

**SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING – 1 October 2014**

**REPORT OF THE CABINET**

The Cabinet met on the evening of Wednesday 10 September 2014.

On that occasion the Cabinet considered the matters set out below. Decisions shown in boxed areas are subject to Council confirmation; the reports considered by the Cabinet were available to all members in advance of the Cabinet meeting.

**1. Corporate PC Replacement**

The Cabinet Member for Shared Services and Corporate Support announced that he was withdrawing this report as information had just been received to the effect that the procurement system for hardware was changing nationally and it was therefore considered appropriate to await new guidance and bring a report to the next meeting.

**2. Anti-Social Behaviour – Community Triggers**

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Streetscene presented the report which introduced the provision of Community Triggers giving anti-social behaviour victims and communities the right to request a review of their case and bring agencies together to take a joined up approach to find a solution. The report was seconded.

Members of the Cabinet regretted that the definition of anti-social behaviour excluded 'nuisance and annoyance' but welcomed the multi-agency approach and recalled local incidences of anti-social behaviour which had been successfully dealt with in this manner.

Cabinet members shared Councillor Hughes' view that repeated irresponsible parking and behaviour during the 'school run' was a real cause of concern in built-up areas. He said that neither the police nor the county council enforced parking restrictions and something needed to be done to alleviate the problem.

In responding to questions from other members present about which other bodies might be designated as responsible agencies (such as schools), who had responsibility for determining what constituted 'harassment', 'annoyance' and 'hate', and for logging incidents and initiating investigations, the Cabinet Member and the Leader pointed out that the legislation was very new and there would undoubtedly be refinements moving forwards, but this was a council responsibility working in close liaison with the police and with other relevant agencies as considered appropriate.

It was decided to:-

- 1) adopt the proposed Community Triggers as outlined in the report;
- 2) delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Streetscene, to designate social landlords in the borough to be part of the Community Trigger group of relevant bodies and/or to issue Community Protection Notices, and
- 3) delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Streetscene, to adjust the Community Triggers following any future review and subsequent recommendations from the Lancashire Anti-Social Behaviour group.

### 3. Community Infrastructure Levy – Instalments Policy and Payment in Kind

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing presented the report which considered an instalments policy and a payment in kind policy intended to ensure the fair, practical and flexible implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Councillor Hughes proposed that the policy wording on page 2 should be amended to read 'in those circumstances that the authority Cabinet resolve are acceptable, if the authority will accept land and/or infrastructure....' to ensure that Cabinet was satisfied that the council was getting a fair deal in terms of payment in kind. The report and proposed amendment were seconded.

Another member present suggested that it was crucial for the borough for some larger projects to come through and expressed concern about the possible adverse impact on the viability of large strategic housing sites as mentioned on page 3. He considered that a review of the policy within 12 months might be premature. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that this was a new venture and pointed out that the policy could be reviewed at any time. It had been discussed at the highest level with developers and it was considered that it was the smaller developers who might have difficulty paying up front.

It was decided to:

- 1) adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy 'Payment in Kind' policy as amended, and
- 2) adopt the Community Infrastructure Levy Instalments policy.

### 4. Housing Assistance Policy 2014

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing presented the Housing Assistance Policy 2014 which brought together and updated a number of existing policies, including Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), and the changes to that scheme were outlined on page 3. The report was seconded.

Members of the Cabinet commended the policy for its clarity, particularly in relation to the DFGs.

Other members present generally welcomed the changes but had lingering concerns about the underspend on DFGs over the last year and the impact that this might have had on people on the waiting list. They sought assurance that the money would be spent quickly to allow the backlog to be cleared and residents to have potentially life changing adaptations made / equipment fitted.

Responding to questions and observations from members in the audience, Councillor Hughes agreed that it had been a traumatic two years and he was sympathetic to members' concerns. However, this policy signified a fresh start and the council officers concerned were determined to make the scheme work. Ultimately control was being handed back to the customer to choose who to appoint to carry out the work, although the council would maintain a list of approved suppliers and would be able to check on the quality of work undertaken.

The Leader pointed out that the waiting list had reduced by about 60% following an exercise to determine eligibility. She and her Cabinet colleagues were fully supportive

of Disabled Facilities Grants and wanted things to move forward as quickly as possible. Progress was being monitored extremely closely now, with fortnightly reports provided to the Cabinet Member. She understood there had been a suggestion of a separate 'pot' for stairlifts which she thought was a good idea.

It was decided to:

- 1) recommend Council to adopt the Housing Assistance Policy 2014;
- 2) publish the policy in accordance with the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, with the policy coming into effect after the date of publication;
- 3) recommend Council to adopt the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions Relating to Approval of Payment of Grant) General Consent Order 2008 ("the General Consent Order"), and
- 4) recommend Council to approve and adopt the grant conditions as outlined in Appendix 1 of the policy.

#### **5. Our People Plan Outturn 2013/14 and Draft Our People Plan 2014/15**

The Leader presented for noting the report which had been considered at length at the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 23 June 2014. She was pleased to report that 97% of personal appraisals had now been completed.

It was decided to note the report.

#### **6. Performance, Budget and Risk Monitoring Report – Year End 2013/14 (April 2013 to March 2014)**

The Leader presented for noting the report which had been considered at length at the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 23 June 2014.

In response to a question from the member of the public, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources confirmed that the authority examined every aspect of the council to try to ensure it was as efficient as possible. Redundancy was not a measure of efficiency and every effort was made to avoid redundancy whenever possible.

It was decided to note the report.

#### **7. Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) – Proposed Further Modification**

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing presented the report which provided an update on the adoption of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the new Local Plan, and raised awareness of recent correspondence suggesting the potential for a legal challenge by another local authority in relation to Policy C4 concerning the Cuerden site.

The report sought Cabinet approval for six weeks consultation on an amendment to

the policy requiring that 'any proposed main town centre uses must satisfy the sequential and impact tests....'

Members were supportive of the amendment but expressed their frustration that this council was being put in this position now and said that they would be looking more closely at policies of other local authorities.

It was decided to endorse the Further Main Modification relating to Policy C4, the Cuerden Strategic site, for a six week consultation period and subsequent submission to the Planning Inspectorate.

**8. The Cabinet's Forward Plan**

It was decided to approve the Forward Plan submitted under Section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000.

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

**9. Land Charges**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources presented the report for noting.

It was decided to note the report.

I hereby commend the report of the Cabinet to the Council.

**COUNCILLOR MRS MARGARET SMITH**

**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**