



CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 31ST JULY 2012 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor H.A. Andrews - Chairman

Councillors:

C. Forehead (HR and Governance/Business Manager), D.T. Hardacre (Performance and Asset Management), K. James (Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development), G. Jones (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing), R. Passmore (Education and Lifelong Learning), D.V. Poole (Community and Leisure Services), K.V. Reynolds (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and Engineering), R. Woodyatt (Social Services)

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), A. Heaney (Corporate Director Social Services)

Also present:

C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager), G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development), B. Hopkins (Assistant Director Our Schools Our Future), C. Jones (Head of Performance and Property), A. West (Senior Admissions and Placement Officer)

24. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence had been received from Mrs S. Aspinall, Corporate Director Education and Lifelong Learning.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

26. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th July 2012 (minute nos. 17-23; page nos. 9-11) be approved and signed as a correct record.

27. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY PANEL

The minutes of the meeting of the Sustainable Development Advisory Panel held on 13th June 2012 were noted.

MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED**28. COMMUTED SUMS FOR HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE**

The report was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 17th July 2012. The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations contained in the report.

Members' views were sought on the principle of charging developers commuted sums to cover the future maintenance costs of non-standard highway apparatus offered for adoption by them, together with the time period to be covered by such sums.

The rationale for seeking commuted sums for future highway maintenance and associated works is to ensure that Highway Authorities have the resources to cover the upkeep and where appropriate, the replacement of the assets they have adopted from developers and for which the additional funding received from Welsh Government through Revenue Support Grant is insufficient.

A summary of the current Welsh Local Authority approach to commuted sums is set out in Appendix 1 to the report. A proposed list of items for which commuted sums should be calculated, with prices based on a 75 year period, is also attached. The commuted sums would need to be reviewed annually to ensure the sums remain up to date and that any additional items are added.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report: -

1. All developers entering into Highway Agreements with the Highway Authority be charged commuted sums via the legal agreements entered into for the future maintenance requirements of the works constructed by them and adopted by the Highway Authority for the costs associated with non-standard features that are not 'covered' by the Revenue Support Grant.
2. The time period to be used in calculating the commuted sums for all other items than structures should be 75 years.
3. The time period to be used in calculating the commuted sums for highway structures should remain at 150 years.
4. Officers review and update, as considered necessary, the calculated commuted sums in Appendix 2 of the report annually and the need for any additional items.
5. All commuted sums monies received be retained within Engineering Services Division budgets for future expenditure on highway maintenance use and in the specific asset categories, for structures and non structures.
6. 'Standard' construction be taken to mean a 5.5 metre wide carriageway with two 2.0 metre wide footways and street lighting.

29. REVIEW OF THE RESIDENT PERMIT PARKING SCHEME POLICY

The report was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 17th July 2012. The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations contained in the report.

The Council's Resident Permit Parking scheme/policy was last reviewed and amended in 2006. Over 190 requests have been received for new resident permit parking schemes since July 2006 but none have been progressed due to the significant drawbacks the policy is considered to have. The main issues of the current scheme/policy that inhibit support from residents to progress a scheme are as follows: only one permit per property can be issued; there is an administration charge of £30 per year for each permit; visitors and carers are not adequately catered for.

Appendix 2 to the report sets out a full list of the current scheme/policy criteria, the proposed amendments and a description of the benefits. The main change proposed is the move from one to two permits per property. It is not proposed to change the current administration charge of £30.

Members endorsed the proposals contained in the report subject to there being a review of the revised scheme/policy in 12 months.

RESOLVED that for the reasons set out in the officer's report: -

1. The changes to the Council's Resident Permit Parking Scheme and Policy, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved.
2. A review of the revised scheme/policy be undertaken in 12 months.

30. REVIEW OF HIGHWAY AGREEMENTS FEES AND CHARGES

The report was considered by the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 17th July 2012. The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations contained in the report.

The report details areas for which charges could be raised with developers for highway agreements and solicitors for non standard/additional questions raised in connection with highway searches and recommends levels of charges, which would be reviewed annually.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report: -

1. The existing and new items listed in Appendix 1 to the report become the subject of a charge at the levels of cost stated in the Appendix, in line with inflationary rises, as agreed in the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan at Council.
2. All of these charge levels be reviewed and revised annually, as considered appropriate, by officers.

31. FORMER BRICKWORKS SITE, DANYGRAIG, RISCA

At its meeting on 4th May 2010 Cabinet resolved that the land shown on the plan be leased to Mrs Blunt for the Lylac Ridge project, the details of which are set out in the earlier report. It was left that officers would report back to Cabinet with alternative options if the application did not progress satisfactorily.

In order to develop the site as originally proposed, planning permission will be required and as part of this process Mrs Blunt will be required to arrange site investigations and risk assessments to identify the extent of any contamination and to assess whether gas emissions are present.

Due to the costs and the uncertainty of obtaining funding for the surveys Mrs Blunt has expressed an interest in leasing the land on an annual tenancy for grazing purposes to graze existing animals in their ownership. If the land is used solely for grazing then planning permission will not be required.

It was noted that adjoining landowners have also expressed an interest in leasing the land for grazing purposes and the report set out the various disposal options.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report, support for the Lylac Ridge project be confirmed and Mrs Blunt be granted an annual farm business tenancy at a nominal fee on terms to be negotiated.

Officers recommended that the circumstances be reviewed after 3 years.

32. SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2013-2016

The school term and holiday dates for the academic years 2013 to 2016 have been established to try and ensure that there are common dates across Wales. Sixteen of the twenty one Welsh Local Authorities have already adopted the dates proposed in the appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the officer's report, the dates outlined in the appendix to the report be approved for the 2013-2016 academic years.

MATTERS THAT REQUIRED A RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

33. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LIVING WAGE

The report sought approval to implement arrangements for the introduction of "The Living Wage", a rate of pay per hour, which is considered sufficient for workers and their families to be able to live free from poverty.

On 30th May 2012, the Welsh Government announced its commitment to encourage employers in Wales to introduce the Living Wage (£7.20 per hour outside of London). The main objective is to increase employees' wages above the poverty line. The Council is committed to improving the impacts of poverty within the county borough and this is integral to a number of its policies and plans.

Members were fully supportive of the proposals contained in the report.

RECOMMENDED to Council that for the reasons contained in the officer's report: -

1. The funding proposals identified in Section 6 of the report be approved.
2. The Living Wage proposals contained within the report be implemented with effect from 1st October 2012.

The meeting closed at 2.43 pm.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 4th September 2012.

CHAIRMAN