

## **CABINET: MINUTES**

**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011

**Time:** 10.00 a.m. – 12.45 p.m.

**Present:** Chairman: Councillor N Clarke

Councillors I Bates, D Brown, S Criswell, M Curtis, D Harty, L W McGuire and M Shuter

**Apologies:** Councillor S Count

**Present by invitation:** Councillors K Bourke, F Brown, S Hoy, S Johnstone, L Nethsingha, T Sadiq, T Stone, S Tierney, S van de Ven, F Whelan and S Whitebread

### **439. MINUTES: 6<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were approved as a correct record.

### **440. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Curtis declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct in item 15, Consultation from Fenland District Council on 'Fenland Communities Development Plan: Core Strategy', as a member of Fenland District Council.

### **441. PETITIONS**

#### **Petition on Bus Services**

Cabinet received a petition with 204 valid signatures, plus a further 57 without full address details, which read:

The Conservative-run County Council has axed all funding for subsidised buses – the worst bus cuts in England. Comberton 18 services that will be affected are the 7.15 pm to Cambridge and return at 23.15 pm that operate on Friday and Saturday.

Residents who rely on these services, including young people and those without cars, will be hard hit and face either increased isolation or increased cost of travel in already difficult economic conditions.

We the undersigned urge the County Council to reconsider its cuts to these vital services.

Three representatives of the petitioners addressed Cabinet, South Cambridgeshire District Councillor Harangozo and Comberton Village College students Thomas Denney and Subha Kumar. They reported that they were working on a proposal to reinstate the service, which they would submit shortly.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor Criswell, expressed concern that the text of the petition was misleading: the County Council had not axed all funding for subsidised buses, but was proposing a phased withdrawal of bus subsidies over four years, subject to consultation. He invited the petitioners to take part in this consultation process.

It was resolved:

That as there was no related report on the agenda, the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure would send a written response to the petitioners within 10 working days of the meeting.

#### Petitions relating to the Library Service

Cabinet received two petitions relating to the library service. The first had 1,631 signatures and read:

We the undersigned express our support for Sawston Library and call on Cambridgeshire County Council to keep Sawston Library open.

Yasmin Emerson, the Chair of the Friends of Sawston Library, addressed Cabinet on behalf of the petitioners.

The second petition had 7,052 signatures at the time of submission, 2,295 of them electronic. It read:

We the undersigned call upon Cambridgeshire County Council to reject proposals to close libraries or to replace the existing professional service with a reduced service run by volunteers. We believe that libraries are a vital part of the community.

Jane Elliott, the Chair of the Friends of Rock Road Library, addressed Cabinet on behalf of the petitioners. She noted that the petition now had over 8,000 signatures from across Cambridgeshire, 5,500 on paper and 2,500 electronic.

Responding to the two petitioners, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, recognised the strength of local feeling. He undertook to work with Friends groups and local communities to take the library service forwards.

The issues raised by these two petitions were considered as part of the following item.

#### **442. A 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY LIBRARY SERVICE**

The Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, introduced proposals for a 21<sup>st</sup> century library service. He explained that these had been developed in response to feedback from local people on the value they placed on their libraries, in urban and rural areas and in new communities.

Five non-Cabinet members spoke on this item:

- The Chairman of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tierney, reported comments from the Committee, which had been incorporated into the main report, and noted that the Committee looked forward to helping to prepare more detailed proposals in due course.
- The Liberal Democrat Spokesman for Localism, Climate Change and Social Justice, Councillor Whitebread, expressed concern that detailed proposals were still lacking and stressed the value of libraries to local communities.
- The Labour Group Leader, Councillor Sadiq, expressed concern that some libraries could yet close. He also emphasised the importance of library buildings to local communities, noting that information services co-located in another facility would not provide the same benefit.
- Councillor Johnstone spoke as the local member for Willingham and the planned development at Northstowe. She emphasised the importance of Willingham library to its local community, including Travellers, and called for early library provision at Northstowe.
- Councillor Whelan spoke on behalf of the Friends of Comberton Library. She noted that this library was situated at the Village College site in Toft and asked for Toft Parish Council to be involved in all future discussions. She stressed the importance of the library's physical presence and expressed uncertainty as to the nature of the support being sought from the local community.

Cabinet also noted comments submitted by Councillors Gymer and Jenkins.

In discussion, Cabinet members confirmed that it was no longer intended to make the 48% funding reduction to the library service over five years as envisaged in the current Integrated Plan. Instead, discussions would take place with communities on an individual basis, developing proposals that would meet local need, whilst also ensuring the most effective use possible of the Council's and partners' assets and of resources and technology.

It was resolved:

- a) To cease development of a Trust for the Libraries, Learning and Culture Service.
- b) To endorse the vision for a 21<sup>st</sup> century library service and a programme to deliver it.
- c) To note comments from the 13 communities where libraries were under review and agree an ongoing dialogue that reflects their views in the shaping of services.

#### **443. AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The Chairman of the Audit and Accounts Committee, Councillor Stone, presented a report raising two concerns identified by the Committee: poor levels of implementation of management actions, which had subsequently improved, and lean resourcing of the Internal Audit function.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, the Deputy Leader, Councillor McGuire, thanked the Committee for this report. He noted that Cabinet shared concerns about implementation of management actions and would continue to pursue this with senior managers. The adequacy of Internal Audit resources would be kept under review through the Integrated Planning Process (IPP).

It was resolved:

To note the concerns of the Audit and Accounts Committee.

#### **444. DOMESTIC ABUSE JOINT MEMBER-LED REVIEW: INTERIM REPORT**

Councillor Hoy presented an interim report from the Domestic Abuse joint member-led review group, which had been set up by the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She explained that the review was still continuing but that members were seeking to influence the IPP at an appropriate stage.

Cabinet commended the report and recognised the significant impact of domestic violence, on both the lives of individuals and on a range of public services. It was suggested that partners such as the NHS should be more involved in supporting domestic abuse services and that this involvement should be pursued via the Cambridgeshire Public Service Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Members agreed that the Cabinet response set out on the agenda should be strengthened.

It was resolved:

- a) To thank the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for an excellent and thorough report.
- b) To take note of this report during the IPP.
- c) To seek to work with partners to secure support and funding on a cross-organisational basis.

#### **445. ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY**

Cabinet noted that the Council's Road Safety Strategy, which had last been reviewed in 2005, needed to be revised to reflect the Government's Strategic Framework for Road Safety, published in June 2011. Members received a report setting out a proposed revised Strategy and an implementation process.

Members noted that road traffic accidents led to significant costs for a range of partners, such as the Constabulary and the NHS. The Constabulary had indicated its

willingness to contribute financially to casualty reduction initiatives, subject to further collaborative work. NHS colleagues were also engaged on road safety issues but not currently contributing financially. The Chairman suggested that this be pursued via the Health and Wellbeing Board.

It was resolved:

- a) To approve the revised Road Safety Strategy as set out in Appendix B to the report.
- b) To support the implementation process as set out in Appendix C to the report.

#### **446. ALLOCATION OF REMAINING LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT REWARD GRANT**

The Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, introduced proposals for use of the second tranche of Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) reward grant, £4.5 million. He explained that these had been discussed with the District and City Councils, the Constabulary and Health. Members noted as an amendment to the report that the allocation to South Cambridgeshire had been increased from £57,000 to £100,000.

Three non-Cabinet members spoke on this item:

- The Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Councillor Bourke, reported his Group's opposition to the recommendations. They supported broadband but did not consider £4 million of the remaining LPSA reward grant essential for this use, when it could be used to support voluntary sector organisations who were stating, contrary to the report, that they had projects ready to proceed.
- Councillor van de Ven spoke on behalf of one of her residents, the Chairman of the Care Network, a local charity. She expressed concern about a lack of communication between the local authorities and the Care Network and noted that its Chairman had written to the County Council, outlining projects that could proceed if further funding were available.
- The Labour Group Leader, Councillor Sadiq, expressed concern about a lack of consultation with the voluntary sector once the second tranche of LPSA reward grant had been received, and about the impact that a lack of funding would have on local projects.

Responding to the speakers, the Chairman, Councillor Clarke, and the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, noted that the LPSA reward grant had been assigned to the County Council as unringfenced grant. Allocation of the first tranche had been negotiated through Cambridgeshire Together, with each Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) contracting with delivery organisations, including the voluntary sector, for specific projects. The County Council was willing to consider any cost-effective business case presented by the voluntary sector. The detailed business case for superfast broadband was still being prepared meaning that full

costs were not yet known; additional funding could reduce prudential borrowing and associated costs or could be used in addition to improve broadband speed.

It was resolved:

To endorse the allocation of the remaining LPSA Reward Grant and approve the payment of the allocated funding to partners, subject to the amendment of the report in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 to reflect the increase of the allocation to South Cambridgeshire from £57,000 to £100,000 and the resultant increases in the total local allocation from £460,000 to £503,000 and in the total allocation to the City and South Cambridgeshire LSP from £100,000 to £143,000.

#### **447. INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORTS FOR PERIODS ENDING 31<sup>st</sup> JULY 2011 AND 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2011**

Cabinet received the Integrated Resources and Performance Reports for the periods ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2011 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011. It was noted that the forecast year-end overspend had reduced from £5.6 million at the end of July to £3.9 million at the end of August.

The Liberal Democrat Spokesman for Resources, Councillor Nethsingha, spoke on these reports. She noted that Adult Social Care services continued to be significantly over budget and suggested possible communication problems between the Council and the NHS. She suggested that whilst savings were being achieved in Environment Services and the Corporate Directorates, this was due to events outside the Council's control. She also expressed concern at the level of staff vacancies in Children and Young People's Services.

Responding to these comments, the Chairman, Councillor Clarke, and the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Curtis, emphasised that Adult Social Care services were being given their full attention, both to address the current overspend and to ensure that they were fit for purpose in the future. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown, provided assurance that staffing levels in these services were being kept under close review.

It was resolved:

- a) To analyse resources and performance information in both reports, note the remedial action currently being taken and consider if any further remedial action is required.
- b) To approve the transfer of £160,000 from the Pressures and Developments Reserve, to fund Year 1 (2011/12) and Year 2 (2012/13) of the Senior Leadership Development Programme (£60,000 in Year 1 and £100,000 in Year 2) (see section 3.2 of the report).
- c) To approve the transfer of £500,000 from the Corporate Grant Holding Reserve to fund the revenue costs of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough superfast broadband capital scheme, which will fund the following years (see section 3.2 of the report): 2011/12 - £100,000; 2012/13 - £300,000; 2013/14 - £100,000.

#### **448. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Cabinet and the Resources and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee had over a number of months been developing a set of corporate performance indicators to be included in the monthly Integrated Resources and Performance Report. Cabinet now considered final proposals for a set of 13 indicators.

Two non-Cabinet members spoke on this item:

- The Chairman of the Resources and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor F Brown, reported that the Committee had welcomed the opportunity to help shape the set of indicators. Its view was that a set of clear indicators would help promote public understanding, ownership and engagement.
- The Liberal Democrat Spokesman for Resources, Councillor Nethsingha, asked for all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees now to be involved in helping to develop the more detailed indicator sets to be used by the individual Directorates. She also asked for the resident survey to be funded from within existing resources.

Responding to Councillor Nethsingha, the Chairman, Councillor Clarke, noted that whilst he welcomed Overview and Scrutiny involvement, it was for each Committee to determine its work programme.

It was resolved:

- a) To approve the list of performance indicators on pages 3 and 4 of the report.
- b) To request that a report on educational attainment is presented annually as described in 2.2.
- c) That a 'state of the county' factsheet should be produced and made available to Cabinet and the public as described in 2.5.
- d) That organisational health information should be included in the Corporate Directorate Budget Control Report as described in 2.7.
- e) That a Customer Intelligence report should be produced and provided to Cabinet and the public, containing information from existing sources, as described in 3.4.
- f) That the Local Government Shared Services: Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, should develop a detailed proposal for a resident survey as described in section 3.

#### **449. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE: THE COUNTY SCHOOL, FENLAND SITE SELECTION**

Cabinet was reminded that although the national Building Schools for the Future programme had closed in July 2010, the Fenland programme was continuing, with the County School, Fenland as its final project before Partnership for Schools disbanded

in March 2012. It was proposed to develop the County School, Fenland on part of the surplus Somers Road site in Wisbech.

Cabinet noted comments submitted by Councillors Downes and King. Cabinet members noted that the search for a site had been challenging, but agreed that Somers Road in Wisbech would be the most suitable choice.

It was resolved:

- a) To endorse use of part of the surplus Somers Road site in Wisbech for the development of the Fenland campus of The County School.
- b) To note the potential prudential borrowing costs associated with the capital receipt foregone if the whole Somers Road site is used for the purposes set out in recommendation a).

#### **450. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN APPROVED TRADER SCHEME WITHIN CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

Cabinet considered a proposal to introduce the Buy with Confidence scheme for Cambridgeshire businesses. Trading Standards would offer advice and support to businesses joining the scheme, and to their customers in the event of a dispute. The scheme would enable good local businesses to flourish and would boost consumer confidence.

Cabinet welcomed the proposal and noted that effective publicity would be vital; it was suggested that parish magazines could be used.

It was resolved:

To approve the proposal by the Trading Standards Service to develop a full local approved trader scheme.

#### **451. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES: ADULTS' SERVICES FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE – ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

Cabinet was reminded that in 2009/10, the Care Quality Commission had judged the Council's Adult Social Care services to be performing well, with excellent features. An action plan had been prepared to respond to the Commission's findings and progress against this action plan was now reported. As an amendment to the report, it was noted that a peer review was no longer planned for October 2011, although this would be reconsidered at a later date.

Members noted the report and commended progress against the action plan.

It was resolved:

- a) To note the content of the report, as amended to delete references to an October 2011 peer review in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4, and the progress made in implementing the current action plan.



- b) To continue to support the role of the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in receiving exception reports where actions are rated 'amber' or 'red'.
- c) To receive a further report at the Cabinet meeting in December to approve the Local Account and Action Plan prior to publication.
- d) To delegate to the Service Director: Strategy and Commissioning (Adult Social Care) and the Cabinet Member for Adult Services the responsibility of agreeing with the Chairman of the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee how the Committee will be involved prior to approval being sought from Cabinet.

#### **452. CONSULTATION BY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Cabinet was advised that as part of its reform of the planning system, the Government was consulting on a draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which aimed to simplify existing guidance and to reduce more than 1,000 pages of national policy to around 50 pages.

Members considered the County Council's proposed response on the draft NPPF and made the following comments:

- The need for local authorities to co-operate effectively over local authority boundaries should be emphasised more strongly.
- The NPPF should include infrastructure requirements as well as housing requirements.
- There should be clarity on the links between national policy and local communities' aspirations as set out in their Neighbourhood Plans.
- Paragraph 25 – the need to ensure that green infrastructure networks are appropriately maintained should also be highlighted.
- Paragraph 29 – the reference should be to paragraph 74, not 63.
- Paragraph 47 – proposed amendment should read 'Where market interest is demonstrated to be limited'.

Members also noted that the meeting of the Enterprise, Community Infrastructure and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee had discussed the draft at their meeting the previous day and that their comments would be incorporated into the Council's final response.

It was resolved:

- a) To assess and comment on the draft response set out in Appendix A to the report, as minuted above.
- b) To delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, in consultation with the Executive Director: Environment Services, the authority to amend the response for submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

#### **453. CONSULTATION FROM FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL ON 'FENLAND COMMUNITIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN: CORE STRATEGY'**

Cabinet was advised that Fenland District Council was currently consulting on its Fenland Communities Development Plan: Core Strategy. This was an overarching framework setting out a vision for Fenland from 2011 to 2031, including areas of search for future development.

Members considered the County Council's proposed response to the draft Strategy. They noted that effective collaboration between local authorities would be essential, especially with the discontinuation of the Structure Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy. In particular, the County Council would need to work with the District Council to help ensure that areas of search were appropriate, for example in terms of transport links, and that infrastructure was planned and brought forward to support development in a timely way.

It was resolved:

- a) To assess and comment on the draft response set out in Appendix 3 to the report, as minuted above.
- b) To delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, in consultation with the Executive Director: Environment Services, the authority to amend the response before submission to Fenland District Council.

#### **454. DRAFT CABINET AGENDA**

Members noted the draft agenda for the Cabinet meeting to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011, including the following changes made since publication of the agenda for this meeting:

- Additional item on Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Swavesey Short-Stay Car Park
- Additional item from Enterprise, Community Infrastructure and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee: referral back to Cabinet following call-in on Windfarm Development on County Farms Estate
- Item on Future Options for Park and Ride deferred to 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011

- Cambridgeshire Future Transport item renamed as Cambridgeshire Future Transport Programme

It was resolved:

To note the draft agenda for 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011, as updated.

Chairman 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011