

CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 AUGUST 2015

AT 4.30 PM

IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WILLITON

Present:

Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew..... Leader

Councillor M J Chilcott
Councillor K Mills
Councillor K Turner

Councillor M O A Dewdney
Councillor S J Pugsley
Councillor D J Westcott

Members in Attendance:

Councillor I Aldridge
Councillor B Maitland-Walker
Councillor R Woods

Councillor B Heywood
Councillor P Murphy

Officers in Attendance:

Director – Operations (S Adam)
Assistant Chief Executive (B Lang)
Senior Debt and Recovery Officer (S Perkins)
Finance Manager (S Plenty)
Corporate Strategy and Performance Officer (H Stevenson)
Meeting Administrator (R Bryant)

CAB28 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Morgan.

CAB29 Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 July 2015

(Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 1 July 2015 - circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 1 July 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

CAB30 Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Minute No.	Member of	Action Taken
Councillor A Trollope-Bellew	All	Crowcombe	Spoke and voted
Councillor K Turner	All	Brompton Ralph	Spoke and voted
Councillor D Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Councillor P Murphy	All	Watchet	Spoke
Councillor B Maitland-Walker	All	Carhampton	Spoke
Councillor I Aldridge	All	Williton	Spoke

CAB31 Public Participation

No members of the public spoke at the meeting on any items on the agenda.

CAB32 Forward Plan

(Copy of the Forward Plan for the month of September 2015 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of this item was to approve the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan for the month of September 2015 be approved.

CAB32 Cabinet Action Plan

(Copy of the Action Plan – circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED (1) that CAB18 – Request for Allocation of Planning Obligations Funding be deleted as actioned.

RESOLVED (2) that CAB19 – HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocations of CIM Funding be deleted as actioned.

RESOLVED (3) that CAB20 – HPC S106 Housing Funding Strategy Amendment to Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy be deleted as actioned.

RESOLVED (4) that CAB21 – HPC S106 Provisional Allocation of Leisure Contribution be deleted as actioned.

RESOLVED (5) that CAB23 – Allocation of HPC S106 Tourism Information Funds be deleted as actioned.

RESOLVED (6) that CAB27 – Street and Toilet Cleaning Services Contract be deleted as actioned.

CAB33 Corporate Debt Policy

(Report No. WSC 119/15 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to introduce the new Corporate Debt Policy which was key in outlining operational debt recovery activities for a range of debt types. It was essential that all monies owed to the Council were actively pursued. The Policy therefore reflected a range of measures to help customers pay sums due, maximising the level of resources available to support front line public services.

The Policy was underpinned by the following key principles:-

- taking early and co-ordinated debt recovery action;
- taking account of all relevant circumstances relating to the debt;
- offering a range of payment methods to make it easier to settle debts;
- providing links to debt advice; and
- adopting a debt hierarchy to prioritise those debts where non-payment could directly impact on an individual's wellbeing.

The report was presented by the Lead Member for Resources and Central Support, who welcomed the proposed introduction of the new policy.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendation of the report, which was duly seconded by Councillor M Dewdney.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Full Council:-

- (i) to approve the adoption of the new Policy detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) to note the Council's commitment to engage with those customers in debt, helping them to pay by providing advice and guidance and involving relevant welfare and debt agencies; and
- (iii) to note that the Policy would be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account changes in legislation, service improvements, regulations and wider policy initiatives.

CAB34 Corporate Performance Report – Quarter 4 – Outturn 2014-2015

(Report No. WSC 118/15, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to provide Cabinet with an update on progress in delivering the Council's Corporate Priorities and the performance of Council services for the period from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. The report also provided an overview of the outcome of the latest Council Satisfaction Survey.

The Leader presented the item and confirmed that the Cabinet was happy to accept the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 9 July 2015. Reference was also made to the results of the

most recent Customer Satisfaction Survey which were particularly encouraging.

The Leader proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor K Turner.

During the discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor P Murphy, pointed out that the wording of the recommendations from the July meeting were not accurate. The actual recommendations were as follows:-
 - Scrutiny recommended that KPI 52 was amended to reflect the change in resources and the subsequent impact on performance. Scrutiny would support the target being amended from 22 weeks to 40 weeks;
 - Scrutiny Members asked that the Committee was proactively involved in the proposed review of the current performance measures to reflect new and emerging Corporate Plan priorities; and
 - That an item be included on a future Community PAG agenda to ask Christian Trevelyan to attend and discuss the matter of Disabled Facilities Grants in more detail.

An explanation as to the different interpretation of the Scrutiny views was provided to Members.

- Queries were made as to whether some of the existing performance targets were realistic. It was acknowledged that it was for the Lead Member to seek alterations to targets where this was required.
- Although the overall Satisfaction Survey results were good, there was still work to be done as far as street cleansing – particularly in Minehead during the summer season – was concerned.

RESOLVED that the performance in 2014/2015 be noted.

CAB35 Revenue and Capital Outturn 2014/2015

(Report No. WSC 121/15, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with details of the Council's financial outturn position for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information regarding end of year reserve balances, for the financial year 2014/2015.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the item and outlined the details in the report. She went on to propose the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor M Dewdney.

During the discussion of this item, the following main points were raised:-

- Without the Hinkley Business Rates appeal decision, the Council would have reported an underspend.
- The situation was of concern especially that further savings would need to be sought to balance the books

RESOLVED (1) that the reported General Fund Revenue Budget net overspend of £228,348 be noted.

RESOLVED (2) that it be recommended to Full Council to transfer £2,183,984 to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve to mitigate the deficit on the Collection Fund in 2014/15 and the estimated deficit in 2015/16 due to the outcome of the recent Hinkley Point appeal, as well as future risks in this area.

RESOLVED (3) that it be recommended to Full Council to approve a Supplementary 2015/16 Revenue Budget allocation of £40,000 for essential asset maintenance and health and safety works to be funded from the Sustainability Earmarked Reserve.

RESOLVED (4) that the transfers to and from Earmarked Reserves as set out in Table 4 and Appendix B of the report be noted, and the recommended Budget Carry Forward of 2014/15 underspends for specific service costs in 2015/16 totalling £206,394 as set out in Appendix B to the report be supported.

RESOLVED (5) that the proposed recommendation to Full Council to approve Capital Programme Budget Carry Forwards totalling £577,719 for general schemes to be funded using capital receipts, capital grant and S106 contributions (as set out in Appendix C of this report) be noted.

RESOLVED (6) that it be recommended to Full Council to approve Capital Programme Budget Carry Forwards totalling £1,026,174 for Hinkley S106-funded schemes (as set out in Appendix C of the report).

RESOLVED (7) that the net overspend of £39,204 in relation to the Capital Programme for general schemes in the current year and that this overspend has been funded from the useable capital receipts reserve be noted.

CAB36 Medium Term Financial Plan Update

(Report No. WSC 120/15, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to share the latest Medium Term Financial Plan forecasts for the Council's net spending and funding and highlighting the projected budget gap to be addressed over the immediate and short to medium terms.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendation of the report which was seconded by Councillor M Dewdney.

The main points raised during the discussion included:-

- The Council needed to recognise that due to its financial situation it would only be able to deliver statutory services and a proportion of the non-statutory services in the future;
- Greater efforts were needed to bring in more income. For example, every property in the district needed to be rated; and
- Further savings would be sought but finding over £500,000 per annum would be extremely difficult.

RESOLVED that the updated Medium Term Financial Plan position and the key messages in respect of achieving continuing financial sustainability be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.24 pm