified that opportunity exist within Local Committees to feed back to Cabinet, and on to the LSP's.

In general, Members welcomed the changes in structure and the new name being more recognisable (than PACT).

DECISION: That the Council supports the proposals set out in the consultation paper, and feedback is reported to the Local Strategic Partnership by the deadline date of 5th September 2008.

61 **BRAINTREE DISTRICT STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT & ANNUAL PARTNERSHIP PLAN**

Councillor Mrs Schmitt, Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, presented the report on the Braintree Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) including Strategic Assessments and Partnership Plans. Consultants, Priority Research, are currently undertaking the first Braintree District Strategic Assessment and the yearly audit will focus on crime and disorder, and data on quality of life issues. A collective approach is being taken across Essex, with priorities for the Braintree District of youth offending and disorder; anti-social behaviour/criminal damage; substance related crime and disorder; hate crime; domestic abuse and road safety. Although the Braintree District doe not suffer from 'Hate crime' it was noted that the Braintree District has the highest number of migrant workers in Essex, and this may create 'Hate crime' in the future. Monthly meetings of the Joint Action Group, and bi-monthly Neighbourhood Action Panels can address new priorities as they occur, in the intervals between publications of the Annual Plan.

The following issues were raised and discussed:-

- One Member reported no contact with hate crime or domestic abuse. However, thieving (particularly of metal) from industrial estates was a concern, and did not have a category. The Cabinet Member responded that the topics are a 'snapshot' of issues when the survey was completed.
- Under the Partnership structure, it was considered that the District Council cannot be approached to resolve all issues, and a scenario on vandalism in Sible Hedingham was reiterated, and the resolution of joint working with the Police and local residents/Councillors to address the issue.
- The role of Neighbourhood Action Panels was highlighted, and the Police Community Safety Tasking Group (PCSTG) being renamed Joint Action Group.
- That the public and Members are aware how people got on the Neighbourhood Action Panels, and clarity on the Panel's purpose and Terms of Reference

DECISION: That it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:-**

That the Braintree District Annual Partnership Plan 2008 be approved.

ACTION POINT:- That Officers ensure that current issues, i.e. thieving from industrial estates, are included in the annual Strategic Assessment

62 **LEISURE ISSUES AND MALTINGS ACADEMY**

Cabinet was informed of the establishment of the Maltings Academy that comprises of John Bramston School and Rickstones School in Witham as part of a three-way academies initiative with Greensward College in Hockley. Braintree District Council will be invited to join the Academies Enterprise Trust Board, and the new facility at Bramston is timetabled for completion by September 2011.

A report will be made to Cabinet in the autumn on: -

- The provision of facilities by the Maltings Academy
- The options for leisure provision in Witham, and
- The proposed timetable.

Under Item 3 of the report (Page 9 of the agenda) it was agreed that Item (c) under 'Intentions to move forward' should read -
'That discussions are held with the Academy/Essex County Council regarding the re-provision of leisure facilities in Witham.'

DECISION: That the way forward as set out in the report entitled 'Leisure Issues and Maltings Academy' be endorsed.

63 **DELEGATED DECISIONS**

That the following delegated decisions be noted

- (i) Councillor Walters response to consultation on the Draft Joint Municipal Waste Strategy for Essex 2007-2032
- (ii) Councillor Butland agreed to the final version of the Council's Smoking Policy
- (iii) Councillor Butland signed off the final version of the Essex Local Area Agreement
- (iv) Councillor Harley response to consultation on proposed changes to airspace affecting the Braintree District
- (v) Councillor Mrs Schmitt amended the Council's adopted Private Sector Housing Renewal Assistance Policy in relation to Disabled Facilities Grants
- (vi) Councillor Mrs Schmitt amended the Council's adopted Private Sector Housing Renewal Assistance Policy in relation to grants for landlords
- (vii) Councillor Lager agreed the Proposed Agreement for 2008/09 to 2010/11 on Concessionary Travel.

64 **CABINET MEMBERS' UPDATES**

There were no reports made by Cabinet Members

65 **REFERENCE FROM JOINT CONSULTATIVE GROUP 7TH JULY 2008 – PEOPLE STRATEGY**

Cabinet received the recommendation on the People Strategy – a four-year Strategy to be delivered through the Workforce Development Plan.

DECISION: That the People Strategy 2008-12 be endorsed.

66 **REFERENCE FROM JOINT CONSULTATIVE GROUP 7TH JULY 2008 –
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Cabinet received the recommendation on the Workforce Development Plan defining actions and target dates for 2008-09.

DECISION: That the Workforce Development Plan 2008-09 be endorsed.

67 **REFERENCE FROM PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME BOARD
11TH AUGUST 2008 – COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT**

Cabinet was referred to the Local Government Association (LGA) briefing paper and the key aspects of the Comprehensive Area Agreement (CAA), and noted that responses to the consultation paper are required by 20th October 2008.

Councillor Lager, Cabinet Member for Efficiency and Resources, advised that the CAA replaces the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and now looks at 'what it is like to live in the District' instead of 'how the Council performs'. It was considered that the CAA should use current data and not rely on old information. The paper was broadly welcomed and now provides an ongoing assessment, although the scoring mechanics should be kept simple and made easier to follow. It was also noted that the use of 'plain English' should continue.

DECISION: That the LGA briefing paper be endorsed, including the above comments, and a response submitted to the LGA and the Audit Commission by 20th October 2008.

68 **CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

The Chief Executive, Allan Reid, presented his second report to Cabinet and highlighted all the Current Issues, including an attached extract from the Mid Essex PCT's Strategic Service Development Plan 2008-2012 that contained details on Braintree Community Hospital and Halstead Hospital – a topic requested by Members at the last Cabinet meeting. Under the Audit Commission item it was noted that the Direction of Travel inspection would now be one day (not two).

In addition, the Chief Executive advised that Electoral Registration is currently out for Annual Canvass, and the introduction of electronic feedback has resulted with 5,000 telephone responses, 5,000 Internet responses and 2,000 by text – an overall 20% performance of total forms sent out. The Braintree College had also been visited by the Democracy Team to encourage young people to become involved in the democratic process.

Cabinet welcomed the new initiatives for Electoral Registration and were encouraged by the electronic response systems saving costs and staff time.

Councillor E Lynch reminded Cabinet of his concerns on energy costs at Braintree Swimming Pool (and other Council buildings) and the proposed use of solar panels. The Leader advised that DCL Leisure would consider this issue.

Councillor Mitchell, Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability, advised that Mark Wilson had been appointed as the Council's Carbon Manager, and will be evaluating power use to heat the three swimming pools in the District, under a 'Smart' metering system.

The Leader confirmed that the Chief Executive's report is on a 'trial' period at Cabinet only.

DECISION: That the report be noted.

69 **JOINT CONSULTATIVE GROUP – 7TH JULY 2008**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Joint Consultative Group held on 7th July 2008.

DECISION: That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Group of 7th July 2008 be noted.

70 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM CABINET SUB GROUP – 4TH AUGUST 2008**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Local Government Reform Cabinet Sub Group held on 4th August 2008.

DECISION: That the minutes of the meeting of the Local Government Reform Cabinet Sub Group of 4th August 2008 be noted.

71 **PERFORMANCE & EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME BOARD – 11TH AUGUST 2008**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Performance & Efficiency Programme Board held on 11th August 2008.

Councillor Lager, Cabinet Member for Efficiency and Resources, highlighted the Quarterly Performance and Financial Report, Quarter 1; and details will be forthcoming on the Review of Parking Services and proposals for a Joint Parking Service, with management held by Colchester Borough Council.

DECISION: That the minutes of the meeting of the Performance & Efficiency Programme Board of 11th August 2008 be noted.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

DECISION: That under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the Act.

72 **REPORTS FROM CABINET MEMBERS ON ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE BROUGHT
TO THE CABINET'S ATTENTION (PRIVATE SESSION)**

There were no reports

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm and closed at 8.40pm

G BUTLAND

(Leader)

