
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

CABINET

**Held on Tuesday, 4 September 2007 at 9.30 am in
Norfolk Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr W.H.C. Smith (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)
Mr S. Askew
Mr P.D. Claussen
Lady Fisher
Mr A.C. Stasiak
Mrs A.L. Steward

Also Present

Mr D.S. Myers

In Attendance

Trisha Bailey	- Commercial Property Manager
Mark Finch	- Chief Accountant
Sian Harland	- Senior Committee Officer
Trevor Holden	- Chief Executive
Steve Knights	- Revenues Strategic Manager & Acting Operations Manager (Community/Environment)
Keith Stevens	- Acting Business Transformation Director
Mark Stokes	- Operations Manager (Cabinet Office) & Acting Deputy Chief Executive
Ian Vargeson	- Democratic Services Manager

Action By

99/07 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2007 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

100/07 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs J. W. Nunn and R. Goreham.

101/07 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

Mr D. Myers.

Action By

102/07 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2006/07

The Chief Accountant informed Members that the annual treasury report was a requirement of the Council's report procedures and covered the treasury activity 2006/07. The report also covered the actual Prudential Indicators for 2006/07 in accordance with the requirement of the Prudential Code.

Members' attention was drawn to the actual Capital Expenditure for 2006/07 which had been £11.37m with £36.3m in investments.

Two options were made available to Members. The first was to approve the actual 2006/2007 Prudential Indicators within the report and note the Treasury Management performance report for 2006/07. The second option was not to approve the actual 2006/07 Prudential Indicators within the report and note the Treasury Management Performance Report for 2006/07 as presented and make amendments.

The reason for the recommendation was that the Council had to comply with the Local Government Act 2003.

RESOLVED that

- (1) That the actual Prudential Indicators for 2006/07 within the report be approved.
- (2) That the Treasury Management Performance Report for 2006/07 be noted.

103/07 POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER (PCSO)

The report outlined a request from Norfolk Constabulary for funding towards the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) services and related Safer Neighbourhood role.

Breckland Council had contributed £25,000 over the past 3 years towards the cost of the provision of PCSOs in Breckland. This funding had greatly assisted with the overall shortfall of central funding for these valuable resources. Norfolk Constabulary was now requesting the same amount of funding for 2007/2008. However, a letter had been received from Chief Inspector Tony Cherington assuring the Council that this would be the last year this funding would be requested as the PCSOs funding would be mainstreamed in the constabulary budget in future years.

The creation of PCSOs had been successful and had achieved the following:-

- Attleborough – the PCSOs had solved problems in Norfolk Drive with a new neighbourhood agreement which formed part of the tenancy for residents. Since the agreement the anti-social behaviour had stopped anti-social behaviour.

Action By

- Thetford – the Town Centre Designated Drinking Area was being enforced which had led to a reduction in violent crime and anti-social behaviour associated with the night time economy.
- Dereham – Pub Watch had been launched with Breckland Licensing Section which provided radios linked into CCTV and existing shopwatch. There were plans to expand into late night refreshment houses and taxi firms.
- Watton – there had been successful intervention around the Bull Public House in the High Street and conditions had been placed on the licence to curb anti-social behaviour and offences associated to premises.
- Swaffham – PCSOs were being involved in community clean-up in an area suffering litter, discarded needles and general unsightliness.
- Rural Areas – the team had dealt with complaints from rural schools concerning inconsiderate parking and speeding through villages and rural hotspots of criminal damage.

Members agreed that the PCSOs had been a success but were pleased that this was the last year funding would be requested as it was a form of double taxation as the police already received a percentage of the Council Tax.

Concern was raised with regard to the number of police officers who were on duty during the weekend as it was felt that the market towns and villages within Breckland were left exposed to crime and disorder during this time.

The Democratic Services Manager informed Members that the Attleborough Designated Drinking Area had just soon come into effect and there was a proposal to expand the Thetford area.

The options were to either support or decline the request for a contribution towards funding the Breckland Police Community Support Officers

The reasons for the recommendations were that the results of many surveys carried out by Breckland and national surveys clearly demonstrated the public want to see more uniformed officers on the beat and request relevant authorities take actions to reduce crime, the fear of crime and tackle quality of life issues which were important for the wellbeing of the communities. The project fitted well with the Council's aims and objectives for statutory obligations under Section 17 of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act.

Furthermore, the role of the Police Community Support Officers compliments the Local Authorities enforcement and statutory duties and would assist the Council in meeting its objectives to improve quality of life for all residents.

Action By

RESOLVED that Norfolk Constabulary's request of a contribution of £25,000 towards the Policy Community Support Officers support in Breckland Safer Neighbourhoods be approved and that this will be a one off payment for 2007/08 only from the Council's Match Funding Reserve.

104/07 REFERENCE FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

(a) Review of the Breckland Council Website

Members received the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Commission following a review carried out by Policy Development and Review Panel 2.

Cabinet agreed with the recommendations and noted that many of the improvements sought had already been implemented.

105/07 NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Cabinet would be held on 9 October 2007 at 9.30 am.

106/07 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12a to the Act.

107/07 RELEASE OF FUNDS FOR AN EXTENSION TO A UNIT IN ATTLEBOROUGH

The report detailed an application to release funds to extend an existing factory in Attleborough as an investment opportunity with a guaranteed rental income on the extension to give the Council a 10% return on capital invested.

In response to queries regarding the income from the lease the Commercial Property Manager informed Members that a new lease would be drawn-up which would incorporate both the lease on the existing building at open market value and the extension at 10% return over a 10 year period.

Two options were made available to Members. The first was to release the funding indicated in the report plus VAT for the extension to take place to enable a local company to expand and to remain in Council owned premises within Breckland plus achieve a 10% return on capital invested. The second was not to release the funds and prohibit a local company from expanding and staying within the Breckland District.

Action By

The reason for the recommendation was that releasing the funds would enhance the Commercial Property Portfolio to enable a local company to expand and to achieve a 10% return on capital invested.

RECOMMEND that Council release the funding indicated in the report plus VAT to extend an existing unit in Attleborough as an investment opportunity for the Council and to enable an existing company to expand and remain within the Breckland District.

108/07 STAR CHAMBER REPORT JUNE 2007

The Chief Accountant informed Members that the Star Chamber met on the 14 and 18 June to consider a number of current funding priorities. Only priorities within available funds had been considered at this time. Cabinet were now requested to approve those priorities identified.

The options available to Members and the reasons for the recommendation were detailed in the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the interest income generated from the Dereham High Street Capital Receipts be used to fund the shortfall in funding of the Housing Register;
- (2) the Organisational Development Reserve be used to cover the costs of the fixed term posts of Senior Business Improvement Officer, Business Support Officer and HR Assistant and, if required, the first 6 years of the permanent post of ICT Manager; and
- (3) the Medium Term Financial Strategy be updated to extend the Organisational Development Reserve to cover key service delivery costs between budget cycles.

The meeting closed at 10.00 am

CHAIRMAN