

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING

held in the Council Chamber

23 May 2011

commencing at 6.30p.m.

Present:

Councillor Rook (Leader) in the Chair

Councillors: Mrs. Ackerley, Charlish, Dann,
Golding, Pain, Spendlove-Mason

Officers: R. Abbott, M. Bradford, A. Graves, B.Murgatroyd, S.Pointer, ,

29 ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader announced that he had signed a document in accordance with article 6.10 of the constitution which delegated the exercise of executive functions set out in part 3 section c(2) to the Executive made in accordance with the Executive procedure rules set out in part 4 of the Constitution. The Executive functions set out in part 3 section c(1) were thereby delegated to the officers as set out in the constitution in so far as the functions delegated under part 3 c(1) were Executive functions. The relevant head of service was thereby authorised to exercise such functions that fell within their area of responsibility

The functions delegated under part 3 section d would continue to be exercised as set out in the constitution

All Executive decisions taken by the officers since 8th May 2011 in accordance with part 3 above were thereby confirmed and ratified

30 PORTFOLIO HOLDER ACTIVITY REPORTS

i) Asset Management and Finance

Cllr Spendlove-Mason announced that the official opening ceremony for Harborough Innovation Centre would take place on 9 June.

He also informed members that the Auction of 104 Northampton Road Market Harborough would take place on 2 June

31 INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Corporate and Customer Services

Cllr Dann gave an update on the shared Revenues and Benefits service. Harborough District Council staff would be moving to the Atkins Building, Hinckley on 31 May 2011. There would be a dedicated Benefits Officer based at each Council. Staff would continue to be employed by their authority. It was intended that there would be a meeting of the Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee on 25 May 2011 to discuss governance issues and receive induction on the new processes

The Lutterworth Service Shop will close on 3 June and the opening of the new facility in the library would take place on 9 June 2011. Information has been given to customers about the change.

Community Safety and Enforcement

Cllr Golding announced that negotiations have continued with the existing pest control contractor. There would be a paper on the Pest Control service on the Executive agenda for July

Change Management, Local Business, Enterprise, and Legal Services

Cllr Rook announced that he had attended a conference in Birmingham on the Localism Bill on 13 May

32 TOPICAL ISSUES

Cllr Pain raised the issue of the PCT and St Luke's Hospital. The Leader confirmed that the Council would be writing to the PCT to offer to help to expedite the issue

33 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 14th March 2011 be approved and signed as a true record.

34 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest

35 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

The Executive considered the principle of the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) during 2011/12 and whether to begin a project to establish a local Levy, a mandatory levy to fund infrastructure. It was noted that the timescale to introduce the Levy is dictated by Regulation and the degree to which steps in the process have to be referred for formal decision by Executive and Council.

It is proposed that work on CIL would be largely undertaken in-house, but the process of introducing a Levy will generate some additional costs such as further specialist advice, public notices, fees for holding an independent examination of the Charging Schedule and costs of collecting the Levy. However any associated costs of introducing a Levy can be built into the calculation of the eventual charge and administration costs recovered from the Levy itself. The potential for sharing costs with other Councils would also be investigated. It was proposed that the funding obtained from previous years Housing and Planning Delivery Grants, currently retained in a holding account and used for local planning work would fund the start up costs.

Further investigations were being carried out to look at joint working with neighbouring authorities on CIL

Detailed project planning remains to be completed, but it is noted that at least two steps – the publication of a Charging Schedule for consultation and the adoption of the Levy following examination would be Council decisions.

RESOLVED that;

- i) a Community Infrastructure Levy on new development be created as a means of funding specified community infrastructure in a fair and transparent manner.
- ii) a task and finish seven Member Panel chaired by Cllr Ackerley (the relevant portfolio holder) be arranged to oversee this work.
- iii) the project be developed to incorporate other matters such as member and parish council liaison, be subject to corporate project management tools and a project plan be submitted to the first meeting of the Panel.
- iv) officers investigate applying for CIL "front runners" project money with neighbouring authorities, through a joint officer panel

Summary of reasons for recommendation

A new approach to securing funding towards community infrastructure made necessary by new development is available to the Council. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was brought into being via Regulations in April 2010 but in light of the election of a Coalition Government in May 2010 many authorities waited to see what approach the Government would take to this initiative.

In November 2010, the Coalition Government indicated its support for a CIL approach to fund infrastructure from multiple developments and announced that Regulations would be amended further to create more flexibility for Councils

A paper on CIL was discussed at Scrutiny Places Panel on 17 March and the issue has been considered by the Local Development Framework Task Panel on 30 January and 9 March. Scrutiny Resources Panel considered this issue at its meeting on 14 April. All Panels have endorsed its introduction in a District where the vast majority of development is of a scale where traditional Section 106 agreements have not been appropriate and thus the majority of development does not at present make any form of contribution to the demands it makes on local infrastructure.

36 CONSULTATION STRATEGY

The Executive gave consideration to a revised consultation strategy following a review of the Communication and Consultation strategy which had been written in 2006.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act placed a greater duty on councils to involve local people in the decision making process. The Consultation Strategy has been further refined and developed to ensure that requirement is met.

The new strategy placed greater emphasis on the Citizens' Panel for consultation exercises which would be more cost efficient.

The Executive considered that the increasing rise in use of social media should be reflected in the strategy and toolkit, as it was likely that society would use that form of communication to a greater extent in the coming years.

The Executive agreed with the recommendations from Scrutiny that previously completed consultation exercises should be used to design future improvements and that a briefing note be produced and sent to all members to advise them of changes to the consultation process.

RESOLVED that

- i) the new consultation strategy and consultation techniques be approved subject to greater reference in the document to social media
- ii) the new Consultation toolkit for staff and members be approved

Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

Consultation is all about listening, responding to and working with residents, local business and visitors to make sure they receive high quality services. With the far greater duty to involve local people in what we do, therefore a separate Consultation Strategy that is at the heart of the Council's planning and decision making process has been produced. This new Consultation Strategy will help staff and members who carry out consultation by including a 'toolkit' to consultation which will ensure consultation is of a high quality and meets the needs of our residents.

Our role as a Council is not just to deliver services to the highest possible standard but also to ensure that our residents can:

- Find out the information they need
- Find out about changes in existing services and influence new services
- Provide comment(s) on the services they receive

The new Consultation Strategy will ensure our residents receive information in a clear and targeted way which would be accessible to all. In this new Strategy it will cover areas such as:

- Our aims
- What is consultation?
- What are the benefits of consultation?
- The council's commitment to consultation.
- Principles & Objectives
- The role of members
- Methods to co-ordinate consultation

The strategy also addresses the use of the Council's website and intranet by developing this service further and by offering on-line consultations which will ensure more cost efficient consultation by reducing paper, postage and the cost of capturing of data. It will also be more accessible to young people and those with a disability or access concerns.

37 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

RESOLVED the draft Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period June 2011 – September 2011 attached at Appendix A, be approved for publication.

38 SECTION 100A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED that, except for those Members present not being Members of this Committee, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matter yet to be discussed involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972

39 GRANT OF A LICENCE AT MANOR FIELD THURNBY

RESOLVED that

- i) the request made by the resident to lease the land at Manor Field Shown at Appendix A to the report on a short lease of up to seven years be noted;
- ii) consultation and notification be undertaken with residents and other relevant stakeholders on the proposal to lease the land (shown at Appendix A to the report) to the resident, on the basis set out in the report;
- iii) the results of the consultation be brought back to the Executive for final decision.

The Meeting ended at 8 p.m.