

MINUTES of the meeting of CABINET held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD on Thursday, 18 December 2008 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor JP French (Chairman)

Councillors: AJM Blackshaw, H Bramer, JA Hyde, JG Jarvis, PD Price and DB Wilcox

In attendance: Councillors PA Andrews, GFM Dawe, PJ Edwards, TM James, RI Matthews and SJ Robertson

70. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor LO Barnett and RJ Phillips.

71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

72. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2008 be amended to better reflect the comments of the Cabinet meeting.

The Chairman of the Strategic Monitoring Committee referred to the minutes of the 20 November and in particular the agenda item on the Call-in of the Cabinet decision on swimming pool provision for primary schools in Hereford City, and stated that he did not believe that the minutes fully reflected the comments made at the meeting. The Leaders of the Independent, Liberal Democrat and Herefordshire Alliance Groups were in agreement with the comments made on the minutes. The Chief Executive reassured Cabinet that the minutes would be amended to ensure that the key points and decisions were reflected in the minutes.

73. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2007/08

The Cabinet Member, Environment and Strategic Housing presented the report informing Cabinet that approval was required prior to formal submission to the Secretary of State. The report, based on the UDP, has a thematic approach looking at the core subjects of housing, employment, retail etc. Cabinet was referred to the Executive Summary of the report and the UDP objectives in particular H(3), which referred to the efficient use of land for residential developments. The Cabinet Member stated that a conscious decision had been made not to go for high density housing, but rather to meet the needs of Herefordshire and its residents. The Cabinet Member also referred to H(4) in the report and how the authority was working towards fulfilling the need for additional affordable housing.

The Director of Regeneration reiterated that the report was a statutory annual requirement and stated that the Executive Summary showed the authority as being on line with 15 of the targets. Cabinet noted the green standard that had been

included in the report and which would be a challenge for the future.

The Strategic Monitoring Committee Chairman referred to page 34 point 7.13 of the report and stated he was pleased to see a public open space strategy for Hereford and in particular for the residents in the city centre, as it was essential for residents' wellbeing. The Cabinet Member stated that he had had a recent meeting with the PCT Board on where there were direct links with the Council's requirement for the provision of open spaces and the PCTs' targets for wellbeing and how they were looking at where policies came together.

The Chairman of the Strategic Monitoring Committee referred to a case where people had been paying £7-800 per month for rented accommodation and now could only afford to pay £300 and were finding they were in a position of having no place to live. The Cabinet Member referred to the work that was being done with the housing associations and the mortgage support that was in place for some cases. He added that government was being lobbied to further raise mortgage support from £50k back to the previous £75k.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet approve the Annual Monitoring Report 2007/08 for submission to the Secretary of State.

74. PROPOSAL AND ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007

Cabinet was advised by the Parish Liaison and Rural Services officer that the report on the Proposal and Action Plan to Address the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 was intended to update Cabinet on the Act and to make recommendations on its implementation in Herefordshire in light of the recent invitation from the Secretary of State to submit proposals. It was stated that the government paper sets out the process and Cabinet was being asked whether it wished to participate in the process, with the recommendation being to accept the invitation. It was added that the risk was the raising of expectations of the communities as to how much influence they would have on central government policy. The cost identified would not exceed £10k. It was hoped that there would be some government funding available, although this still needed to be investigated.

Cabinet was advised of the consultation process that would be carried out, which would be through the local media, parish councils, and community organisations. Proposals would then be submitted to the Citizen's Panel for prioritisation and any additional proposals. There would also be consultation with under represented groups such as youth, travellers and migrants. Once the proposals had been collated they would then be presented to Cabinet. Cabinet was concerned over the short time frame to consult with the various groups, including the Hereford Association of Local Councils (HALC) and the Herefordshire Partnership. It was requested that a briefing note be prepared for Members in order obtain their views and consider any suggestions. The Director of Regeneration reminded Cabinet that this would be an annual process and therefore any complex suggestions could be held over to the following year.

RESOLVED

THAT:

- (a) the invitation from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to submit proposals under section 2(1) of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 be accepted;**

- (b) the commencement of a local process for identifying the proposals for submission to the “Selector” by 31 July 2009 be approved; and**
- (c) a briefing note be sent to all Members to identify any potential proposals for submission.**

The meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.

CHAIRMAN