

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: 14th December 2010

Time: 10.00 a.m. – 12.15 p.m.

Present: Chairman: Councillor J. Tuck

Councillors: Sir P Brown, S. Criswell, M Curtis, D Harty, L W McGuire, T Orgee, R Pegram, J Reynolds and F Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors: None

Present by invitation: Councillors: S Johnstone and T Stone

280. MINUTES 16TH NOVEMBER 2010

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 16th November 2010 were approved as a correct record subject to an amendment in minute 273 “Great Haddon Planning Application” to add Councillor Guyatt’s concerns regarding the potential delay to the provision of a community centre.

281. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Criswell declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as a member of Huntingdonshire District Council with regard to Item 16 “Consultation from Communities and Local Government (CLG) on New Homes Bonus” with reference to representations that had been made to oppose the suggested County Council response to question 5 on the proposed split of the bonus payment.

Councillor Curtis declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as a governor of two fenland schools with regard to agenda Item 4 “the Children and Young People’s (CYPS) Scrutiny Committee Fenland District Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel (Joint Review) Educational Attainment in Fenland and in Item 16 New Home Bonus consultation as a vice chairman of a Housing Association.

Councillor Harty declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as a member of Huntingdonshire District Council with regard to Item 16 “Consultation from Communities and Local Government (CLG) on New Homes Bonus” with reference to representations that had been made to oppose the suggested County Council response to question 5 on the proposed split of the bonus payment.

Councillor Yeulett declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as a governor of three fenland schools with regard to agenda Item 4 “the Children and Young People’s (CYPS) Scrutiny Committee Fenland District Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel (Joint Review) Educational Attainment in Fenland

282. A) PETITION REQUESTING THAT THE COUNCIL TO RECONSIDER THESE DECISIONS TO MEET THE STATUTORY REQUIREMENT BY MAKING CONNEXIONS AND YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION UNIVERSAL AND READILY ACCESSIBLE IN ALL OUR COMMUNITIES

A joint trade union petition of 758 signatures had been received signed by trade union and members of the public with the wording "We the undersigned are extremely concerned with the threat to withdraw universal youth provisions to young people in Cambridgeshire and that open access youth provision may no longer be provided by the County Council. We call upon the Council to reconsider these decisions to meet the statutory requirement by making Connexions and youth service provision universal and readily accessible in all our communities". The decisions on the proposals for a targeted Integrated Youth Provision (IYP) Service had been agreed by Cabinet at their last meeting.

A spokesperson had been unable to attend the meeting but a statement was read out on the organiser's behalf stating that "the petition had been signed by members of the public mainly in the Fenland market towns and Huntingdon who were extremely concerned with the proposals and whose wish was that careful consideration of the impact of the proposed changes should be considered."

The Cabinet Member for Children made the point in a brief response that the decisions that had, had to be made on IYP did not sit easy with him or Cabinet but were due to the national cuts in financial provision as a result of the very difficult financial situation that the Coalition Government had inherited from the previous Government. He confirmed that the County Council would do everything it could to mitigate the cuts to the Youth Service through alternative providers / funding streams, making reference to the good initiatives currently being taken forward in Fenland. As there was no relevant report on the agenda, he confirmed that an officer response in consultation with himself would be provided to the petition organiser within 10 working days.

B) PETITION TITLED "SAVE YAXLEY LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY SHOP"

A petition with over 1,900 signatures with the title "Save Yaxley Library and Community Shop" had been received by the Cabinet Member for Communities which had the text "Residents of Yaxley would like the County Council to consider other ways of making budget cuts, we need our library and Community Shop they are part of our village from young children to the elderly we need and use our Library and Community Shop they are life lines for our village".

Councillor Mark Oliver from Yaxley Parish Council made a brief statement on behalf of the petitioners highlighting the value of the library to the local community which was considered to be a fantastic facility in terms of the professional service provided and the knowledge it imparted. He indicated that it served a potential population of 30,000 when taking into account the surrounding villages to Yaxley with an average of 6,000 books being borrowed on a monthly basis and the library achieving a footfall of 700-800 visits a week. He made reference to the successful Summer Reading Challenge voluntary initiative which he had been involved with undertaken under the guidance of the libraries professional staff and pointed out that the library was used from children from the age of 18 month right the way to the other end of the age spectrum. He suggested that should closure be considered then consideration should be given to combining the Library Service with the community shop. In answer to a question from the Cabinet local member he confirmed he was aware of the

activities of the Norman Cross Action Group resulting in the County Council and district council currently holding talks to explore the option of a combined library / community shop.

In response to the petition presentation, the Cabinet Member for Communities welcomed the very helpful suggestions made, noting that the number of signatures showed the strength of feeling in the local community to proactively seek to save the service and confirmed that officers and himself would take account of the representation / views expressed as part of the current consultation exercise being used to shape the Libraries Review report going forward to Cabinet in January.

283. ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE / FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE PANEL (JOINT REVIEW): EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN FENLAND AND THE CABINET RESPONSE

As the response report was not available / finalised / authorised for despatch 5 clear days in advance of the meeting the chairman agreed to exercise her discretion under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to allow the report to be considered taking into account the following reasons provided:

Reason for lateness - due to the lead officers only receiving the final agreed report following the scrutiny meeting held on 2nd December and then having to consult with heads of service before being able to finalise the response.

Reason for urgency – in order for the response to be considered and agreed at the same meeting as the original joint scrutiny report recommendations in line with the Constitution requirements.

Although not part of the review team, Councillor Johnstone as the chairman of the scrutiny committee had been asked to present the report in the absence of Councillor Downes.

As part of the presentation the chairman drew attention to review being the first joint scrutiny review undertaken with a District Council's scrutiny function and represented a significant way forward for the conduct of future reviews, bearing in mind the recent changes to partnership arrangements. She thanked Councillor Downes and Hutton for the work they had undertaken as part of the review team, the members from Fenland and expressed the appreciation of the service group to the officers involved from both authorities.

The executive summary explained that Fenland, historically, had low levels of educational attainment and skills and therefore the joint review was undertaken to investigate this issue and formulate recommendations to assist in making improvements in Fenland. The review demonstrated that while the causes were complex, performance was improving with levels of attainment climbing, particularly at secondary school level with examples being provided in the detail of the report. The report to Cabinet can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/101214-4i>

The scrutiny chairman highlighted that the gap between Fenland attainment levels and County or National averages was, in some cases, reducing with the overall improvement being the result of the hard work that schools and partners had contributed both to,

education directly and in the wider work to develop provision for children and families in the district. The chairman highlighted that Fenland was becoming a more aspirational place and a key message from the review was the need to recognise this success and build on it.

While there remained substantial challenges these were seen as being much to do with the wider determinants of education as with specific school performance. The need to raise the aspirations of parents and the community and increase parental engagement and confidence to support their children's educational needs was seen as a key aim for all partners. It was made clear from the presentation to the scrutiny committee that many of the recommendations could be enforced without additional resources being required as they were attitudinal in nature requiring closer partnership working between Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and local schools undertaking initiatives to positively engage parents.

Cabinet welcomed the well written review which recognised both the improvements that had been made, as well as identifying the challenges to still be overcome. It was confirmed that the report had also been positively received by Fenland District Council the previous week. One Cabinet member suggested that the good practice identified in the report needed to be rolled out to the whole district with the key issue being the need to continue to raise parental / pupil aspirations. It was also highlighted that health visitors and children's centres would have an important role to play in taking forward the improvement agenda.

One Cabinet Member highlighted that while there had been a significant improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving 5 plus A-*C GCSE passes there was still the need to improve the number achieving any GCSE equivalent passes (which was currently only shown as a marginal improvement statistic) and also in the area of post 16 attainment.

It was agreed to:

- a) thank Scrutiny for its part in producing a valuable and detailed report; and
- b) approve the proposed response to the Member Led Review on Educational Attainment in Fenland set out in part 2 of the response report and attached as appendix 1 to these minutes and to agree to the request to include the agreed recommendations in the relevant services' Service Plans.

284. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE - INTERNAL AUDIT WORK ON SAFE RECRUITMENT IN SCHOOLS

Cabinet was reminded that within its terms of reference, the Audit and Accounts Committee (AAC) was able to report as appropriate to the County Council, Standards Committee or to the Cabinet on issues which required their attention or required further action. Further to this, Cabinet received a report introduced by the Audit and Accounts Chairman advising it of the results of the continued Internal Audit work being undertaken on Safe Recruitment in Schools and highlighting the potentially unmitigated risk in this area.

At its September meeting the Audit and Accounts Committee (AAC) had received a report on the latest safe recruitment audits and had noted with extreme concern that for the third year running the Head of Audit and Risk Management had only been able to provide a

'moderate assurance' opinion on the adequacy of control with regard to Safe School Recruitment despite a number of reminder letters issued in previous years. The opinion of 'moderate assurance' indicated that whilst there was basically a sound system of control, there were some areas of weakness which put the safeguarding of children in schools at risk. The report indicated that while the large majority of schools had acceptable practices and some improvement against previously reported audits, for a minority of schools audited (2 out of 16) it had been found that they were still making staffing appointments before all relevant Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks had been received.

As part of the agreed management response to the audit report, the Executive Director: Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) on 25 October 2010 had written to Head Teachers and all Chairs of Governors reminding them of the need to make all required safety checks when appointing staff / volunteers and advising schools of their responsibilities in the strongest terms and asking them to bring to the attention of their governing bodies, schools' own responsibilities for ensuring the safety of their children. AAC had noted the letter at its November meeting and after discussing the matter further, considered that in view of the importance of the issue to the strategic objectives of the County Council that the Committee wished to exercise its right to advise Cabinet of its concerns and of the risk in this area. In addition, it agreed to invite the Director: CYPS to its January meeting to update the committee on further progress.

The Cabinet Member for Children while recognising that it was school's rather than the County Council's responsibility for their own staff recruitment, expressed his concern that some schools were still choosing to ignore safe recruitment advice and that the County Council needed to continue to press schools on this vital issue where child safety was being compromised. There was discussion on whether more should be done in relation to Local Education Authority (LEA) appointed governors pursuing the issues at governor meetings but the advice received was that it was more appropriate to continue to raise the issues with those governors responsible for child protection, namely the chairs of governors/ headteachers and to continue to advertise the safe recruitment training available. It was also noted that the latest letter sent in October had, had an even stronger tone than previous letters sent and reflected the increased concerns expressed by AAC.

It was agreed:

- a) To receive and note the Audit and Accounts Committee's findings.
- b) That officers should continue to raise the concerns expressed regarding safe recruitment in schools with the chairmen of governing bodies and through the Governor Services Safer Recruitment Training Programme.

285. [COUNCIL DECISIONS]

None for determination at the full Council meeting.

[REPORTS FOR INFORMATION FOR THE COUNCIL MEETING]

Copies of reports considered by Cabinet are on the County Council's website via the links shown in this report. Alternatively they can be found by navigating from the Home page (www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk) to **Council and Democracy** then **Democracy Decision Making** and then **Agenda and Minutes** and then using the drop down menu for Agenda

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| minutes and reports to seek the correct meeting and then clicking on the report title on the agenda page and then clicking on the report attachment title. |
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[KEY DECISIONS]

286. INVESTMENT ON THE COLLEGE OF WEST ANGLIA (COWA) ISLE OF CAMPUS WISBECH

Cabinet received a report on the progress of the Better Utilisation Of Property Assets (BUPA) Fenland Project in order to continue the commitment set out in the Integrated Plan to invest in Wisbech in order to provide cost efficient replacement facilities, provide additional facilities to allow staff and job relocation, encourage partnership working and help address the skills agenda / shortage in the area.

Cabinet was reminded that it had approved the BUPA phase 1 projects Business Cases in the autumn/winter of 2009 which included the Fenland Project Business Case and £6.5M capital was authorised in principle to provide the new facility in Wisbech, the area with the greatest need. The top 5 most deprived Super Output Areas of Cambridgeshire are all in or around Wisbech, whilst the unemployment rates for Fenland and Wisbech remain substantially higher than the Cambridgeshire average. The vision has been to provide a new public facing office in Wisbech to serve the Fenland community built to a high standard able to accommodate a range of services on the current COWA site replacing the existing H block with a new engineering building. Services delivered from this facility would be vital in addressing deprivation and help reduce NEET levels supporting the development and retention of skills within Fenland, while addressing immediate skills needs, as well as providing a platform for identifying and addressing emerging skills needs in the local economy.

It was confirmed that the Cambridgeshire County Council's (CCC) £6.5m office facility could be delivered on the COWA site within budget as part of an integrated scheme, including the CCC funded engineering block. It was highlighted that while the County Council has no statutory obligation to invest in the capital condition of COWA, with this responsibility sitting with the College itself, the Skills Funding Agency, the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, there was however no prospect of any significant level of capital funding being made available from those agencies.

Members commenting on the detail of the report and the revised tabled recommendations:

- Stressed the importance of the Cabinet Members for Learning and Resources and Performance keeping a watching brief on the capital programme to ensure the monies allocated achieved best value for money in terms of the long term education benefits to the pupils of Wisbech.
- Requiring more detail from the college regarding their plans for the development of the Engineering block.

The detail and the benefits of the project are as set out in the report which can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/Cab101214-7>

It was resolved to:

- a) Restate the commitment set out in the Integrated Plan to the planned investment in Wisbech which is designed to provide cost efficient replacement facilities provide additional facilities to allow staff and job relocation, encourage partnership working with other public bodies in the area, address the skills agenda, through the proposed grant of £5m to COWA.
- b) To confirm that the total costs of the project, including the COWA contribution, will be met from within the existing budget set for the Better Utilisation of Assets programme together with a £2m virement from the Economic Regeneration capital pot.
- c) Delegate the agreement of the site acquisition terms (for the Wisbech office facility) and the terms of the £5m grant funding for the new engineering block to the LGSS Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance. The agreement to ensure that the Council's long term interest in the office facility was protected and that the £5m grant funding was used for the purpose of the provision of a new engineering block on the Isle Campus, Wisbech.
- d) Also agree that the provision of a £5m grant contribution to the engineering block should be conditional on the agreement to the use of the COWA site for the new office facility.

287. PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS TO CHERRY HINTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND (C of E) VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED INFANT SCHOOL AND CHERRY HINTON COMMUNITY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Cabinet was reminded that a series of reports presented to advisory meetings had provided detailed information about the projected increased demand for primary school places across Cambridgeshire due to rising birth rates and increased fertility rates. This information was based on National Health Service (NHS) data. The full report can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-8>

The most significant level of growth had been experienced in Cambridge, particularly in the south. In order to address this need, a public consultation document, with outline options for meeting the identified demographic pressures in the south of the City, was circulated during December 2009 and included specific proposals in relation to Cherry Hinton Infant and Junior Schools to provide an additional 30 reception places and result in two all through primary schools rather than separate infant and junior schools. A series of public consultation meetings was also held at this time. The report confirmed that no written comments had been received in relation to the proposals set out in a statutory notice published in October.

It was orally reported that the local Member for Cherry Hinton who had been unable to attend had provided the following comments: "I personally support the recommendation for the Prescribed Alterations to the Cherry Hinton C of E voluntary Controlled School. The

alteration to the school will of course be of great advantage to the community as a whole. I hope Cabinet look favourably on the recommendations”.

It was therefore agreed to:

- a) approve the extension of Cherry Hinton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School on its existing site, and the change of its intake and age range from a two form entry infant school (4 - 7 years) to a one form entry primary school (4 - 11 years) from September 2011; and
- b) approve the extension of Cherry Hinton Community Junior School on its existing site, and the change of its age range from a two form entry junior school (7 – 11 years) to a two form entry primary school (4 – 11 years), from September 2011.

288. INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – OCTOBER 2010

Cabinet received the latest financial and performance information to assess progress in delivering the Council's Integrated Plan.

Cabinet noted that there were new exceptions in respect of performance issues reported which were detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the report and can be viewed along with the full report at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-9>

The report also listed those previously reported exceptions where there was nothing further to report.

The following resources were highlighted for Cabinet to note:

1. Overall the budget position was showing a forecast year-end overspend of £1.6m (0.5%) a decrease in the forecast overspend of -£2.4m from the previous month.
2. Although the report was still showing an overspend position at year-end, work was in hand to reduce this overspend further in order to produce a balanced financial outturn by the end of the financial year. To assist in achieving this balanced position Cabinet was asked to approve the one-off virement of £500k from the Pressures and Developments Reserve to CYPS to assist in offsetting the pressure that has arisen from the unexpected increase in the number of Looked After Children.
3. In Environment Services (ES) an underspend of -£873k was currently being predicted, which was due to savings identified across the whole Service.
4. In Community and Adult Services (CAS) an overspend of £1.2m was currently being predicted, which was due to pressures identified within Adult Support Services and Libraries, Learning and Culture.
5. In Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) an overspend of £1.4m was currently being predicted, which was due to pressures within Strategy and Commissioning and Children's Social Care).

6. In Corporate Directorates (CD) an underspend of -£338k was currently being predicted, which was due to savings identified across the whole Service.
7. In Corporate Directorates – Financing, an overspend of £250k was currently being predicted due to higher borrowing than budgeted for in the Integrated Plan and a write-off of a debt.
8. Spending on the council's overall capital programme was currently proceeding slower than estimated.
9. There were no significant debt problems to report and there were no noticeable effects arising from the economic downturn.

The following general economic issues were noted:

- The current round of the Integrated Planning Process (IPP) had incorporated the general funding assumptions announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 20th October 2010.
- The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2011/12, and the following three years had been announced the previous day and was the subject of an oral update on the budget report later on the agenda and provided the necessary detail the Council needs in order to finalise the funding available for the next four years, along with the necessary savings required in order to meet the allocated resources.

While welcoming the continued reduction in the projected underspend which was continuing in the right direction, Cabinet Members again stressed the need to achieve a year end balanced budget through the initiatives being undertaken in departments currently showing an overspend (as set out in the detail of the report) while also encouraging underspending departments to continue to seek to drive down of costs where practicable, in order to come in further under budget and help the overall budget position.

Cabinet received an oral update with regard to the managed risk that it had agreed to take on regarding the potential over-commitment of Housing Growth Fund Monies over the next two years, a which had been undertaken on the basis that such an overspend would be covered in future years by the return of monies owed by developers in respect of the "revolving Fund". It was confirmed that an over commitment of £1.5m was probable next year, and that the authority could accommodate this pressure within emerging capital plans and this would be formally reported in January and would feature in the detailed budget propositions for 2011/12. By taking this sensible and measured risk, progress would be assured in respect of the Huntingdon Relief Road and the Hive Project in Cambridge.

It was agreed to:

- a) note the resources and performance information and the remedial action currently being taken and
- b) to approve the one-off virement of £500k from the Pressures and Developments Reserve to Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) to assist in offsetting the pressure that has arisen from the unexpected increase in the number of Looked After Children (as detailed in paragraph 3.2 - 2nd bullet point of the report).

289. FUTURE OPTIONS FOR THE PARK AND RIDE SERVICE

As the report was not available / finalised / authorised for despatch 5 clear days in advance of the meeting the chairman agreed to exercise her discretion under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to allow the report to be considered taking into account the following reasons provided:

Reason for lateness – in order to provide the most up to date report for Cabinet, it was essential to gather some last minute specialist advice which, together with further Portfolio Holder advice, led to a substantial redrafting.

Reason for urgency - there is an urgent need to gain approval to extend the current agreement with Stagecoach regarding the Park & Ride in order to ensure continuity of service beyond 31 December 2010.

Cabinet was reminded that the Cambridge Park & Ride operated 5 sites on the outskirts of Cambridge which was a partnership between the County Council operating the sites and Stagecoach which operated the bus service. The County Council's part of the partnership was mainly funded from on-street parking income. The three major elements making up the total cost to the Council of the Park & Ride service were the Business Rates for the sites, site maintenance and site staffing costs. Cabinet noted that the Business Rates had recently been reviewed and a reduction achieved. Site maintenance costs were fairly fixed and outsourced for best value where possible. As a result of the forecast that the costs of providing the Park & Ride service (the Current Park and Ride service represented a net cost to the Council of £955k) would continue to rise in the foreseeable future while the On-Street income was forecast to fall, it was considered imperative that the service was reviewed to ensure best value for money in achieving desired service standards.

The full report can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-10>

It was therefore important that any future options should seek to move towards a commercial operation basis. Although much work had been undertaken concerning the shape and form of potential future models for the Park & Ride bus service, the Comprehensive Spending Review had now changed the financial position and consequently, a comprehensive review of all potential future options required to be completed in order to ensure the most cost effective and beneficial way forward for the service.

The review would be used to complete further market research and to seek specialist advice looking at staffing costs /maintenance costs, the issue of concessionary fares and once the conclusions of the review had been considered by Cabinet, officers would need to draw up the requisite specification and other contract documentation prior to mounting an open and competitive process. As this would inevitably take some months, there was the need to authorise an extension to the current agreement with Stagecoach, in order to provide a continuing Park & Ride bus service. This required a further Cabinet decision to that set out in the published report.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment picked up on the fact that the

report indicated that there were no climate change implications, pointing out that the buses now operating on the sites had greatly reduced emissions helping to drive down their contribution to overall pollution levels.

It was therefore agreed to:

- a) Instruct the Acting Executive Director, Environment Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, to undertake a full options appraisal in respect of the future arrangements for the provision of Park & Ride bus services and sites for Cambridge.
- b) Endorse the extension of the existing agreement for Park and Ride Bus Services in order to avoid any disruption to the existing Park and Ride Service. The timescale for any such contract extension to be limited to that necessary to undertake the options evaluation and subsequent implementation of the chosen option.

290. CAMBRIDGESHIRE GUIDED BUSWAY

Cabinet was reminded that as a result of the continued lack of significant progress towards rectifying the defects which would allow the Council to accept sectional completion of the Busway between Cambridge and St Ives, it had been agreed since the April meeting to receive progress reports at each subsequent Cabinet meeting. The issues requiring completion and the progress to date were set out in detail to Cabinet on 16th March 2010 and at each subsequent Cabinet meeting including the latest update with the detail available for viewing in the full report at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-11>

It was reported that the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway construction contract was now nearing the point where the Project Manager could potentially certify completion. However, the report to Cabinet advised that there was still concern that outstanding work would not be completed by the start of BAM Nuttall's Christmas break on 17th December and as a result, completion would not be possible until late January. The Cabinet report set out proposals to rectify three of the defects if, as anticipated, BNL continued to fail to address them. Of the remaining three defects, one appeared close to resolution, and an assessment of the case for rectifying the remaining two would be brought to the next Cabinet meeting. It was noted that if there were any other defects which had not been addressed by the Contractor at contract completion, then a further report would be brought to members at that time.

The proposal was that the River Great Ouse Bridge expansion joint and the St Ives Park and Ride drainage should be rectified before the Busway was opened to passengers and that the flooded sections of maintenance track rectified after the opening of the Busway when weather conditions permitted and that the section of maintenance track was closed until the work was completed. A report would be presented to the January Cabinet meeting on whether there was a need to rectify the shallow foundations and narrow guideway joints.

It was confirmed that BAM Nuttall had submitted revised certified Designer's Risk Assessments for the rubber tyre infill, which was currently under review.

In reply to questions raised, it was confirmed that the industry norm was to issue construction certificates when work had been carried out and not held over until close to completion and that Bam Nuttall had been holding back on issuing certificates with the concern still being that they would issue the certificates all together.

It was confirmed that the Council had taken legal advice which confirmed that it would still be able to claim £14k liquidated damages for each day of Bam Nuttall's holiday period for work still outstanding beyond the agreed contract period.

Cabinet Members requested an assurance that should work as suggested be undertaken by other contractors that all possible negotiations would be undertaken to ensure the best price was achieved. It was confirmed that this would be the case and it was proposed that it would be undertaken through the framework contract.

It was agreed:

- a) to note that the Contractor's progress is such that completion is unlikely to be achieved before late January 2011 at the earliest;
- b) to approve the rectification by the Council's framework Contractors of the following defects as set out in the report:
 - River Great Ouse Expansion Joints
 - St Ives Park and Ride surface ponding.
- c) approve the development of proposals to address the flooding and ponding on the maintenance track between Swavesey and St Ives; and
- d) to note that the above actions would only be necessary if the Busway Contractor failed to correct the defects within the timescales as set out in the contract.

[OTHER DECISIONS]

291. BUDGET 2011/12

As the report was not available / finalised / authorised for despatch 5 clear days in advance of the meeting the chairman agreed to exercise her discretion under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to allow the report to be considered taking into account the following reasons provided:

Reason for lateness - Due to the report still having been the subject of consultation with Cabinet Members / Executive Directors.

Reason for urgency - In order for Cabinet to receive the most up to date position regarding cash limits, and receive details of the Government announcement made the previous day.

Cabinet received a report of the latest financial forecasts and requesting approval to the initial cash targets set out in the Cabinet report to enable further progress to be made with forming an Integrated Plan and supporting Budget for 2011/12 for final approval by the full

Council meeting in February. Cabinet noted that the formation of the Integrated Plan had been made more challenging due to reductions in funding from Government as a result of the general economic situation and rapidly changing Government policy as the Coalition Government implemented its plans and confirmed its priorities.

Attention was drawn to transposition errors in the first (printed) version of the papers at tables 3.7.1, 3.7.2 and 5.2 with figures shown for ES Waste actually related to CAS and vice versa. Overall totals savings requirements etc were still correct. The revised version of the report can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-12>

In terms of the funding situation, the Government reported on the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in October which in Local Government terms would lead to average funding reductions in general grant of around £17.9m (12.0%) in 2011/12 and £10.1m (7.4%) in 2012/13 and specific grants being cut entirely or significantly reduced.

It was noted that normally by the end of November the Council had received formal and detailed notification of its general and specific grant funding from Government. However as the grant announcement had not been made until the day before the Cabinet meeting, an oral update was provided with health warnings that the detail on various grants received would require greater examination and therefore absolute certainty could not be given so soon after the announcement. In addition officers were still awaiting further funding announcements from the other Departments of State for which Council funding was provided. There was a request that the LGSS Director of Finance should provide a concise note of the budget announcements for all Members as soon as possible.

The grant announcement had been very much in line with previous officer predictions for the County Council which reflected the good forecasting and preparation by officers (within the parameters of plus /minus 1%) a fact recognised by the external auditors and finance officers were thanked for their efforts in providing such a good service.

Cabinet was advised that a sum equating to a £160m was required to be made in savings over a five year. In 2011/12 alone the County Council required to make savings of £50.4m which equated to 16% of the relevant budget base and well above the efficiency ceiling of 4% required to be made by the Health Sector. As a context comparison it was explained that the County Council had successfully achieved savings of between £15m and £20m in past years but the sheer scale of the challenge and its immediacy meant that there were difficult choices and decisions to be made.

While net funding was only falling by £12.3m in cash terms next year, account was also required to be taken of:

1. the cost of increased demands for the Council's services from the most vulnerable,
2. the impact of managed inflation costs of £6.6m
3. the costs of investing in improved services of £8.1m
4. capital investment in schools and roads which would increase debt charges by £5.3m.

The headlines from the announcement highlighted for Cabinet included:

- A) That after damping (which now involved four levels of floors and for which Cambridgeshire fell into the bottom level) the formula grant had been cut by 14.3% in

2011/12 (compared to an average cut of 4.4% for Counties) which was higher than the assumption originally made of 11.9% but which when taking into account the higher level of new Social Care Grant brought the overall figure within funding forecasts.

- B) In overall terms the County Council would receive £120.1m Formula Grant, and £41m of other specific grants from the Department of Local Government and Communities (DCLG) and included adjustments for the transfer of costs and responsibilities for Learning Disabilities (from Health) an indicative Council Tax Freeze Grant and Support for Social Care Reform.
- C) The position for Capital Funding from the Department of Transport initially appeared to be higher than originally forecast at £3.8m for Integrated Transport and £10.7m for Capital maintenance for 2011/12 which coming in the form of a grant rather than supported borrowing would help reduce the debt charge burden.

A Cabinet Member raised concerns at the potential fall in capital funding as highlighted in the report which could result in a 40% funding reduction over the next four years at a time of very heavy capital commitments as a result of the growth agenda.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note that due to the delayed Government Grant announcement at the time of preparing the report that all figures were indicative and were subject to further change once the details of the announcement only made the previous day had been further analysed;
- b) Note the financial forecasts and to confirm that budget exemplifications should be produced within the indicative funding limits as set out below;

| £000 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 14/15 | 15/16 |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| CYPS | 87,866 | 84,911 | 84,224 | 82,685 | 81,279 |
| ES | 37,098 | 36,432 | 35,015 | 33,610 | 31,958 |
| ES Waste | 21,654 | 22,145 | 21,115 | 21,854 | 23,105 |
| CAS | 157,382 | 154,088 | 157,515 | 158,998 | 161,570 |
| Corporate | 19,407 | 16,695 | 15,922 | 15,297 | 14,524 |
| LGSS | 9,068 | 8,346 | 7,563 | 6,409 | 6,006 |
| Debt | 34,295 | 38,084 | 39,900 | 42,219 | 44,061 |
| Levy | 384 | 399 | 414 | 430 | 446 |
| | | | | | |
| Other | 811 | 146 | 1,475 | 1,532 | -6 |
| Total | 367,965 | 361,246 | 363,143 | 363,034 | 362,943 |

- c) Agree that following publication of the Grant Announcement that the Leader, with the support of the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance and the LGSS Director of Finance would make any appropriate representations to Government.

292. PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

This report had not come forward and had been deferred for further consultation with the

intention that it was re-submitted to the February Cabinet meeting.

293. ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL PROVISION IN CAMBRIDGE RESPONSE TO PARENTAL REPRESENTATIONS

Cabinet was reminded that the County Council had a specific duty to respond formally to parental representation, under the Education Act 1996, (as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006) in furtherance of its duty to promote choice for parents and secure diversity in the provision of schools. The recent competition process for the new primary school in Gunhild Way, Cambridge (for which Cabinet had made a decision on 28 September 2010) had shown that there was strong parental demand and support for additional Roman Catholic (RC) primary school provision in the south of Cambridge City. Cabinet, had therefore, agreed that the letters of support received, and the petition presented in relation to the Diocesan bid, should be judged to be a formal parental representation under the duty referred to above. In order to take this matter forward, officers were asked to produce a timetabled plan for future action on the establishment of additional RC primary school provision in Cambridge, in consultation with the Diocese of East Anglia.

Officers had met with a representative of the RC Diocese of East Anglia in early October 2010 to discuss the potential for establishing additional RC provision in the south of Cambridge. The difficulty of making such provision in the short term was acknowledged in terms of the likely availability of capital funding during a period of significant financial restraint, and the identification of appropriate sites in a historic city such as Cambridge. There was recommended provision in the CYPS revised capital programme for a County Council contribution towards an increase of ten places per year, from September 2012, at St Laurence RC Voluntary Aided Primary School in the north of Cambridge but no provision in the capital programme for any additional RC provision in Cambridge, in response to this parental representation. It was noted that the Department for Education (DfE) was currently reviewing its approach to capital funding for schools and was not expected to report until the end of 2010 and therefore until the findings /outcomes were known, it was not possible to be clear on funding availability.

Notwithstanding the above, the production of a timed action plan was seen as helpful in establishing the scheme as a priority for the County Council and for the Diocese, and in addressing the barriers to development. The Diocesan representative did, however, advise that realistic timescales should be adopted, in order that the expectations of Catholic parents should not be unfairly raised.

As a result of the discussion at the above meeting, a timed action plan was prepared and presented to the informal Policy Development Group in November for their initial comments. The PDG suggested that Cabinet should consider agreeing that a specific parental survey of demand for additional RC school places in Cambridge should be undertaken, rather than simply relying on expressions of support in response to a competition for a new school and that the County Council should consider developing an explicit policy on its general approach to supporting the establishment of denominational schools, before determining the way forward on the establishment of additional RC primary school provision in the south of Cambridge.

However since the above PDG meeting, the Government had published The Schools White Paper on 24 November 2010 titled "The Importance of Teaching" which included important information relating to the Government's approach to the establishment of new schools which stated that *"where there is a need for a new school, the first choice will be a new Academy or a Free School"* The White Paper also indicated that the DfE *"will legislate in the forthcoming Education Bill to simplify significantly the bureaucratic competition process currently required to open a new school."*

As any new statutory requirements required to be taken into account, the action plan attached as Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report had been amended to take account of these further developments and had been shared with the RC Diocese, who it was reported had expressed concerns that the additions had diluted the original intentions of Cabinet. The full report can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-14>

As could be seen from the amended action plan set out in appendix 1 the timescale for completing additional actions was relatively short. It was noted that until there was clarity on the White Paper proposals, this would have an affect on the ability to make further progress and therefore the DfE's advice was being sought on the implications of the statements for the establishment of new Voluntary Aided religious denominational schools. The Cabinet Member for Learning indicated that depending on the advice received from Government there was an intention to prepare a further report to the relevant PDG for their comments by 20th January and to possibly report back on any further progress to the 22nd February Cabinet meeting in respect of the development of a Cambridgeshire policy on the establishment of religious denominational schools.

It was agreed to:

Endorse the proposed action to be taken to respond formally to the parental representations received in support of additional Roman Catholic primary school places in Cambridge.

294. CONSULTATION BY EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON DRAFT PLANNING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT ON PLANNING CATEGORIES

As the report was not available / finalised / authorised for despatch 5 clear days in advance of the meeting the chairman agreed to exercise her discretion under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to allow the report to be considered taking into account the following reasons provided:

Reason for lateness - due to their having been ongoing discussions with East Cambridgeshire District Council officers on the proposed Supplementary Planning Document which had focused on particular areas of concern the District Council had around developer contributions and the extra time then necessary to prepare the consultation draft accurately.

Reason for urgency: the report needed to be considered by the current Cabinet meeting as

the closing date for consultation responses was 20th December 2010 which was before the next Cabinet meeting.

Cabinet received a report in order to approve a response to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) consultation on planning obligations produced by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) for which the consultation period was Monday 22nd November to Monday 20th December 2010. The full report can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-15>

Cabinet was reminded that the Government was seeking to implement changes to the current system of developer contributions through the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which would allow Councils to set standard charges for development schemes, set locally and tested by an independent examination. East Cambridgeshire District Council was working towards the introduction of a CIL charging mechanism, pending the publication of revised Government Regulations. As part of this process, the District Council would be producing a draft Infrastructure Investment Framework that would set out infrastructure requirements across the district, including costs and potential funding sources/gaps. Prior to the development of their CIL charging schedule, East Cambridgeshire District Council had produced the current SPD which would act as an interim document until ECDC implemented a CIL Charging Schedule.

Whilst the clarity brought by the draft SPD was welcomed, officers had serious reservations about a number of the proposals contained within the document. The three principle areas of concern were in relation to:

1. Reduced contributions based on development viability - *In particular, there were concerns about the proposal to discount developer contributions based on viability and the impact that this will have on service providers. This was of great concern to the County Council as education costs are uniform across the district and if such an approach were accepted, it would mean that the full cost of the infrastructure to be provided could not be met in the discounted areas unless other sources of funding were secured. In current circumstances, it could not be assumed that other sources of funding would be available and this could therefore reduce the County Council's ability to provide statutorily required infrastructure. It was therefore agreed that the County Council should object to reduced contributions being applied for services and infrastructure that it provided and that instead, a uniform rate across the district should apply for s106 contributions.*

2. Transport

The draft SPD relied too heavily on the assumption that external funding sources other than development would be available to provide transport infrastructure and services to support growth. It was noted that there was a significant risk that little or none of the £1.3billion expected in this way could be secured from these other sources and therefore more robust assumptions were required.

3. Waste

Contributions for waste were not included in the draft SPD but were needed to support waste infrastructure and services arising from growth.

Cabinet asked and for received assurances that there had been dialogue between the officers of the two authorities in respect of the proposed draft response at various workshops and transport related forums. It was indicated that many of the assumptions in the draft document had been prepared before the collapse of the housing market and the new spending limits imposed by Central Government and therefore required updating.

It was agreed to:

- a) approve the draft consultation response set out in Appendix 1 of this report; and
- b) to delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth Infrastructure and Strategic Planning in consultation with the Acting Executive Director, Environment Services, to make any minor textual changes as appropriate prior to submission.

295. CONSULTATION FROM COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG) ON NEW HOMES BONUS

Cabinet received a report proposing a draft response to the Government's Communities and Local Government (CLG) consultation on the proposed 'New Homes Bonus'.

Cabinet was informed that in 2009 only 118,000 homes had been completed in England and Wales, the lowest level of house-building since 1923-24 and therefore in order to try and address this, the Coalition Government had proposed a new system of incentives called the "New Homes Bonus". This was designed to create an effective financial incentive to encourage local authorities to facilitate housing growth and would operate by authorities being paid grant for each new home and each new affordable home that is built and each empty house that is brought back into use.

The detail of how the new Homes bonus proposed paying funds was set out in paragraphs 1.3 to 1.5 of the report and included:

- New Home - the equivalent of the average band D Council tax for each new house completed for a period of six years following its completion.
- New Home that is classed as an 'affordable home' – as for new home above **plus** an additional £350 payable for each of the 6 years following completion of the new affordable home
- Empty Home that is brought back into use – identical calculation as for New Home noted above.

The whole report can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-16>

The key points highlighted were:

1. That the suggested 80% to 20% split in favour of lower tier authorities over upper tier authorities was considered inequitable by County Council officers given the range of

services that both provided and taking account of the infrastructure obligations of the County Council and the financial pressures from growth that resulted;

2. The 'additional' payments in relation to affordable housing and bringing empty houses back into use should be allocated in the same way as the 'base' funding.
3. The consultation document suggested some potential uses that the New Homes Bonus could be put to such as to improve local playgrounds and parks or improve bin collections. Whilst it was understood that these were only suggestions, it was considered that it should be picked up as part of the response in recognising that the scope of uses was much wider than those in the document.

On 1 above, officers suggested that the Government should consider more widely distributing the New Homes Bonus to all organisations who provided public services to underpin growth to more genuinely reward those responsible for ensuring new development moved forward and that the new development was supported by all the vital public services the residents would use.

Question 5 of the consultation read "Do you agree with the proposal to split the payment of the New Homes Bonus between tiers: 80 per cent to the lower tier and 20 per cent to the upper tier, as a starting point for local negotiation? If not, what would the appropriate split be, and why?"

The proposal above weighted the New Homes Bonus in favour of the district councils, whereas it was considered that the greatest financial pressure from growth fell on the County Councils who hold a greater range of statutory duties, such as for education, local roads and waste, and therefore provide a greater range of services to new development. The suggested response therefore proposed that the starting point of the split of 80% and 20% was inequitable and should not be supported.

An alternative to the split proposed in the consultation was that the New Homes Bonus would be allocated on the basis of current proportions of the existing overall Council Tax bill. In Cambridgeshire this would equate to:-

- County Council – 71%
- District Council – 10.5%
- Parish Council – 2.5%
- Fire Authority – 4%
- Police Authority – 12%

Councillors Orgee and Yeulett declared personal interest as members of district councils and were of the view that Question 5 was unhelpful and set Councils against each other. This view was shared by Cabinet who were aware of concerns from Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council who opposed the alternative split proposed within the current Cabinet Report.

Other concerns expressed included:

1. that communities own views of what constituted essential infrastructure was not being taken into account.

2. That what was also needed in the response was drawing Central Government's attention to the County Council's statutory responsibilities to provide infrastructure in order to support the position being proposed and to highlight that the resources that were currently being lost through cuts in grants and capital funding could seriously impact of the County Council's ability in the future to provide the necessary infrastructure.
3. That there appeared to be nothing in the current proposals to add as an incentive / encouragement to housebuilders to actually build new houses. (Councillor Tuck declared a personal interest as a house-builder during this discussion which had been raised as an issue by another Member of Cabinet).
4. That with the proposed relaxation of planning regulations there could be an increase in the number of inappropriate extensions to private dwellings etc although it was pointed out that this would partly be balanced by the ability of communities to appeal against planning decisions.
5. The other major challenges that needed to be remembered when establishing new communities / increasing the amount of housing in existing communities, was not only the increase in physical infrastructure requirements, but also the increase in demand and need for social / adult care services.

Cabinet was concerned that the future provision under the section 106 replacement CIL would be inadequate to meet infrastructure requirements as was already proving to be the case with Section 106 contributions, and that joint partnership working was required between the various tiers of government to ensure that plans were developed that met communities own requirements / recognised needs. The final officer response therefore required to be bold in its statement on the requirements needed to help achieve the above aims and to press the point that adequate resources needed to be made available It was therefore agreed that the response required major modifications to take account of the issues raised in the Cabinet discussion.

It was agreed to:

- a) note the draft consultation response set out in Appendix 1 of the Cabinet report.
- b) Delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Acting Executive Director, Environment Services to make changes as appropriate prior to submission, taking into account the discussion at the meeting.

296. CAMBRIDGESHIRE INEQUALITIES CHARTER

Cabinet received a draft of the proposed Cambridgeshire Inequalities Charter for Cambridgeshire for consideration by Cabinet taking into account consultation questions being asked. The proposed Charter had been agreed by members of the Inequalities Charter project team, made up of representatives from the County Council, Cambridge City Council, Fenland District, Cambridgeshire Horizons, NHS Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue, and Cambridgeshire Constabulary. It was proposed that The Charter should be adopted by all the public sector organisations in Cambridgeshire and would be a tool designed to inform strategic and project planning within the County by illustrating the key inequality issues that existed within Cambridgeshire.

It was highlighted that in relation to the areas and communities within Cambridgeshire where people tended to experience poorer opportunities and outcomes across a wide range of issues (including health and education) tackling inequality was often very difficult due to the multiple factors involved. As a result, it was often possible for residents to receive numerous uncoordinated interventions from the public sector.

Cabinet noted that the countywide partnership project, “Making Cambridgeshire Count” (MCC), had investigated the approach to tackling inequality in Cambridgeshire and undertaken a consultation exercise with citizens who required extensive support from public services on how their lives could be improved. Following this, officers representing the range of public services in Cambridgeshire had created a proposed Inequalities Charter with the aim of articulating a better way of working.

The Charter’s priorities were intended to save money and improve performance by:

- encouraging the redesign of the approach to tackling inequalities
- a focus on one set of priorities,
- using resources better,
- examining whether preventative actions can reduce longer term problems and costs,
- working closer together as a public sector to better coordinate services on behalf of residents.

The Charter (Appendix B to the Cabinet report) which can be viewed at the following link:

[HTTP://TINYURL.COM/CAB101214-17](http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-17)

was created as a one page document setting out the key social, economic and environmental aspects of inequalities across the whole of Cambridgeshire. It advocated a holistic approach to reducing inequalities at less cost, which included shifting resources, better joined up working between different public sector agencies and promoting the importance of working with communities to ensure services were shaped around their needs and was seen as being a potentially valuable tool in respect of the Localism Agenda. The Charter provided a focus to the issue of inequality in Cambridgeshire and was intended to promote awareness setting an expectation that organisations adopting the Charter ensured that addressing inequalities through the development of new ways of working, would be a key part of their own individual strategic and operational plans.

It was deliberately short and simple document (one page diagrammatic in format) so that it could be displayed and used as an aide memoir across the public sector in Cambridgeshire and borne in mind during strategic and project planning.

It was resolved to:

- a) agree the consultation questions set out in (appendix A) to the report in regard to the Charter and
- b) agree to the Inequalities Charter being adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council and integrated into its strategic planning process and that it should be promoted throughout the organisation.

297. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

Cabinet received the latest quarterly update report on the Council's Corporate Risk Register which set out the significant business risks that could impact on the Council's ability to meet objectives and statutory obligations and provided important assurance on how the risks were already managed, and, where necessary, described what further action needed to be taken.

The report which includes the full Risk Register as one of its appendices can be viewed at the following Link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-18>

Cabinet noted that Risks 1 'Vision and prioritisation' and 2 'Financial Strategy' had been significantly reworked to reflect increasing certainty about the forward position. Risks showing a change in direction of travel were as follows:

| No | Description | Change | Reason for Change |
|----|--|----------|--|
| 2 | Finance and Performance Strategy | Worsened | Worsened position since Comprehensive Spending Review announcement, which demanded an increased savings requirement from the authority and front-loaded cuts. Detailed risk analysis is taking place as part of the Integrated Planning Process. |
| 10 | Performance | Worsened | Worsened position since more 'red' indicators were appearing on the scorecard. |
| 19 | Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults | Worsened | Worsening position; cumulative budget reductions might increase risk. |
| 20 | Resourcing for children with complex needs | Worsened | Worsening position; numbers of children receiving services had increased significantly and the trend was upward |
| 21 | Recruitment and Retention – Children's Social Care | Improved | Improving position; vacancy levels were relatively low. |

In terms of Risk 19 above, The Cabinet Member for Children indicated that officers were currently looking at different models of social care to help reduce the risk identified, as well as seeking to understand and mitigate the risks further.

In terms of Risk 23 'Pooled budgets' a report was due to come forward on revised Section 75 Agreements to Cabinet at its meeting in January.

Cabinet in discussing the report highlighted the need to ensure individual service risk registers linked to the Corporate Risk Register and requested that in future reports the Head of Audit and Risk Management should identify the links to individual risk registers.

It was agreed to:

Confirm that Cabinet was content with the risks as described, the controls

which already existed to manage these risks, and any mitigating actions planned as set out in the detail of the report.

298. LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHARED SERVICES UPDATE

As the report was not available / finalised / authorised for despatch 5 clear days in advance of the meeting the chairman agreed to exercise her discretion under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to allow the report to be considered taking into account the following reasons provided:

Reason for lateness: this was the first integrated finance and performance report in a new format as requested by the Joint Committee. To prepare the first report of this type and ensure it met both Authorities' needs had taken time, although the preparation of subsequent reports would be a matter of routine.

Reason for urgency: -it was important to consider the performance of Local Government Shared Services at the earliest opportunity.

The Local Government Shared Service (LGSS) initiative between Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire County Councils came into operation on the 1st October 2010 and Cabinet have received the second regular monitoring update report reviewing the progress of the Local Government Shared Services arrangement. The first full report covering the month of October which provided a summary of finance, performance and operational issues was attached as appendix 1 to the Cabinet report and can be viewed at the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/cab101214-19>

Cabinet noted an update against the following headings:

1. Operation of LGSS All Director appointments had been made and interim arrangements confirmed in respect of the Managing Director position. Team meetings and one to one meetings had taken place between Directors and heads of services and teams. Further team activities were planned, built around delivering operational improvements and supporting strategic activities such as the Integrated Plan.

2. Financial Performance of LGSS. Although LGSS had only operated from 1st October for reasons of operational simplicity and financial discipline, LGSS had taken over responsibility for the financial position of in scope corporate services up and until 30th September. There were no significant financial performance issues in either the Northamptonshire or Cambridgeshire "office".

3. Operational Performance of LGSS. No operational issue or problems had arisen from 1st October. Prompt payment, aged debtor, system availability and other metrics remained at or above target save for the asset sale target. The asset sale target was behind plan as a result of the Authority decision to retain certain school sites in Cambridgeshire to meet current and future need (the sites previously having been identified for disposal). Both Authorities had led the way in early publication of £500 plus spending.

4. Savings and Benefits Delivery. In terms of LGSS Management Team appointments and associated secretarial support, the target saving would be delivered with further savings accruing as a result of not filling the Managing Director role in the short to medium

term. Savings on the IT hosting contract had also exceeded plan. There were no implications on the net savings figure for the LGSS Business Case proposed by Cabinet on the 5th July and agreed by Council on the 20th July.

A question was raised on whether the Council was actively seeking more partners. In reply it was indicated that this was being progressed in a sensible and cautious manner and discussions with partners were ongoing. Any progress would be more realistic later in the new year when there would be more evidence of the track record of achieved savings over a longer period.

It was agreed to:

- a) note the contents of the Cabinet report and Appendix 1 covering the first month of Local Government Shared Service (LGSS) operation;
- b) note that key performance measures were still being formalised and would appear in the January 2011 report to Cabinet.

299. DRAFT CABINET AGENDA FOR 25th JANUARY 2010

As the draft agenda was not available / finalised / authorised for despatch 5 clear days in advance of the meeting the chairman agreed to exercise her discretion under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to allow the report to be considered taking into account the following reasons provided:

Reason for lateness – as the Forward Agenda changed on a regular basis to ensure Cabinet received a more up to date version than would have the case if it had been despatched as part of the original agenda.

Reason for urgency – to enable Cabinet to plan for the next meetings and to inform the public of the items.

Cabinet noted the draft Cabinet agenda with the following changes made since the agenda was published:

To be rescheduled to a later meeting as the January Cabinet meeting was being reserved for the IPP/ Budget where at all possible.

Item 8 – Care Quality Commission Performance Assessment and Action Plan moved to February

Chairman
25th January 2011

CABINET AGREED RESPONSE TO MEMBER LED REVIEW – EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN FENLAND

Recommendation 1: CCC and FDC to work in partnership with schools and other providers to raise aspirations in Fenland through:

- **Communicating successes and opportunities**
- **Developing parental engagement with schools and education in all its forms, particularly those from migrant communities**
- **Developing parental skills in supporting children's education**
- **Targeting work to ensure children in Fenland have access to a broad range of cultural and sporting opportunities**
- **Targeted work to address young peoples confidence about controlling their own health and wellbeing**

In terms of overall partnership working between CCC, FDC, schools and other providers, lead officers from both councils supporting the review will meet to develop a joint plan to address the specific recommendations. Plan to be produced by March 2011.

In terms of CCC's own response to specific recommendations, a number of actions will be taken:

i) Communicating successes and opportunities

Greater use will be made of CCC communications, such as Learning Together, to highlight successes and opportunities in Fenland. Standards & Effectiveness Services will ensure that particular strengths and successes are shared through best practice audits, the Cambridgeshire Directory of Best Practice; meetings of the Fenland headteachers, senior leaders and subject leaders; and developmental work linked to supporting school-to-school improvement partnerships.

ii) Developing parental engagement with schools and education in all its forms, particularly those from migrant communities

CCC officers from the Learning Directorate and the Enhanced & Preventative Services Directorate will liaise with FDC, schools and other partners to agree a more co-ordinated and cohesive approach to this challenging issue. The restructuring of the Learning Directorate along area lines will support improved partnership working. The impact of current work will be evaluated and actions adjusted and added to, as appropriate. Action to be completed by March 2011.

iii) Developing parental skills in supporting children's education

CCC officers will ensure that the implementation of the parenting strategy includes an appropriate and specific emphasis on Fenland. Action to be completed by April 2011.

iv) Targeting work to ensure children in Fenland have access to a broad range of cultural and sporting opportunities

This will require a collaborative strategic approach between Fenland District Council and CCC and

further discussions by lead officers will take place. This will be supported by the move to embed Cambridge Culture activity at a local level and to develop and fund local events and activities, driven by local schools and groups of children. Action to be completed by September 2011.

v) Targeted work to address young people's confidence about controlling their own health and wellbeing

CCC will liaise with Fenland District Council and Health and other community partners to investigate funding sources that would enable a deeper and more detailed analysis of health-related outcomes for young people in Fenland to be undertaken and appropriate actions to be taken. CCC will seek financial support for all Fenland schools to join the extended Healthy Schools programme with subsequent school-level actions guided by the analysis referred to in the previous sentence. CCC will support, through funding and guidance, the extension of the Kick Ash smoking cessation programme to all Fenland secondary schools. Action to be addressed by April 2011.

Recommendation 2: CCC and its partners to widen the availability of provision at the Early Years foundation Stage, taking advantage of proposals for additional provision for 2 year-olds and ensuring it is targeted at those most in need.

Response

CCC officers, using the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, will continue to be aware of the pressures on free childcare places for 2, 3 and 4 year-olds, and will deploy appropriate resources in order to a) address these pressures and b) develop places in quality settings. CCC officers will focus future work on promoting parental awareness of early years provision to ensure maximum take-up in Fenland, with particular reference to 'hard to reach' families. CCC officers will continue to develop innovative approaches to reaching and supporting disadvantaged children, e.g. by providing an outreach translation facility for migrant families to ensure that such families are well informed about services available.

CCC officers will support promote Children's Centres in Fenland as the key foci for community engagement; the provision of facilities and networking opportunities; and the identification of disadvantaged 2 year-olds. CCC officers will work with early years settings in Fenland to develop the accurate use of the Early Years Foundation Stage progress summaries for all disadvantaged 2 year-olds in receipt of funding and use these to ensure good transition into school. CCC officers will ensure that settings providing funded places for 2 year-olds remain engaged, motivated and effective.

Recommendation 3: Health engagement needs to be improved and best practice implemented consistently across the district. In particular, work to:

- **Identify, assess and refer children with developmental needs at the earliest stage**
- **Ensure effective engagement of key stakeholders including GPs, health visitors, children's centres and schools**

- **Address the outcomes of the Health Related Survey for Fenland**

Response

The links with early identification from Children's Centre teams will be developed to ensure clearer communication of early indicators and joint working with midwife teams and health visitors will be strengthened.

A meeting will be arranged between relevant stakeholders to agree a strategy and plan to ensure effective engagement and improved outcomes for children and families in Fenland. This recommendation will need to be addressed by CCC, Fenland District Council, Cambridge Health, schools and other partners and will be the subject of further discussions, leading to agreed actions.

Recommendation 4: Continue to strengthen the work of schools and the Councils in 'cluster groups' including continuing to focus on the development of transition projects and services.

Response

This recommendation will be the focus for a set of current and future actions to be taken forward by CCC officers in the Learning Directorate and Enhanced & Preventative Services Directorate. A key outcome of the restructuring of the Learning Directorate will be an improved focus on educational support at area and 'cluster' levels. This will align well with the new 'localism' agenda promoted by the Coalition Government.

Plans are in place to strengthen links between localities and the education support teams to ensure that partnerships and cluster activity is developed. This will be driven by the new Education White Paper focus on school to school support and partnership, and will be supported by the area lead officer from the Learning Directorate who will facilitate and promote the development of local clusters for successful impact on pupil outcomes.

Recommendation 5: To support the joint project led by Fenland District Council and CCC to address recruitment and retention of public sector staff, particularly teachers, health visitors and social workers.

Response

Cabinet is asked to support the recommendation regarding the joint project and associated work being developed by the Cambridgeshire Schools Workforce Steering Group.

Recommendation 6: Fenland District Council and CCC to support stronger links between business and schools at all curriculum levels and in particular to:

- **improve the quality of work experience placements**
- **support the growth of apprenticeships**

Response

CCC and its partners will address this recommendation under the aegis of the Education Business Partnership, which is in the process of being established and will replace the Cambridgeshire Education Business Links Organisation. Specific actions to improve work experience placements and support the growth of apprenticeships will be contingent on

forthcoming legislation and funding settlements but priority will be given to ensuring that such stronger links are made in Fenland.

Recommendation 7: Fenland District Council and CCC to pilot the extension of community transport initiatives to support the provision of after school activities, particularly in rural villages

Response

The recommendation is agreed, subject to the availability of identified funding.

Recommendation 8: It is essential that resources continue to be targeted to reduce the educational attainment gap across Cambridgeshire. In addressing the reduction of resources, CCC and Fenland District Council should ensure that the potential of community assets are maximised and that duplication is avoided.

Response

The recommendation is agreed and is already a high priority for the Council. Focused work by CCC officers, schools and other partners to further raise attainment in Fenland will continue but the precise nature of future work will need to be determined in response to forthcoming legislation and funding arrangements.

Recommendation 9: Further work needs to be undertaken to understand the reasons for high levels of School Action and School Action Plus identification in Fenland

Response

CCC officers will undertake this work as a) part of a project within the Special Educational Needs Programme and b) through monitoring in individual schools undertaken by Standards & Effectiveness officers.

Recommendation 10: The conclusions of this review need to be tested through engagement with children, young people and families.

Response

A series of stakeholder visits/events will be jointly coordinated and organised by Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council members to discuss the outcomes of the review and seek stakeholder views. Action to take place by May 2011.