

**MINUTES OF: THE CABINET**

**Date of Meeting: Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**PRESENT: Councillor Swain (in the Chair)  
Councillors Challinor, Driver, Essex and Graham**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive  
George Graham, Executive Director of Resources  
Phil Seddon, Head of Financial Services  
Andrew Buckle, Head of Customer Services and ICT  
Bill Lawley, Interim Legal and Democratic Services Manager  
Heather Moore, Committee and Member Services Manager  
Keith Bell, Building Control Manager  
Caroline Ridge, Planning Assistant**

**ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Aldred, Dickinson, Farrington, Lamb, Neal,  
Robertson, Sandiford, Thorne and Wilson  
County Councillor Serridge  
1 member of the public**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Tickner, Portfolio holder for Quality Services to Customers.

**2. MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**3. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS**

The Leader of the Council reported that there were no urgent items of business.

The Leader further reported that Items E5 (Traffic Management Act) and H1 (Job Evaluation) had been withdrawn from the Agenda.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No questions were raised under this item.

**6. OPEN SPACE AND PLAY EQUIPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS: A CONSULTATION DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Regulatory Services which set out proposals to consult on the draft Open Space and Play Equipment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The Planning Assistant reported that consultation would be undertaken for a period of six weeks in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement and a further report would be submitted to Cabinet later in the year.

**Decision Made:**

1. That proposals for consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document for Open Space and Play Equipment Contributions be noted.
2. That approval of the draft Supplementary Planning Document for Open Space and Play Equipment Contributions be delegated to the Executive Director of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regenerating and Promoting Rossendale.

**Reason for Decision:**

The SPD will clearly set out how the Council will expect developers to contribute to the provision of open space and play equipment as part of their development where appropriate.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

To not go forward with the production of an SPD which would leave the Council without a planning policy framework in this area.

**7. ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES: A CONSULTATION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regenerating and Promoting Rossendale presented the report of the Executive Director of Regulatory Services which set out proposals to consult on the draft Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The Planning Assistant reported that consultation would be undertaken for a period of six weeks in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement and a further report would be submitted to Cabinet later in the year.

**Decision Made:**

That the draft SPD on Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties be approved and go out to public consultation for a period of six weeks.

**Reason for Decision:**

The SPD will set out the Council's policies on alterations and extensions

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

To not go forward with the production of an SPD which would leave the Council without a planning policy framework in this area.

**8. UPDATE TO MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council, presented the report of the Head of Financial Services which provided an update to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy reflecting the Cabinet's policy proposals.

Councillor Essex reported that the Medium Term Financial Strategy had set a savings target of £850k over the two years 2009/10 and 2010/11 for the Council.

**Decision Made:**

That, subject to any final amendments arising from the Council's final budget approval, the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy allows the Council to demonstrate both the direction of resources into the priorities of the communities it serves and improvements in value for money.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**9. REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2008/09**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council, presented the report of the Head of Financial Services which detailed proposals on the Revenue Budget and level of Council Tax for 2008/09 including information on the Revenue Support Grant Settlement, the budget consultation process, the cost of maintaining current service levels, saving, investing and taxation and the Area Based Grant Distribution.

Councillor Essex highlighted proposals for an additional investment for the Pennine Lancashire Night Time Service which would enable complaints relating to noise nuisance to be investigated at the weekend.

The Head of Financial Services gave positive assurance to Members on the robustness of the budget and adequacy of reserves as required under S25 of the Local Government Act 2000.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee reported on the discussions which had taken place at the Committee on the revenue budget proposals.

In considering the report presented Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder, the Executive Director of Resources and the Head of Financial Services responded.

- Members allowances
- Concessionary Fares
- Role of town centre caretakers

**Decision Made:**

1. That the Cabinet recommends to Council a net budget requirement for Rossendale Council for 2008/09 of £ 11,504, 000.
2. That the Cabinet recommends to Full Council that a Council Tax set based on a 2.9% increase on the current year (2007/08), this equates to a Band D equivalent of £246.26 for 2008/09.
3. That further discussions take place on proposals to the Area Based Grant following an increase in funding from £449k to £540k over three years and that proposals be presented to the next meeting of the Cabinet.
4. That the Head of Financial Services be instructed to prepare the technical resolutions necessary to give effect to these proposals.
5. That Members note the contents of Appendix 4 and approve the proposed options to mitigate risk.
7. That Cabinet agree to recommend to the Council the proposals in paragraph 4.4.4 relating to Member allowances.
8. That members agree to the proposals in paragraph 4.6.4 relating to Concessionary Travel.

**Reason for Decision:**

The proposals produce a balanced and management budget for 2008/09.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

## 10. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/09 AND BEYOND

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council, presented the report of the Head of Financial Services which outlined details of capital expenditure estimates and resources for 2008/09 and for the medium term 2009/10.

In considering the report presented Members identified the following issues to which the Portfolio Holder, the Executive Director of Resources and the Head of Financial Services responded.

- Unadopted roads in the Borough
- The Council's Leisure White Paper
- Disability Discrimination Act compliance
- The Council's Accommodation Strategy

### Decision Made:

1. That Council be recommended to approve the following additions to the capital expenditure programme for 2008/09:

Detail	£000's
Vehicle replacement Programme (5 year programme)	805
Environmental Improvement Programme (4 year programme)	320
CCTV	51
Emergency Works	100
DDA Work	60
IT Upgrade	35
War Memorials (5 year programme)	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,401</b>

2. That subject to confirmation of grants the Brownfield's Recycling Programme and the Housing Programme (including the ELEVATE funded Environmental programme) as in Appendix 1 be approved, and that the Head of Financial Services be authorised to amend the programme in the light of final grant allocations.

### Reason for Decision:

The Council needs to ensure that it is able to generate adequate sources of capital funding to support its capital commitments over the medium term and that it does not over stretch itself in terms of borrowing exposure.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**11. BENEFIT TAKE UP STRATEGY**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Customer Services and ICT which detailed proposals to introduce a Benefit Take Up Strategy which set out the Council's commitment to improving the take-up of all welfare benefits by residents together with providing a framework within which the Council could work in order to deliver its objectives.

In considering the report presented Members identified the following issues to which the Head of Customer Services and ICT responded.

- Promotion of the Strategy
- The application process
- Information for Elected Members to provide to Constituents

**Decision Made:**

That the Benefit Take Up Strategy be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Strategy will support the Council and its partners to actively improve the take-up of all welfare benefits.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**12. STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING POLICY**

Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regenerating and Promoting Rossendale, presented the report of the Executive Director of Regulatory Services which detailed the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy together with the proposed scale of charges, for the consideration of the Cabinet.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the Street Naming and Numbering Policy be approved.
2. That the scale of charges to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Policy will give clear guidance to both applicants and officers to ensure that the naming and numbering function is transparent and all applications are processed in a consistent approach.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

To not adopt the Policy which would leave no clear rules for the administration of this function.

**13. REVIEW OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council, presented the report of the Executive Director of Resources which detailed the review of Corporate Governance Arrangements.

Councillor Essex reported the comments from the Audit Scrutiny Committee, who had considered the report at their meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

**Decision Made:**

That the Review of Corporate Governance Arrangements be agreed.

**Reason for Decision:**

The continual implementation of the Code of Corporate Governance will ensure that the business of the Council is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and is used economically, efficiently and effectively.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**14. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council, presented the report of the Head of Financial Services which provided an update on General Fund estimates for 2007/08, the Capital Programme and Treasury Matters.

Councillor Essex indicated that the current revenue spend forecast compared to budget for 2007/08 showed overall a net favourable variance of £60k.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Members approve in principle the carry forward of service savings as outlined in 4.2.5 of the report.

**Reason for Decision:**

Strong financial management ensures the effective management of the Council's resources which enables the provision of value for money services.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**15. PERFORMANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Councillor Essex, Portfolio Holder for a Well Managed Council presented the report of the Head of Policy and Performance which brought together a comprehensive range of performance issues covering Quarter 3.

The Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Committee reported on the discussions which had taken place at the Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008. She indicated that for future reports to Cabinet the observations of the Performance Scrutiny Committee would be included for consideration. It was agreed at Performance Scrutiny Committee, that the Head of Policy and Performance would review and update the Council's Data Quality and Performance Management Strategy to reflect the role of Members in scrutinising the Council's performance.

**Decision Made:**

1. That the report be noted.

**Reason for Decision:**

It is essential that the performance of the Council is monitored to ensure the delivery of the Council's priorities.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.10pm**

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CHAIR