

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **CABINET**

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Wednesday, 11th June, 2014

#### **Present:**

Councillor Paul Crossley	Leader of the Council
Councillor David Dixon	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods
Councillor Simon Allen	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning
Councillor David Bellotti	Cabinet Member for Community Resources
Councillor Katie Hall	Cabinet Member for Community Integration
Councillor Caroline Roberts	Cabinet Member for Transport
Councillor Dine Romero	Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children and Youth
Councillor Ben Stevens	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development

#### **17 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair was taken by Councillor Paul Crossley, Leader of the Council.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **18 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Democratic Services Officer drew attention to the evacuation procedure as set out in the Agenda.

#### **19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Paul Crossley declared an "other" interest under the Code of Conduct in item 14 on the agenda (Radstock Ecology Mitigation Programme) as a Board Member of the Norton Radstock Regeneration (NRR) company. Councillor Crossley would be taking part in the debate and voting.

#### **21 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

There was none.

#### **22 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS**

There were 16 questions from the following Councillors: Liz Hardman (3), Geoff Ward (4), Anthony Clarke (3), Liz Richardson (2), Vic Pritchard (2), Martin Veal (2).

There were no questions from members of the public.

*[Copies of the questions and response, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book as Appendix 1 and are available on the Council's website.]*

## **23 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS**

Robert and Anna Morgan raised their concerns in terms of their stall at the Guildhall Market. Councillor Paul Crossley advised that he would meet Robert and Anna Morgan with relevant officers to discuss this issue.

Rachel Mercer in a statement *[a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2 and on the Council's website]* expressed her concern about pedestrian safety within the village of Combe Down, in particular on the zebra crossing on North Road between the junctions of Stonehouse Lane and The Firs. Rachel Mercer presented a petition with 228 signatures that supported her call for a change to be made.

Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones said that he made a statement at the last Cabinet meeting and that he was very encouraged by the response from Councillor Stevens. Councillor Anketell-Jones quoted Councillor Stevens, who said 'if the budget was to continue and the Gallery was left out in the cold, they would struggle'. Councillor Anketell-Jones commented that this was exactly what he had been saying for the last two years. Councillor Anketell-Jones also quoted Councillor Stevens, who said 'the plans he (Councillor Anketell-Jones) referred to are beginning to be thought about to change the gallery operating model to make the Gallery more sustainable'. Councillor Anketell-Jones added that everyone knew that the Gallery had been operating on unsustainable business model.

Councillor Anketell-Jones asked if he could get updates from Councillor Stevens on the progress towards sustainability.

## **24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING**

On a motion from Councillor Paul Crossley, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **25 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET**

There were none.

## **26 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES**

There were none.

**27 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING**

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

**28 APPROACH TO SHARED SERVICES AND CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT WITH NORTH SOMERSET**

Councillor David Bellotti introduced the item by saying that he would be quite happy to move the recommendations. Councillor Bellotti said that it was really important to have a purpose in looking at working with other people and the main purpose here was to improve the quality of services for B&NES residents. At the same time, it would be possible to make some savings. Those savings could either be used to avoid an increase Council Tax or to increase the level of services provided. The Council had been already working with a lot of local partners in the area, such as Sirona. The Council had been also working with neighbouring Councils in some areas , such as a jointly managed Audit service with North Somerset.

Councillor Bellotti said that Councillor Crossley had had a number of very useful meetings with the Leader of the North Somerset Council, and also some individual Cabinet Members had met with their equivalents from the North Somerset Cabinet, in order to discuss shared services.

Councillor Bellotti concluded his introduction by saying this was about delivering services to our residents in better way.

Councillor Bellotti moved the proposals.

Councillor Crossley seconded the proposal.

Councillor Crossley said that there was one change in the report. The following should be added at the paragraph 6.1 of the report: '...but only where this does not contradict or lessen the impact of the Think Local procurement strategy'.

Councillor Crossley also said that the B&NES Council had had a prior record of working with different organisations and partners across ex-Avon, Wiltshire and Somerset. This would be a growing model of the future. This proposal was not only about saving money, it was more about delivering better services with better value to residents.

Councillor Crossley added that there were quite a few meetings between senior officers from both Councils, which helped towards building the trust and interest between two Councils.

Councillor Katie Hall said that she was delighted to see this paper on the agenda. Councillor Hall appreciated the thoughtful way of talking with the North Somerset Council over the past 18-24 months, instead of rushing into this agreement. This was all about service improvement and doing this in more modern and efficient way.

Councillor Bellotti summed up by saying that even though B&NES Council had been in discussion with North Somerset Council, this Council would welcome an opportunity to work with other neighbouring Councils in future. Councillor Bellotti also said that, in terms of working with local partners, he was particularly pleased that the Police in Bath had expressed an interest in having a presence in our One Stop Shop. In the years to come there would be great developments with other Councils, local partners and voluntary organisations.

On a motion from Councillor David Bellotti, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE:

- (a) further opportunities to join up services internally;
- (b) develop work with local partners in Bath & NE Somerset; and
- (c) work with other Councils where our services could benefit from joint working;

(2) To APPROVE the Co-operation agreement;

(3) To AUTHORISE the Leader to sign it on behalf of Bath & North East Council; and

(4) To ASK for a progress report in 12 months on the joint work that is developing.

**29 COMMUNITY REGENERATION CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014-15**

Councillor Eleanor Jackson in an *ad hoc* statement drew Cabinet's attention to page 27 of the report, related to Digital B&NES. Councillor Jackson felt that this was an excellent initiative for investment of Council resources into and she also welcomed an investment into the River Corridor Fund. Councillor Jackson also said that the Midsomer Norton Business Centre was not accessible by public transport.

Councillor Dave Laming in an *ad hoc* statement said that this day represented a quite significant day in the history of river. The lease of the Boathouse had been finalised as headquarters for the River Corridor Group. This Council for the first time confirmed budgetary recognition of the river. Councillor Laming also said that he had received full support from a senior director of Wessex Water. Similar support had been received from an Environment Agency and the Canal and River Trust. All of this was possible with support from the leadership of the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet. Councillor Laming also thanked the Strategic Director for Place for her contribution towards the River Strategy.

Councillor John Bull in an *ad hoc* statement commented that broadband connectivity in Paulton had not been included in Digital B&NES programme. Councillor Bull felt that the scheme was not completely successful considering that residents in other parts of B&NES had provided their own cables in order to link to the BT system. Councillor Bull said that all parts of the authority would need to be connected.

Councillor Ben Stevens introduced the item by saying that this was really good news for all residents in B&NES. Councillor Stevens thanked Councillor Laming for his kind words and for his efforts for bringing the river into the forefront.

Councillor Stevens said that the Digital B&NES scheme had been trailed for the last few months and it would deliver wireless network in Bath, Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Keynsham. That would offer a significant boost in tourism and convenience for residents. It would also offer a superfast broadband in Enterprise Area, which would help businesses. Councillor Stevens highlighted an ongoing work with the BIDUK to deliver superfast broadband in rural areas. This would cover all but few thousand premises across B&NES.

Councillor Stevens said that comments from Councillor Jackson about public transport connections with the Midsomer Norton Business Centre would be picked up by the relevant Cabinet Member.

Councillor Stevens moved the proposals.

Councillor David Dixon seconded the proposal.

Councillor Dixon said that this report showed how Council would support businesses in the area.

Councillor Dixon said that he was pleased to see that the Minerva Rowing Club would receive some funding to provide basic facilities.

Councillor Dixon was also pleased that the Midsomer Norton Business Centre would receive some funding.

Councillor Paul Crossley said that this was really good news for B&NES. This was about provision of vibrant economy and vibrant place across the whole of B&NES. An expansion of Digital B&NES would address some current inadequacies. Councillor Crossley also praised commitment from Councillor Laming towards the River Corridor Group and highlighted Council's pledge of investment in the river. Councillor Crossley was also pleased for investment in the Minerva Rowing Club and the Midsomer Norton Business Centre.

Councillor Stevens summed up by saying that this would support local businesses and help them grow.

On a motion from Councillor Ben Stevens, seconded by Councillor David Dixon, it was

## **RESOLVED** (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE the following provisional items for inclusion within the 14/15 capital programme:

- River Corridor Fund - £340k to include support towards:
  - Minerva Rowing Club;
  - Edge Protection at Widcombe;
  - Riverside linkages through Pulteney Bridge to Cleveland Place;
- Digital B&NES - £350k;
- Midsomer Norton Business Centre - £125k; and

(2) To DELEGATE authority to the Strategic Director for Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development to draw down the funds.

## **30 RADSTOCK ECOLOGY MITIGATION PROGRAMME**

Councillor Eleanor Jackson said she was speaking as Meadow View resident. The other residents in the road felt that this was a misuse of Council funds and it was the developer's responsibility to look after the ecological mitigation.

Councillor Jackson questioned whether £400k should be put in this programme. Councillor Jackson felt that this would set a worrying precedent because developers would now claim that their site was not viable.

Councillor Jackson also said that these proposals did not leave any way for a proper scrutiny for this measure, if executed by the B&NES Council.

Councillor Jackson requested that this report should be sent back for a further consideration.

Debra Porter said that the Council would need to commit to claims made by the developer. Debra Porter also said that it was important that the Council should not inflate the ecological value of a significantly diminished ecological resort. The ecologist would accept the package but only if it does what it said it would. Debra Porter suggested that the proposed money should go elsewhere instead of where it was proposed by the report and called this report a financially unviable plan.

Colin Currie addressed his concerns on the plan and also his concern that the developer would not look after the ecological mitigation.

Jason Shore in an *ad hoc* statement said that he was speaking in support of the regeneration project. Jason Shore also said that he did not understand why the regeneration had not happened yet and there was nothing in Radstock to keep people in the locality. The focus should be on building more shops in Radstock. In his view, the trade was declining in Radstock and soon it could become a ghost town.

Hayley Worth in an *ad hoc* statement said that she had lived in Radstock for long time and asked for how long Radstock would stay the same place. Hayley Worth said that more homes and shops would give more opportunities to people in the area. The regeneration should start and the town should be moving forward.

Councillor John Bull in an *ad hoc* statement said that the purpose of the paper was to agree the allocation of the funding to this particular project in Radstock. Councillor

Bull expressed his concern that money had been paid to developers for something which they were responsible for under the planning decision.

Nettie Williams in an *ad hoc* statement said that she worked with Radstock families for some time and that the regeneration of Radstock should continue to happen. This plan showed a great level of commitment for the future of Radstock. The Victoria Hall refurbishment had had a big impact on Radstock so further regeneration could only move Radstock forward.

Shane Kitchen in an *ad hoc* statement said that he grew up in Radstock and that had business in Radstock. Shane Kitchen would like to see the regeneration move forward. It would increase employment and contacts with Bristol and other cities.

Councillor Ben Stevens introduced the item by saying that he listened to the concerns on mitigation and ecological impact though he was satisfied that this plan could go forward. Councillor Stevens said that for far too long the Norton Radstock Regeneration project had been held up by a small group of people and that he was quite happy that there were people in Radstock who wanted to move forward.

Councillor Stevens moved the proposals.

Councillor Simon Allen seconded the proposal.

Councillor Allen said that 26 years ago the last train left Radstock train station. Councillor Allen said that there were still people who did not want Radstock to move forward. Councillor Allen also said that he was pleased that there were residents who wanted to move forward with the regeneration of Radstock. This would deliver affordable homes for people of Radstock. What had been happening in Radstock now, in terms of the regeneration, was a positive thing.

Councillor Tim Ball said that Radstock would need to move forward and supported the plan.

Councillor Paul Crossley said that there was no mishandling of money in Radstock. Radstock is an important part of B&NES. Councillor Crossley read out paragraph 5.5 of the report and said that this was good news for Radstock and it would allow regeneration to happen. Councillor Crossley also praised the Victoria Hall regeneration. Councillor Crossley said that the Cabinet would move Radstock forward and this plan was good news for Radstock.

Councillor David Dixon said it was great to see younger families in the Chamber tonight. The Victoria Hall had been a success. This plan had been created to enable regeneration happening. This would provide new homes and more amenities to local community. This paper was a big step forward in delivering the regeneration of Radstock.

Councillor Ben Stevens summed up that we would need to continue momentum. Councillor Stevens also said that this paper facilitates the regeneration

On a motion from Councillor Ben Stevens, seconded by Councillor Simon Allen, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously)

(1) To AGREE that the Council will work in partnership with Norton Radstock Regeneration Company and its development partner Linden Homes Ltd to undertake the responsibility to deliver the Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Management Plan for the former Great Western Railway lands to support the delivery of new highway, homes and jobs in Radstock; and

(2) To ALLOCATE up to £400k of the existing capital budget for the capital costs of the Ecological Mitigation, Compensation and Management Plan with future revenue costs met from associated savings in corporate borrowing costs.

### **31 FUNDING APPROVAL FOR INDICATIVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

Councillor Eleanor Jackson in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 3 and on the Council's website*] said that this subject and a version of this paper came to the meeting of the PDS Panel for Housing and Major Developments on 27 May 2014, where it was generally welcomed by panel members.

This Panel was a good place to discuss the proposals because the measures recommended clearly needed to be seen in the wider context of housing delivery in Bath and North East Somerset, and the difficulties experienced in a number of the current major projects in getting adequate amounts of affordable housing built. Councillor Jackson suggested that the Resources PDS Panel should scrutinise this matter.

Amanda Leon (Radstock Action Group) in a statement [*a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 4 and on the Council's website*] said that Linden Homes were clear that they were not going to pay the proposed S106 agreement due to their responsibility to their stakeholders and asked why the Council would have to pay for this out of taxpayers money.

Councillor Dave Laming in an *ad hoc* statement said that the title might be misleading. Not many people in the area could afford houses so the Council should be looking to invest into homes, like mobile homes.

Councillor Paul Crossley asked if all Cabinet Members had read a Public Interest Test circulated as an appendix to the report.

All Cabinet Members confirmed that they had read the Public Interest Test.

Councillor Paul Crossley asked if all Cabinet Members agreed that appendix 1 of the report be exempt from publication.

All Cabinet Members agreed.

Councillor Paul Crossley informed the meeting that if any of Cabinet Members would want to refer to information from exempt appendix, then he would exclude the public from the meeting and move into exempt session.

Councillor Tim Ball introduced the item by saying that paper had been about homes for people. Councillor Ball said that there had been partnership work across the



authority, with different housing associations, to ensure there were affordable homes and social housing. Councillor Ball also said that he was pleased that Councillor Jackson welcomed the report and assured that appropriate Scrutiny would be taking place.

Councillor Ball informed the meeting that we were the only authority in the country to hit its target on delivery of affordable homes. 610 affordable homes had been delivered within four year programme across the district. Councillor Ball congratulated officers and thanked them for the hard work they put in this report.

Councillor Ball highlighted that there were quite a lot of details in the papers on how the Council would deliver affordable housing, including S106 details.

Councillor Ball moved the proposals.

Councillor Paul Crossley seconded the proposal.

Councillor Crossley thanked Councillor Jackson for her comments on this report and commended her commitment towards housing for disadvantaged and excluded groups.

Councillor Crossley said that the Council would be committing a significant capital budget to provide homes. The most substantial problem was the cost of the land in B&NES, which makes building of the affordable homes extremely difficult.

Councillor Simon Allen said that building homes for people was one of the most important things that this Council had been doing. Councillor Allen also said that this was a vital document which would be interrelated with future S106 agreements.

On a motion from Councillor Tim Ball, seconded by Councillor Paul Crossley, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously)

(1) To APPROVE the allocation of £1.015m Affordable Housing Capital budget for 2015-18, as detailed within Appendix 1; and

(2) To DELEGATE the Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes & Planning, to approve allocations of Affordable Housing Grant and Commuted Sums for developments falling within the scope of the indicative 2014-15 programme.

Councillor Paul Crossley closed the meeting at this point and read out some of tweets that arrived during the duration of this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date Confirmed and Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Prepared by Democratic Services**