

Minutes of Cabinet

17 December 2013

Present:

Councillor R.L. Watts, Leader of the Council, Chairman of the Cabinet and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Human Resources
Councillor P. Forbes-Forsyth, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Young People, Leisure and Culture
Councillor T.J.M. Evans, Cabinet Member for Finance
Councillor N. Gething, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Fixed Assets
Councillor V.J. Leighton, Cabinet Member for Planning and Corporate Development
Councillor D. Patel, Cabinet Member for Parking services and ICT
Councillor J.M. Pinkerton OBE, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Independent Living
Councillor J. Sexton, Cabinet Member for Communications and Procurement

Apologies: None given.

2000. Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 26 November 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

2001. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

2002. Petition on the sale of land at Brooklands College, Ashford campus

Cabinet received and noted a petition on the sale of land at Brooklands College, Ashford campus and encouraged the petitioner to communicate with Brooklands College.

2003. Petition on the Stonham BASS bail hostel at Woodthorpe Road, Ashford

Cabinet received and noted a petition on the Stonham BASS bail hostel at Woodthorpe Road, Ashford and encouraged the petitioner to communicate with Stonham BASS.

2004. *Localisation of Council Tax support (adoption) – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed Local Council Tax support scheme.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Cabinet approves the revised Council Tax discounts and premiums from 1 April 2014 (for a minimum of two years) as set out in para 4.2 of the report of the Assistant Chief Executive, subject to the application of the Regulations issued for schemes under the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet agreed on 9 September 2013 that the then current local scheme needed to be revised.

2005. *Technical reforms to Council Tax discounts and premiums (adoption) – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed technical reforms to Council Tax discounts and premiums.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council approves the revised Council Tax discounts and premiums from 1 April 2014 (for a minimum of two years) as set out in para 4.2 of the report of the Assistant Chief Executive, subject to the application of the Regulations issued for schemes under the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet agreed on 9 September 2013 that the then current local scheme needed to be revised.

2006. *Corporate Plan 2013-15 – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report on the Council's revised Corporate Plan for 2013-15.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council adopts the proposed Corporate Plan for 2013-15.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that the revised Corporate Plan outlines the new priorities for Spelthorne going forward.

2007. *Spelthorne Economic Strategy – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report of the Leader's Economic Development Task Group on the Economic Strategy.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council approves the revised Economic Strategy.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted the actions which the Council will be taking over the next few years to further secure the sustainable growth of the local economy.

2008. *Adoption of a Statement of Licensing Policy 2014-19 – Key Decision

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council adopts the proposed Statement of Licensing Policy for 2014-19.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that there is currently a requirement under Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 for licensing policies to be revised at least every three years.

2009. *Scrap Metal Dealers' Act 2013 fee setting and delegations – Key Decision

Cabinet considered an update on the implementation of the Scrap Metal Dealers' Act 2013.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that Council:

- Approves the fee levels as detailed in the report of the Assistant Chief Executive.
- Approves the delegations as detailed at 2.7 to 2.9 in the report of the Assistant Chief Executive.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that the proposed level of fees is set to ensure that the Council recovers its cost in administering its duties under the 2013 Act.

2010. How to deal with the issues of spitting and chewing gum waste

Cabinet considered a report on the prospect of implementing a new byelaw to prohibit spitting and littering of chewing gum in public open spaces.

RESOLVED that Cabinet agrees to option 3 (3.2) of the report of the Assistant Chief Executive to be implemented on a trial basis for a period of three months in Staines-upon-Thames High Street.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that the three months' trial might act as a deterrent to the public.

2011. Laleham Park boathouse Lease

Cabinet considered a report requesting approval to grant a new lease of the Council's land to Sir William Perkins' School to enable them to construct and run a boathouse for rowing at Laleham Park.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the disposal of an interest in land over £75,000

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that this proposal supports economic development, employment and additional community facilities for local residents at no on-going financial cost to the Council.

2012. Residential properties in parks

Cabinet considered a report on the residential properties in parks and their use as temporary accommodation for homeless families.

RESOLVED that Cabinet notes the information within this report and authorises the Strategic Housing Group (SHG) to investigate the possibility of a business model for provision of accommodation for homeless families.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted the shortage of temporary accommodation available to the Council to place homeless families in.

2013. Remote working project update

Cabinet considered a report highlighting the main conclusions and recommendations of the project.

RESOLVED that Cabinet notes the contents of the report of the Assistant Chief Executive and the conclusions and recommendations listed in **Appendix A**.

Staisafe radio network

Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to provide a radio communications system to replace the existing provision in Staines-upon-Thames which would cover the whole of the Borough.

RESOLVED that Cabinet supports a supplementary capital estimate of £45,000 being made available for the purchase of radios and new mast.

Reason for the decision:

Cabinet noted that this communications system reduces the incidence of crime as well as supporting detection and improving the economic well-being of the towns in the Borough.

2014. Outside Bodies appointment

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to change the current representation on the South East Employers' (SEE) organisation due to the change in the portfolio responsibilities for Councillor Leighton.

RESOLVED that Cabinet appoints a new representative to the South East Employers' organisation.

2015. Leader's announcements

The Leader referred to the Council's recent achievements (below) and highlighted in particular the items from Audit and the Leisure team.

Audit

A vigilant finance officer prevented a major fraud when she carried out checks on the validity of a letter to the Council providing new bank account details for a major contractor.

Environmental Health

A property developer was recently successfully prosecuted by the Council for allowing one of his unsecured sites in the Borough (lock up garages at Vibia Close, Stanwell) to be a location for persistent fly tipping. He pleaded guilty and Staines Magistrates Court fined him a total of £1,000 and ordered him to pay legal costs of £372 to the Council. He was also charged with the costs of the Council removing the rubbish.

The Council's Environmental Health and Sustainability teams worked together to have a new boiler installed in a local couple's home. They had been without heating or hot water.

Officers from the Environmental Health team delivered portable heaters to a vulnerable elderly resident who had reported that her boiler had stopped working. The portable heaters enabled the resident to stay warm over the weekend while her family arranged for the boiler to be repaired.

A stray dog without a collar or tag was reported to the Council's Environmental Health team. It was in poor condition, but the team arranged for the RSPCA to treat and re-home it.

A recent internal audit of Environmental Health's licensing functions resulted in it obtaining the highest level of assurance - "effective". This meant that controls in place were evaluated as being adequate, appropriate and effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks were being managed and objectives met.

Community Safety

A great example of the benefit of the Junior Citizen programme was highlighted recently. Whilst on her way to school, a pupil from Town Farm Primary School in Stanwell helped a cyclist who had been hit by a car. Using skills acquired from Junior Citizen, she placed the injured cyclist in the recovery position and kept them warm until the ambulance arrived.

Environment

Almost 200 residents have contacted Action Surrey to access grants for energy efficiency improvements ranging from loft or cavity installation to boiler replacements and renewable technology installations. These save our residents money and assist the most vulnerable members of our community.

54 Green Deal Assessments have been carried out across Spelthorne in partnership with Action Surrey. This provides residents with an energy efficiency overview of their property and recommends measures that can help them save money.

Since June, six recycling road-shows have been held at supermarkets across Spelthorne. These have been hugely successful with approximately 600 residents receiving advice and reminders about recycling and food waste collection services.

The Environment team have been building on the successful school food waste road shows that were trialled last year. They have spoken to approximately 300 parents/carers so far this term about how to reduce food waste at home and how to use the collection service. They have also increased the number of schools that have a food waste collection service.

Since June we have been selling food waste liners at libraries, community centres and the Council Offices. These are bought in bulk and sold for almost half the price of supermarkets. The project is generating a small profit, which we are feeding back into the purchase of more bags.

We have rationalised our recycling bank sites over the last two months from 18 to 8. This has removed sites where we were persistently having contamination problems, such as Ashford Hospital and Sunbury Tesco.

The Surrey Waste Partnership has recently undertaken a waste composition analysis of a number of streets which were deemed to be typical of Spelthorne. This analysis was of the residual waste and aimed to provide further information about materials which are not being recycled by residents.

The flower beds at Scott Freeman Green on Stanwell Road in Ashford have recently been replanted by Lotus Landscapes. The new beds have been designed to be eye catching yet low maintenance with perennial plants such as cyclamen, heather, juniper and conifer as well as ornamental slate stones.

Planning

The look and feel of Staines-upon-Thames is set to change significantly over the next few years after Spelthorne Council's Cabinet gave the go-ahead to further investigate the possibility of redeveloping several sites in the town. The aim is to breathe new life into an already successful town centre with a mix of vibrant new developments which make best use of an under-utilised natural asset, the River Thames.

The Council has successfully taken action against the owner of a site who used it as a scrap yard without planning permission. Whilst there was permission for a car workshop, the owner of the site was using it to load, unload and undertake basic processing of scrap metal. The Planning Inspector agreed with the Council that the level of noise and disturbance was unacceptable. The owner has six months to vacate and find another site.

The Council has recently secured the convictions of two defendants who were involved in the illegal felling of five trees protected in Shepperton under a long standing Tree Preservation Order. Tree surgeon Martin Declan Jones, was fined £750 and ordered to pay Council prosecution costs of £700 and the landowner was fined £10,000 and ordered to pay prosecution costs of £1,500.

The owner of an unsecured lock up garage site in Stanwell has been prosecuted by Spelthorne Council. The site was easily accessed from the open road and became a location for large amounts of fly tipping. The owner was fined a total of £1,000 and also ordered to pay £2,880 for the cost of removal and £372 to cover the Council's legal costs.

Council Tax and Benefits

Council Tax and Benefits is offering residents the chance to win a Christmas hamper if they sign up to use the Council's online services before 13 December.

Leisure

The Leisure team is currently consulting residents on how best to provide leisure facilities in the Borough. The deadline for completing the questionnaire is Friday 31 January 2014.

Two Spelthorne-based individuals enjoyed success at the Surrey Sports Awards held on Thursday 5 December at Kempton Park. Alan Woolford, of Queen Mary Sailing Club won the *3wise Disability Sport Award* and Daniel Simper was awarded the *Active Surrey Coach of the Year Award*.

The first of three Santa Trails was held at Sunbury Cross on Saturday 7 December. It was very successful with over 60 children and parents turning out to help find Santa.

A free craft open day with a Christmas theme was held on 14 December for children aged 5-11 at the Resource Centre in Staines Park.

Independent Living

Spelthorne Council, London Irish Rugby Club and Tesco in Sunbury are joining forces to give the Borough's Meals on Wheels customers a beautifully wrapped gift containing a box of chocolates, a mince pie, a scarf and a Satsuma; delivered with their meal on Christmas Eve.

Communications

The winter edition of the Bulletin has been delivered to all homes in the Borough. It includes articles about Christmas events, planning enforcement and rubbish/recycling collections over the festive period.

2016. Issues for Future Meetings

There were none.

2017. Urgent Items

There were none.

NOTES:-

- (1) *Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are reminded that under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the "call-in" procedure shall not apply to recommendations the Cabinet makes to the Council. The matters on which recommendations have been made to the Council, if any, are identified with an asterisk [*] in the above Minutes.***
- (2) *Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are entitled to call in decisions taken by the Cabinet for scrutiny before they are implemented, other than any recommendations covered under (1) above.***
- (3) *Within three working days of the date on which a decision of the Cabinet or a Cabinet Member is published, not less than three members [one of whom must be the Chairman] of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are able to "call in" a decision;***
- (4) *To avoid delay in considering an item "called in", an extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be convened within seven days of a "call in" being received if an ordinary meeting is not scheduled in that period;***
- (5) *When calling in a Cabinet decision for review the members doing so should in their notice of "call in":-***
Outline their reasons for requiring a review;
 - Indicate any further information they consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to have before it in order to conduct a review in addition to the written report made by officers to the Cabinet;***
 - Indicate whether, where the decision was taken collectively by the Cabinet, they wish the Leader or his nominee (who should normally be the Cabinet Member) or where the decision was taken by a Cabinet Member, the member of the Cabinet making the decision, to attend the committee meeting; and***
 - Indicate whether the officer making the report to the Cabinet or the Cabinet Member taking the decision or his/her representative should attend the meeting.***

(6) The deadline of three working days for "call in" by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the above decisions by the Cabinet is the close of business on 23 December 2013