

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

AT A MEETING of the **CABINET** held at the County Hall, Durham on **THURSDAY 19 JUNE 2008** at **10.00 a.m.**

PRESENT

COUNCILLOR S. A.HENIG in the Chair

Cabinet Members:

Councillors Foster, Hovvels, E Huntington, Nicholls, Robson, Stephens, Vasey and B Young.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hodgson

A1 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

A2 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

A3 Year-end Financial Report – 2007/08

The Cabinet considered a report of the County Treasurer (for copy see file of Minutes) presenting information about the 2007/08 outturn in advance of the Statement of Accounts being submitted to the County Council on 26th June, to allow the financial outturn of the County Council to be examined and to challenge the County Treasurer and Chief Officers on issues raised in the document. In addition the report addresses slippage of the Capital programme. The County Treasurer also pointed out that ways and means of refining and improving Capital Budgeting continued to be examined.

Councillor Young expressed his appreciation of the way that the Budget had been monitored and controlled over what had been a very turbulent financial year. For the budget to be within 1% of target was a credit to the County Treasurer and the Finance staff across the Council.

Councillor Southwell enquired, in light of the additional £9.3 m that had been added to the General Reserve, whether there was scope to double the

Members' Initiative Fund and also their allocations for local highways related schemes. The County Treasurer reminded Members that these allocations had been doubled in 2007/08 on a "one-off" basis and now that there were 2 members per Electoral Division each would receive an allocation of £2,000 as their Member Initiative Fund and £6,000 for local highways related schemes.

The Chairman was also of the view that in the coming financial year, with challenges to be addressed in the run-up to the New Unitary Council, it would be better to remain prudent and maintain the allocations at the current levels.

Resolved:

That the recommendation in the Report be agreed.

A4 Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) 2007-08 – Final Outturn

The Cabinet considered a Report of the Head of Policy and Improvement (for copy see file of Minutes) providing details of the 2007/08 final performance for Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs).

Resolved:

That the recommendations in the Report be agreed.

A5 The Work of Corporate Risk Management in relation to the Year April 2007 – March 2008

The Cabinet considered a Report of the County Treasurer on behalf of the Corporate Risk Management Group (for copy see file of Minutes) providing an insight into the work carried out by the Corporate Risk Manager and the Corporate Risk Management Group during the year April 2007 – March 2008. The report also responded to the Key Lines of Enquiry in the Use of Resources element of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment

In response to a question from Councillor Armstrong about the need to conclude the Waste Management Contract as soon as possible, Councillor Robson explained that robust monitoring of the position was in hand. Councillor Young, the Portfolio holder for Environment, added that a comprehensive report was presently being prepared about Waste issues. This would be presented to Cabinet before the end of July.

Resolved:

That the recommendation in the Report be agreed.

**A6 Prosperous Places: Taking Forward the Sub National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration
[Key Decision BSE/CEO/EDR/01/08]**

The Cabinet considered a Report of the Acting Corporate Director Environment (for copy see file of Minutes) setting out responses to the Government's "Prosperous Places" consultation, from the Association of North East Councils on behalf of the local authorities and also a draft regional response. The report also highlighted the current draft of a region-wide response and identified those aspects of it where there is a particular County Durham element which would indicate the need for a supplementary County Council response.

With regard to paragraph 7 of the report (relating to specific matters that were important to County Durham) Members were informed that these were now being incorporated in the ANEC response and the response on behalf of the region, with the exception of the issue of strategic authority boundary (bullet point 2) of the County Council from April 2009 about which ANEC is still being pressed.

Resolved:

That the recommendation in the Report be agreed.