



**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CABINET  
TUESDAY 18 MAY 2010**

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

**PRESENT:**

J N Clarke - Chairman

Councillors D G Bell, J A Cranswick, J E Fearon, R Hetherington and Mrs D J Mason

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillors S Boote, A MacInnes and B Venes.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

D Banks	Head of Environment and Waste Management
C Bullett	Deputy Chief Executive (CB)
A Graham	Chief Executive
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

**1. Declarations of Interest**

There were none declared.

**2. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 March 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. Choice Based Lettings Scheme and Draft Housing Allocations Policy**

Councillor Bell presented the report of the Head of Community Shaping and explained that the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme and the draft Housing Allocations Policy had been considered by the Councils Community Development Scrutiny Group at its meeting on 19 April. He stated that the Group had endorsed the proposed CBL Scheme and the Policy and recommended them to Cabinet for approval.

The report indicated that all local housing authorities and social housing landlords were required by Government to introduce a CBL for the allocation of social rented housing by the end of December 2010. Additionally the report outlined the progress in the implementation of CBL and the development of a sub-regional housing allocations policy to ensure full compliance with the latest legislation governing social housing allocations.

Commenting further Councillor Bell stated that the Choice Based Lettings scheme brought advantages for service users through the provision of a transparent and open process and accurate and up to date information on homes that were available. Furthermore the arrangements for delivery of the scheme were efficient and cost effective as it was largely financed by government funding.

Responding to comments from Councillors Cranswick and Fearon, the Deputy Chief Executive (PR), explained the banding process as set out in the draft Housing Allocations Policy. He explained that the application process was structured in such a way as to obtain and verify the necessary information which could be evaluated against a criterion to establish the correct banding.

Councillor Mrs Mason welcomed the CBL and the draft policy and referred to a meeting she had attended with the partner authorities involved. She added that the proposed scheme and policy provided a much simpler and straightforward process which made it clearer as to how and why decisions were made. She believed the scheme and the policy would bring significant benefits for service users and were a positive move forward.

In response to a question from Councillor Hetherington, the Deputy Chief Executive (PR), clarified the process of exclusion from the scheme and potential circumstances when it could be necessary to consider this.

In conclusion Councillor Bell stated that scheme and the policy would provide benefits for service users and together they would provide a more responsive, and transparent system enabling applicants to be active in the search for a home.

RESOLVED that:

Cabinet approves the implementation of a sub regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme and the Housing Allocations Policy.

#### **4. Customer Access Strategy**

Councillor Mrs Mason presented the report of the Head of Partnerships and Performance setting out the Customer Access Strategy. She stated that the Strategy had been considered by the Councils Community Development Scrutiny Group at its meeting on 19 April and she thanked the Group for its valuable input. Having considered the Strategy the Group had recommended that Cabinet approve the strategy and agree to its publication subject to the completion of a full Equality Impact and Rural Proofing Assessment.

By referring to the report Councillor Mrs Mason added that the Strategy formalised the Council's approach to customer access and evidenced its commitment to ensuring customers were at the centre of all its activities. She stated that the strategy comprised of three distinct elements, Customer Services, Communications and Consultation. She went onto explain that the strategy, as composite document brought these three elements together setting out the Councils approach to access to services, access to information and access to feedback.

Commenting further Councillor Mrs Mason stated that the Council was highly regarded in respect of the provision of customer services and this was reflected by high levels of customer satisfaction. She added that the action plan within the strategy set out what the Council would do in delivering the strategy and what customers could expect and the difference this would make to communities.

RESOLVED that:

Cabinet approves the strategy and agrees to its publication subject to the completion of a full Equality Impact and Rural Proofing Assessment as recommended by the Community Development Group.

## **5. Leisure Strategy Review – Interim Report**

Councillor Fearon presented the interim report of the Leisure Strategy Review Member Panel which had been considered by the Councils Community Development Scrutiny Group at its meeting on 19 April 2010. He thanked the Member Panel for its valuable work in the development of the interim report and the significant progress made in reviewing the Leisure Strategy.

Councillor Fearon explained that the interim report identified the work undertaken to date by the Member Panel and identified three areas where further clarity was required from Cabinet to assist with future deliberations and taking the review forward. These three areas were set out expressly in paragraph two within the summary of the report. He stated that these were significant issues for determination and as such more in-depth discussion would be required particularly as the development of the Strategy had links with many other issues. With regard to joint use facilities he added that it had to be recognised that these had brought significant benefits to Rushcliffe, but a key issue was the development of a strategy fit for the future by taking into account all the relevant factors.

Commenting further on the report Councillor Fearon highlighted paragraph three within the summary which acknowledged that any changes to the current strategy needed to take account of potential future housing growth and changes in leisure trends.

Councillor Clarke sought clarification of the projected lifetime of leisure facilities and asked if this had been considered as part of the review. In response the Head of Performance and Reputation explained that the review process had involved site visits in order for the Member Panel to determine the standard and condition of facilities. He went on to explain that these visits had identified issues in respect of standards and the projected lifetime of facilities and this was something which could be discussed in more detail at the Member Panels next meeting on 26 May. Councillor Clarke stated that this was an important issue and the Member Panel should give due regard to it when considering future leisure provision.

Councillor Cranswick stated that he agreed with this and that it was crucial to have an accurate reflection of the lifetime of existing facilities in order to properly determine future provision. Councillor Fearon concurred with this view

and stated that due consideration should also be given to a wide range of factors all which had significant impact on future provision.

The Deputy Chief Executive (SG) indicated that the Member Panel was seeking clarification of the way forward in order to make further progress with the review. She added that arrangements could be made for Cabinet's comments to be fed into the review process in order that it could continue. Additionally a further report would then be provided to Cabinet at the appropriate stage to update on progress.

Councillor Clarke stated that there were clearly many issues and factors to consider however it was also appropriate to take account of the national position particularly the potential implications arising from the recent change in central government. Councillor Fearon supported this comment and stated that it was important to consider all the relevant factors before a response was made on the areas for clarification.

RESOLVED that:

1. Cabinet takes on board the issues raised by the Member Panel and will consider an appropriate response once the national strategy emerges as a result of the new Central Government.
2. Cabinet requests that the Member Panel;
  - (i) Evaluates the lifetime of the existing centres under the current arrangements as part of the review process and;
  - (ii) Invites relevant partners to participate in the review, particularly representatives from the County Council and Parkwood Leisure.

## **6. Alleyway Running Between 36 and 37 Scotland Bank, Cotgrave**

Councillor Fearon introduced the report of the Head of Environment and Waste Management setting out the options for an alleyway that runs between 36 and 37 Scotland Bank, Cotgrave. He referred to the section of the report which gave details of the concerns from residents regarding anti-social behaviour and criminal activity within, and in the vicinity of, the alleyway. He also referred to the consultation undertaken, the responses provided and the appraisal of these as set out in the appendix to the report.

Commenting further Councillor Fearon stated that the report set out the factors that needed to be considered before deciding whether to take any action and the options available and brief explanation of these. He added that once a decision had been made it would be necessary to take the matter forward so that it could be properly and amicably resolved.

The Chief Executive advised Cabinet that when making a decision consideration should be given to the long-term implications of any action taken and potential plans for the areas development. Furthermore any action taken should be necessary and proportionate to address the problems associated with the location namely anti-social behaviour and criminal activity. Additionally

it would need to take into account the views of any people immediately affected by it.

Councillor Mrs Mason asked for confirmation of the level of anti social behaviour incidents associated with the area and for clarification of the type of equipment that could be used for the gating process. In response the Head of Environment and Waste Management stated the equipment which could be used was purpose built and vandal proofed. It would restrict access to the alleyway by way of a heavy duty locked gate which was sufficiently large enough as to not be climbed over. Access was possible by Council staff using a key to ensure the alleyway could be cleaned and maintained as necessary.

RESOLVED that:

Cabinet authorises the Head of Environment and Waste Management, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to determine the most appropriate action to be implemented in order to address the immediate anti-social behaviour problems associated with the location

## **7. Orston Conservation Area Review**

Councillor Bell presented the report of the Head of Planning and Place Shaping indicating that in line with government requirements, appraisals and reviews of boundaries were being undertaken for all the Conservation Areas in the Borough. As part of this review process the Orston Conservation Area had been appraised and its boundary reviewed and the report recommended changes to the Conservation Area boundary.

Commenting further Councillor Bell explained that review proposed the inclusion of a large area in the boundary and this land was mainly open space. He explained that appendix one of the report set out the new areas to be included in the boundary and the map at appendix two clarified the proposed boundary changes.

RESOLVED that

Pursuant to Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, changes to the boundary of the Orston Conservation Area be designated as shown on the plan at Appendix 2 of the report and notice be given in accordance with the statutory requirements.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

CHAIRMAN