

Cabinet



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| Date | Wednesday, 28 June 2010 |
| Venue | Town Hall, St Annes |
| Committee members | David Eaves (Leader of the Council) Councillors Karen Buckley, Susan Fazackerley, Dr. Trevor Fiddler, Cheryl Little and Albert Pounder |
| Other Councillors | Councillors Ben Aitken, John Bennett, David Chedd, Maxine Chew, Fabian Craig- Wilson, John Davies, Kevin Eastham, Tony Ford, Kathleen Harper, Ken Hopwood, Elizabeth Oades, Janine Owen, Barbara Pagett |
| Officers | Phillip Woodward, Bernard Hayes, Paul Walker, Darren Bell, David Gillett, Alan Royston, Gary Sams, Lyndsey Lacey Marcus Judge |
| Members of the public | 4 members of the public were in attendance |

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 28 April 2010 as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

3. Urgent items

The Chairman agreed to the consideration of a late item relating to use of Council owned land at Orders Lane, Kirkham. This was dealt with under item 9 on the agenda.

4. Policy Development Scrutiny Committee - Recommendations

Councillor Fabian Craig-Wilson (Chairman of the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee) presented the recommendations made by the Committee at its meeting held on 5 May 2010 (previously circulated).

Councillor Craig- Wilson stated that at that meeting, the committee considered the Draft Fylde Housing Action Plan 2010. Whilst the committee had no specific recommendations for Cabinet approval, she requested that Cabinet consider the following issues highlighted by the committee when the final version of the Action Plan is presented to them.

Draft Fylde Housing Action Plan 2010

Recommended for Cabinet consideration:

- 1) Park homes - that this is a serious and growing problem and to suggest that it is central government who will need to address this issue, and that Fylde should contact other local authorities with similar problems in order to lobby and put pressure on MPs to find a remedy
- 2) Empty homes - to recognise that the new government's programme includes a commitment to explore measures to bring empty homes into use, and to lobby our local MP for action on the matter as well as developing local initiatives.
- 3) That there should be better dialogue with developers in order to secure appropriate development where it is needed.

In reaching its decision, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED to note and approve the recommendations made by the Policy Development Scrutiny Committee and consider these matters during the Cabinet's deliberations under item 7 on the agenda of this meeting.

5. Community Focus Scrutiny Committee - Recommendations

Members of Cabinet were asked to consider the recommendations made by the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 27 May 2010 (previously circulated).

Councillor Karen Buckley (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Community Engagement) made reference to the excellent scrutiny debate that took place at the meeting. In doing so, she made reference to recommendation 5(5) of the Performance Exception report and sought to amend reference to the "Portfolio for Partnerships and Community Engagement" to read "the relevant portfolio holder".

In reaching its decision, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED to note and approve the recommendations (as amended above) made by the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee.

6. Lytham Park Crematorium Refurbishment

Councillor Cheryl Little (Portfolio Holder for Social Wellbeing) and Darren Bell (Head of Leisure Services) presented a report on a proposal to refurbish the crematorium simultaneously with the replacement of the cremators whilst the crematorium was not operational.

Councillor Cheryl Little provided an overview of the background to the report and in doing so, made reference to the fact that the crematorium would be closed for 4 to 6 weeks in order to replace the cremators. She added that the chapel would have to close to carry out the works and that it would be prudent to do the proposed works at the same time.

Councillor Little further reported that officers had sought tenders for refurbishment of the chapel, waiting room, vestry, offices, exterior canopy and the construction of a new pedestrian footpath along the main drive. She explained that following the comprehensive procurement process undertaken, it was estimated that the total cost of this refurbishment

would be £166,632. Members were requested to consider funding the project through a combination of capital and revenue contributions as identified in the report.

In reaching its decision, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED:

1. To approve the addition of a new scheme to the capital programme in the sum of £166,632 in relation to the refurbishment of the crematorium fully funded by a £100,000 virement from the 2010/11 revenue repairs and maintenance budget and £66,632 virement from the creator replacement capital scheme.
2. To approve the letting of the chapel refurbishment contract to RP Tyson Construction in the sum of £117,397

7. Fylde Housing Action Plan 2010

Members of Cabinet considered the comprehensive report prepared by the Director of Community Services on the draft Fylde Housing Action Plan. The report was presented for approval following consultation.

Members were advised that the Fylde Housing Action Plan followed on from Cabinet approval of the Fylde Coast Housing Strategy.

Prior to consideration of this matter, Councillor Oades submitted a question asking why the officers of Lancashire County Council appeared to be still pursuing the Central Lancashire and Blackpool Growth Point agenda (which had been expressed as part of the consultation process) now that the new government had clearly indicated its intention to abandon to principle of housing growth and the imposition of top-down housing targets. She requested that a definitive statement be given that this Council is not now part of the growth point bid.

In response to this point, Councillor Fiddler highlighted the new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government's letter highlighting the coalition Government's commitment to rapidly abolish Regional Spatial Strategies and return decision making powers on housing and planning to local councils.

Councillor Fiddler went on to suggest that it was his intention to write to Blackpool and Lancashire County Councils to confirm that Fylde Borough Council no longer proposed to participate in the Growth Point initiative.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Eaves, stated that he in particular would not want to encourage any moves to create a "City of the Fylde" and welcomed the Government's changing attitude on the locality agenda. His intention was to work positively for Fylde and he would relate this through meetings with colleagues and with the Council's Management Team.

In addition to the above, Councillor Kevin Eastham raised questions on a number of matters:

He asked about the relationship between the Fylde Housing Action Plan and the approved Fylde Coast Housing Strategy. He also made reference to the availability of affordable housing in South Blackpool. He further offered the opinion that Fylde did not need to become an average place; it provided a quality environment sufficient to attract business leaders into Lancashire and the Fylde Coast area. This is economically sound for the region. .

Councillor Eastham also raised an issue with regard to paragraph 16 (page 35 of the report) which referred to park homes / empty homes and an improved dialogue with developers. He asked that further consideration be given to such issues.

Councillor Eaves suggested that the issue of park homes was of national significance, which could not be addressed by Fylde in isolation. He suggested that the Council should write to the LGA and to the MP asking for the legislation relating to this matter to be reviewed. When a response had been received on these issues he would welcome the re-establishment of a task and finish group.

Councillor Fiddler further explained the rationale behind the Fylde Coast Housing Strategy and how the Fylde Borough Action Plan fitted in to that strategy. He suggested that the use of certain language within the document was outdated and needed to be addressed. He also stated that the relationship between housing needs and future planning policy delivery needed further consideration.

In reaching its decision, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED:

1. To approve the draft Fylde Housing Action Plan as agreed at the meeting.
2. To write to the LGA and to local MP's on matters of concern to local communities relating to the use and occupation of static caravans/ park homes.
3. To request that officers undertake an equalities impact assessment, a health impact and risk assessment of the agreed Fylde Housing Action Plan.
4. To provide an annual update on the plan to the relevant scrutiny committee.
5. To include the following additional comment at the end of the bullet points relating to "People" (page 34 of the report)
 - "Recognition of the specific housing needs of economically active young people."

8. Medium Term Financial Strategy-Outturn 2009/10 (including General Fund, Capital Programme and Treasury Management)

A report was presented by Bernard Hayes (Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer) which outlined to members the General Fund outturn (including revenue, capital and treasury management) for 2009/10. The report explained the major variations between the latest approved budget and the actual expenditure and quantified the impact on the Council's reserves.

Mr Hayes stated that overall it had been a satisfactory year with a positive outturn position. He added that there were still a significant number of financial uncertainties facing local government which in turn affected the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. These essentially related to the following areas:

- Government grant support
- Concessionary fares
- Cap or freeze on Council tax increases
- Future external contracting arrangements
- Pensions review
- Pay/ inflation uncertainties and
- Reducing income and fees and charges uncertainty

With regard to the government grant support, Mr Hayes indicated that local authorities had been advised of a likely 25% cut over a 4 year period from 2011 but there were

uncertainties as to how this would be phased in. Along with the proposed freeze on Council tax from 2011, this presented serious risk to the MTFS. With regard to the proposed reserve for concessionary fares, Mr Hayes indicated that this still remained the subject of a legal challenge and was pending the outcome of the hearing. He further advised that a consultation paper was expected at the end of July which, hopefully, would clarify the position further on the transfer of responsibilities for this function to the County Council.

Further questions were raised at the meeting on the Council's out-turn position.

The Leader of the Council endorsed the good housekeeping and tight budget control undertaken during 2009/10. He suggested that it was now rather timely to reemphasise the need for prudent, transparent and effective decision making to enable realistic targets to be set in light of the new government's recent announcements on future public spending.

The Chief Executive, Mr Woodward indicated that he intended to report to the next meeting on proposal for future "scenario planning" which would need to involve both staff and members. A series of workshops would take place to look at the Council's future spending pressures and priorities.

In reaching its decision, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED:

1. To approve the General Fund Outturn expenditure as set out within the report together with the recommended adjustments.
2. To approve the Capital Outturn and its proposed financing as set out in the report.
3. To approve the Treasury Management Annual Report and the actual prudential indicators as set out in the report.

9. Housing Development at Orders Lane, Kirkham

The Leader reported that the above mentioned item had been received after the publication of the agenda. He accepted that it should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) on the grounds that the development was dependent on external grant funding to the developer. The availability of that grant funding might be jeopardised if the decisions about the issues contained in the report, which might affect the viability of the scheme, were not decided at the meeting.

Members of Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Strategic Development on proposals for New Fylde Housing Association through their developer Ice Blue Developments, to commence construction of a low cost housing development on the site of the Henthorne Builders yard on Orders Lane, Kirkham, close to its junction with Moor Street.

In brief, the report made reference to the recent decision of the Development Control committee on the matter, details of a request to licence the whole of the adjoining car park as a contractors working compound for a period of around 12 months commencing on 5 July 2010. In addition, it included information relating to the support offered by various agencies, details on the proposed improvements to the car park, the site of the vacant CAB building and the nearby closed public conveniences together with views of key officers.

Prior to consideration of this matter, Councillor Oades submitted a question seeking clarification on the details contained in the report and an earlier informal meeting with the developed and relevant officers.. She also sought assurance that the Town Council would

be involved in future landscaping of the area on which the public conveniences presently stood.

Councillor Eaves addressed the first part of the question. In addition, an assurance was given by Councillors Eaves and Fiddler to involve the town council in the future planning of the area referred to.

In reaching its decision, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED:

1. To approve the granting of a 12 month licence (from 5 July) to Ice Blue Developments 12 month licence to occupy the Orders Lane car park as a contractor's working compound.
 2. To grant New Fylde Housing Association a permanent right to use 4 parking spaces on Orders Lane car park.
 3. To approve the granting of consent to Ice Blue Developments to demolish the former CAB building on Orders Lane, and NFHA given title to the site.
 4. To confirm that the above consents are made conditional on:
 - The car park being improved at the end of the 12 month licence agreement.
 - Following demolition of the former CAB building, the exposed wall of the electricity sub-station is made good and the site landscaped
 - The closed public conveniences at Moor Lane are demolished, and the site landscaped and incorporated into the adjoining public space.
 5. To ensure that Kirkham Town Council Town Council is involved in future landscape planning of the area on which the disused public conveniences presently stood.
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