

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 11 JANUARY 2011, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A P Jackson (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors M R Alexander, L O Haysey,
R L Parker and M J Tindale

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, S A Bull, J Demonti,
A D Dodd, R Gilbert, J O Ranger, V Shaw
and J P Warren

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Anne Freimanis	- Chief Executive
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Alan Madin	- Director of Internal Services
Lois Prior	- Head of Strategic Direction (shared) and Communications Manager
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services

466 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor
M G Carver.

467 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed the press and public to the meeting. He also introduced Scott Crudgington, Stevenage Council, who was the Deputy Section 151 Officer for East Herts Council.

468 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor L O Haysey declared a personal interest in the matter referred to at Minute 476 – Hertford Museum Request for Capital Allocation, in that she was a member of Hertford Civic Society.

469 EAST HERTS LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN

The Executive Member for Housing and Health submitted a report seeking adoption of the Local Investment Plan. In 2009/10 the Homes and Community Agency (HCA) had initiated a process of 'Local Investment Planning' with all housing authorities. This covered all aspects of housing and regeneration in a local area in order to produce a clearly prioritised Local Investment Plan (LIP). The purpose of the East Herts LIP was to guide investment in housing in East Herts, particularly HCA funding.

The Executive Member set out the process used for developing the LIP and commented that, in general, the Council and its housing partners expected most affordable housing development to be delivered through the market and/or section 106 arrangements without the need for public subsidy. The LIP would be subject to continual review as projects are completed and new ones came forward.

The Executive Member stated that the LIP had been subject to the HCA's peer review process once at a local level and secondly at a regional Peer Assurance Group. They had considered the document to be well structured and complete, indeed, East Herts was the first LIP to have gone through both processes in Hertfordshire and had

been used as an example of a good practice document. The Executive Member congratulated Officers for their work on the LIP.

Various Members made a number of comments. The Executive Member corrected a couple of the figures and stated that a number of typographical changes would also be made to the final document.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Local Investment Plan as now submitted, be adopted; and

(B) the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Health, be authorised to make minor additions and changes to the Local Investment Plan.

470 **SAYESBURY COTTAGE AND THE HAILEY DAY CENTRE, SAWBRIDGEWORTH**

The Executive Member for Resources and Internal Support submitted a report proposing the transfer of ownership of Sayesbury Cottage and the Hailey Day Centre, Sawbridgeworth, to Sawbridgeworth Town Council. These properties represented the remaining elements of East Herts Council's property ownership at Sayesbury Manor.

The Executive Member detailed the history of the Council's ownership of the site. He stated that the Town Council wished to purchase Sayesbury Cottage for conversion and extension to establish a new base for the Town Council. They would also take on full responsibility for the Hailey Day Centre, as owners, enhancing and supporting the use as a Day Centre for the elderly while also making some beneficial use of the premises for meetings, etc.

The Town Council would pay the full current market value for Sayesbury Cottage, subject to confirming planning permission for the change of use to offices and an improved access from the rear. The Hailey Day Centre would be transferred for a nominal value as a community asset, which would continue to function and receive investment under local management and ownership. The benefit of this transaction would be to transfer assets into local control, which were important to the local community and would generate a capital receipt, at full market value, for East Herts without the uncertainty of marketing Sayesbury Cottage.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) East Herts Council agrees, in principle, to transfer the ownership of Sayesbury Cottage and the Hailey Day Centre, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, to Sawbridgeworth Town Council, on terms to be agreed; and

(B) the Director of Internal Services be authorised to agree appropriate terms which will include the transfer of Sayesbury Cottage at full market value.

471 **PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF LEASED CAR PARKS**

The Executive Member for Resources and Internal Support submitted a report proposing the acquisition of two surface car parks currently leased from Hertfordshire County Council. He advised that terms had been agreed to purchase the freehold on Apton Road, Bishop's Stortford and Baldock Street, Ware car parks.

The Executive Member outlined the financial benefits as well as the service implications for the proposal. He commented that the financial analyses detailed in the report demonstrated the advantages for the Council in purchasing the car parks. He also stated that the

proposal would secure the future provision of an important service to residents by enabling the Council to plan and influence the future of these sites.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the acquisition of the sites of the car parks at Apton Road, Bishop’s Stortford and Baldock Street, Ware from Hertfordshire County Council, on the terms agreed, be approved; and

(B) the Capital Programme be amended to include costs of £670k with revenue budgets for car park rents and investment income to be amended as set out in the report.

472 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2010, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

473 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY

The Executive received a report detailing those issues referred to it by the Scrutiny Committees. The Leader reflected on the valuable work of the Scrutiny Committees throughout 2010 in helping to inform policy development.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

474 CAR PARK CHARGES 2011/12

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport submitted a report on options for car park charges in 2011/12. In his absence, the Leader outlined the options as presented in the report and proposed that charges be frozen.

The Leader commented on the current economic situation and

the need for the Council to support town centre businesses. Therefore, he proposed that charges for 2011/12 be frozen and that the VAT increase be absorbed by the Council and not passed on to car park users. He referred to the financial implications of this for the Council, representing a reduction in income of 4.2%.

Various Members expressed their support for this option. In response to questions, the Leader reminded Members of the Transport Strategy that was due to be reported to the Executive in due course.

The Executive agreed that car park charges for 2011/12 be frozen.

RESOLVED – that car park pay and display charges for 2011/12, be frozen.

475 PROPOSED INCORPORATION OF THE HERTFORDSHIRE CCTV PARTNERSHIP

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Protection submitted a report reviewing the governance and structure of the Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership.

The Executive Member detailed the history of the Partnership and its growth since 1996. The Partnership had decided, following a consultation exercise, to expand the network commercially as well as entering new partnerships with other local authorities, which would realise economies of scale and reduce costs to core partners. Various governance models were being explored and a legal consultant had been engaged to provide advice on this.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the Joint CCTV Committee's intentions to:

- (A) provide a detailed business plan reflecting the likely future growth of the network, the

consequential reduction in service costs and other benefits to Partners;

- (B) investigate the most appropriate model for accommodating this growth, including the possibility of incorporation; and
- (C) seek external legal advice to advise on the governance options, including possible company structures and agreements, and that the partners share the cost of this work (approximately £4,000 each partner);

be approved.

476 HERTFORD MUSEUM - REQUEST FOR CAPITAL ALLOCATION

The Executive Member for Community Development, Leisure and Culture submitted a report on a request from Hertford Museum for an additional £10,000 capital grant towards the cost of a major redevelopment project. The Executive recalled that, this matter had been deferred at its meeting held on 9 November 2010, as further clarification was sought (Minute 365 refers).

The Executive Member detailed the additional information that had been obtained and emphasised that, if the Executive was minded to approve the grant, this would be the final payment.

The Executive Member for Resources and Internal Support expressed his disappointment at the overspend on the project resulting in the need for additional funding. However, he supported the proposal on the basis of protecting the Council's previous investment and as a final payment.

The Executive approved the additional capital allocation as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that a supplementary capital estimate of £10,000 for Hertford Museum, be approved.

477 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - OCTOBER 2010

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on finance and performance monitoring for October 2010.

In response to a question from Councillor A D Dodd on the cost of the recent by-elections, the Director of Internal Services undertook to provide a written response.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the budgetary variances set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report be noted;

(B) £100,000 of the Hertford Theatre budget be re-profiled from 2011/12 into 2010/11; and

(C) the addition to the capital programme of a scheme “Bishop’s Stortford Riverside and Markets Improvements” at a cost of £256,300, be approved.

478 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - NOVEMBER 2010

The Leader of the Council submitted an exception report on finance and performance monitoring for November 2010.

The Executive noted the report.

RESOLVED – that the budgetary variances, as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report submitted, be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.08 pm

Chairman
Date