

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET
TUESDAY 11 JANUARY 2011**

Held At 7.00pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors J N Clarke (Chairman), J A Cranswick, J E Fearon, R Hetherington and Mrs D J Mason

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors Mrs D M Boote, S J Boote, C J Evans, R M Jones, A MacInnes and G R Mallender.

OFFICERS PRESENT:

C Bullett	Deputy Chief Executive (CB)
A Graham	Chief Executive
S Goodrich	Head of Revenues & ICT Services
S Griffiths	Deputy Chief Executive (SG)
D Mitchell	Head of Partnerships and Performance
N Morton	Head of Financial Services
P Randle	Deputy Chief Executive (PR)
D Swaine	Head of Corporate Services

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE:

Councillor D G Bell

49. Declarations of Interest

There were none declared.

50. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 December 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51. Future Use of Park Lodge, Bridgford Road, West Bridgford

Councillor Cranswick presented the report of the Head of Revenues and ICT services setting out options for the future use of Park Lodge, Bridgford Road following the relocation of Rushcliffe Community and Voluntary Service (RCVS) to the Civic Centre. He stated that it was intended that RCVS would vacate the premises toward the end of the financial year 2010/11 leaving the building empty from that point.

By referring to the report Councillor Cranswick explained that it set out an options appraisal detailing potential future uses for the building. This appraisal indicated that the property had a number of limitations particularly in relation to its internal accommodation size, layout and access. Furthermore building

works could be required and the fact that its location was outside the retail area also restricted options for its future use.

Councillor Cranswick went on to explain that disposal of the premises appeared on the face of it to be the best option, however it was important to consider that the premises were within the curtilage of the Hall and therefore any action taken, at this stage, should not restrict future wider options. He stressed that disposal at this stage would be premature, particularly as the Hall would be returning to the Borough Council once arrangements with the County Council had ended. He explained that the report included a plan showing the location of the premises.

Councillor Cranswick acknowledged that a key factor to consider in reaching a decision was the minimisation of costs and risks. He explained that the report indicated that the premises required upgrading and the cost of these works could be significant. Furthermore once the premises were vacant the Council would become liable for business rates which would be in the region of £2,500 per annum, after the initial three month period of exemption had expired.

At paragraph eight the report set out details of the options for the Council retaining and letting the premises for a variety of uses. These options indicated the estimated level of rent could vary between £4,000 - £8,000 per annum depending on the type of use. However, any options for rental property could require a significant rent free period to be offered in order for the tenant to upgrade the property and fit it out for their specific use.

Commenting further on the issue of disposal Councillor Cranswick stated that the option of demolishing the property had been discussed with the Council's Conservation Officer, who was of the opinion that the building occupied a prominent position in the local street scene. Therefore it should be valued as a heritage asset contributing positively to the townscape of West Bridgford. On this basis it was anticipated that there would be strong local objection to its demolition.

In conclusion Councillor Cranswick stated that the best way forward was to refer the report back to officers in order that further discussions could take place regarding the future use of the premises. He believed that doing so would enable further consideration to be given to the options in light of the future of the Hall and the wider opportunities this would present.

Councillor Fearon concurred with this view stating that the premises were in use at present and as such this evidenced how they could be used in the short term future without restricting the wider long term opportunities. Councillor Clarke stated that he agreed with this and the option of short term letting of the property with minimum expenditure would help to ensure longer term opportunities were not restricted and risks and costs associated with the payment of business rates and physical deterioration were mitigated.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Clarke the Head of Revenues and ICT clarified the period of exemption from business rates for empty premises and the rate at which these were charged when the 3 month exemption period had ended.

RESOLVED that Cabinet refer the report back to officers for further consideration of options, in the light of discussions in due course on the future of the Hall and its environs.

52. **Nottinghamshire County Council West Bridgford Library Project**

Councillor Cranswick presented the report of the Head of Revenues and ICT services outlining the Nottinghamshire County Council's West Bridgford Library project and the impact of this upon the Council's land. The report set out a timescale for the proposed project, however the County Council had recently revised this timescale indicating that the project would commence in October 2011 and be completed in January 2013. It was proposed that the library would open at some point before May 2013.

The report indicated that in order to facilitate the build, negotiations had been undertaken to transfer land between the Borough Council and the County Council for no consideration as the areas and land values were broadly equivalent. Details of the area of the land were set out in a plan contained as an Appendix to the report.

Councillor Cranswick indicated that the land being transferred to the County Council included the buildings occupied by Shop Mobility and the Spiritualist Church. As part of the arrangements the County Council would have to provide a replacement premise, at their own cost, for Shop Mobility. It was their intention to provide temporary accommodation during the construction period and space would be available for Shop Mobility in the new library in the future at a nominal rent.

The report set out details of the proposed agreement which indicated that during the construction period the County Council required use of part of the Council's car park. The space required during this period equated to 10 parking spaces and these would be re-charged at the maximum parking charge of £20 per day. An initial eight spaces would also be required on an ad-hoc basis and would be charged at the same rate to be payable on practical completion of the project. Councillor Cranswick indicated that officers had put in place actions to monitor the usage of the car park in order to ensure these arrangements worked properly.

Councillor Fearon made reference to the inclusion of facilities for young people in the project and Councillor Mrs Mason welcomed the proposed youth centre as it would provide a valuable and needed community facility.

Councillor Clarke referred to paragraph nine in the report and the requirements of the County Council to ensure that the impact from the build was minimised and to make good any damage caused within one month of practical completion of the project. He welcomed this on the basis that it was very important to ensure that when the project was complete the area was restored to its present standard.

In response to questions from Councillor Clarke the Head of Revenues and ICT Services confirmed that although the timescale for construction and completion had been revised the land transfer arrangements were still going ahead as proposed. The Head of Revenues and ICT further confirmed that the

revised timescale was shortened with the proposal being that the project would take 18 months rather than two years. On this basis the income coming from the arrangements for the use of car park spaces, as part of the construction process, would reduce proportionately.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the land transfers with Nottinghamshire County Council and the occupation of the Borough Council owned land during the construction period of the new library.

53. **Joint Use Leisure Centres – Future Funding Arrangements**

Councillor Fearon presented the report of the Head of Partnerships and Performance about the formalised arrangements for joint use leisure centres which had been in place since 2003. These arrangements were due to terminate in 2013 and the County Council were proposing to change the arrangements from, at the latest, April 2011. The changes that were being proposed had been brought about by the introduction of 'foundation' status for schools and the County Council's desire to fund all schools by the same mechanism.

The report indicated that the existing arrangements required all parties to be signatories to the agreement. The County Council had put these agreements in place following decisions to reduce their funding for joint use sites across the County. However, the advent of 'foundation' schools had removed schools from the direct control of the County Council and transferred assets to the Schools' Governors. Therefore when a joint use school achieved foundation status it was deemed to be a termination event within the joint use arrangements. This required a new joint use arrangement to be formulated to reflect the change and revised documents, based on Local Management of Schools Funding (LMS). As such a proposal for revised arrangements had been received and considered by officers and were recommended to Cabinet for approval.

Councillor Fearon indicated that the new agreement put forward by the County Council broadly mirrored the existing agreement, however the specific changes were set out at paragraph three. Councillor Cranswick stated that Cabinet had to make a decision which ensured an agreement remained in place. He stressed that without such an agreement it would not be possible to effectively manage the joint use arrangements.

Councillor Fearon referred to the arrangements for Keyworth Leisure Centre and the Head of Partnerships and Performance stated that the issue of the swimming pool building was being addressed by establishing a lease agreement with the County Council. He explained that as part of this agreement it was anticipated that the County Council would make an annual revenue contribution as outlined in paragraph five of the report. With regard to the dry side facilities at that Leisure Centre the Head of Partnerships and Performance stated that these would be subject to a similar agreement between the Borough Council and the School. However this would have no direct contribution from the County Council but the School would be responsible for repairs and maintenance. He also confirmed that the termination arrangements for both the new LMS agreement and the lease for

Keyworth Leisure Centre building remained at 2 years in line with the current joint use agreement.

RESOLVED that Cabinet accept the introduction of the local management of schools funding arrangement for the management of joint use leisure facilities being proposed by Nottinghamshire County Council.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm

CHAIRMAN