

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 15th December 2015

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 3.20 p.m.

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor S Kindersley (Chairman)
 Councillors: P Ashcroft, B Ashwood, A Bailey, I Bates, C Boden, D Brown, P Brown, P Bullen, R Butcher, S Bywater, E Cearn, B Chapman, P Clapp, J Clark, D Connor, S Count, S Crawford, S Criswell, A Dent, D Divine, P Downes, S Frost, D Giles, G Gillick, L Harford, D Harty, R Henson, R Hickford, J Hipkin, S Hoy, P Hudson, B Hunt, D Jenkins, N Kavanagh, G Kenney, M Leeke, M Loyne, R Mandley, I Manning, M Mason, M McGuire, Z Moghadas, L Nethsingha, F Onasanya, T Orgee, J Palmer, P Reeve, K Reynolds, M Rouse, P Sales, J Schumann, J Scutt, M Shellens, M Shuter, M Smith, M Tew, P Topping, S van de Ven, A Walsh, J Whitehead, J Williams, G Wilson and F Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors A Lay, P Read, A Taylor, S Van de Kerkhove and J Wisson

179. MINUTES – 13TH OCTOBER 2015

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 13th October 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

180. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made a number of announcements as set out in **Appendix A**.

181. REPORT OF THE COUNTY RETURNING OFFICER

Council noted that Councillor Richard Mandley had been elected to fill the vacancy in the Chatteris Electoral Division in the by-election held on 15th October 2015.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct.

183. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Council noted one question received from a member of the public as set out in **Appendix B**.

184. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

**185. SECTION 85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 –
RECOMMENDATION TO EXTEND SIX MONTH RULE**

a) Councillor Steve van de Kerkhove

It was proposed by the Chairman of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chairwoman of Council, Councillor Smith, and agreed unanimously by a show of hands:

- i) to note that Councillor Steve van de Kerkhove had not been able to attend meetings of the Council due to ill health since his attendance at a meeting of Children and Young People Policy and Service Committee on 30th June 2015;
- ii) extend its best wishes to Councillor van de Kerkhove; and
- iii) to approve Councillor van de Kerkhove's non-attendance at meetings of the Council due to ill health up to 15th June 2016 pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

b) Councillor Philip Read

It was proposed by the Chairman of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chairwoman of Council, Councillor Smith:

- i) to note that Councillor Philip Read had not been able to attend meetings of the Council due to ill health since his attendance at a meeting of full Council on 21st July 2015;
- ii) extend its best wishes to Councillor Read; and
- iii) approve Councillor Read's non-attendance at meetings of the Council due to ill health up to 15th June 2016 pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Following discussion, the recommendations on being put to the vote were carried.

[Voting pattern: all Conservatives, all Labour, three Liberal Democrats, three Independents and one UKIP member in favour; eight Liberal Democrats and eight UKIP against; and one Liberal Democrat and one UKIP member abstained.]

Following a proposal from Councillor Count that the Council should consider introducing a policy to allow only one extension in any four year municipal period, Councillor Hickford undertook to raise this issue at Constitution and Ethics Committee.

186. ITEM FOR DETERMINATION FROM GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Treasury Management Quarter Two Report

It was moved by the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, Councillor Count, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor McGuire, that the recommendation set out in Minute 172 of the minutes of the General Purposes

Committee meeting of 24th November 2015 be approved.

It was resolved unanimously by a show of hands:

to note the Treasury Management Quarter Two Report.

187. AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

The Chairman of the Audit and Accounts Committee, Councillor Shellens, moved receipt of the annual report of the Committee for 2014/15. As part of his introduction, he thanked members of the Committee, the Interim Head of Internal Audit Neil Hunter and his team, and Rob Sanderson, Democratic Services Officer, for the support they had provided during the year.

In response, Councillors Hipkin and Mason paid tribute to the chairmanship of Councillor Shellens.

Council noted the report.

188. CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL

a) Cambridgeshire Local Pension Board – Terms of Reference

It was moved by the Chairwoman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Smith, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor McGuire, that the recommendations as set out in the report from the Constitution and Ethics Committee be approved.

It was resolved unanimously by a show of hands:

to approve the draft Standing Orders for the Local Pension Board as set out in Appendix B of the report for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

b) Recession of Previous Resolutions

It was moved by the Chairwoman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Smith, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor McGuire, that the recommendations as set out in the report from the Constitution and Ethics Committee be approved.

Following discussion, the recommendations were put to the vote.

It was resolved to approve:

- (a) the revision of Rule 17 of the Committee and Sub-Committee Procedure Rules (Previous Decisions and Motions) to include a requirement that, in order to request that a decision made within the past six months be rescinded, a notice of motion must be signed by at least half of the Members of the relevant Committee.
- (b) the exemption of a decision to rescind a previous resolution from the decision review process.

- (c) the amendment of Rule 17 of the Committee and Sub-Committee Procedure Rules as set out in Appendix A of the report.
- (d) the amendment of Part 4.1 (Council Procedure Rules) and Part 4.4 of the Constitution (Committee and Sub-Committee Procedure Rules) to include authority for the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman/woman of the Council or Committee, to cancel a Council or Committee meeting.
- (e) the authorisation of the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairwoman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to make any other minor or consequential amendments to the Constitution necessary for, or incidental to, the implementation of these proposals.

[Voting pattern: all Conservatives, seven Labour, six UKIP, two Liberal Democrats, and two Independents in favour; nine Liberal Democrats and three UKIP against; and one Liberal Democrat and one Independent member abstained]

c) Review of Appeals against Dismissal Policy

It was moved by the Chairwoman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Smith, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor McGuire, that the recommendations as set out in the report from the Constitution and Ethics Committee be approved.

Following discussion, the recommendation was put to the vote.

It was resolved to agree:

That the Constitution be amended in accordance with the recommendation of the Staffing and Appeals Committee, that all* appeals against dismissal will be heard by a Director sitting alone who would be completely independent of the case (* except for Chief Officers and where procedures for statutory officers apply).

[Voting pattern: all Conservatives, three Independents and one Liberal Democrat in favour, ten Liberal Democrats, nine UKIP, eight Labour and one Independent member against; one Liberal Democrat and one UKIP Member abstained]

189. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

It was moved by the Chairman of Council, Councillor Kindersley, and seconded by the Vice-Chairwoman of Council, Councillor Smith, and resolved unanimously:

to agree the appointment of Councillor McGuire to replace Councillor Reynolds on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority.

190. MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10

Three motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

(a) Motion from Councillor Noel Kavanagh

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Kavanagh and seconded by

Councillor Whitehead:

This Council recognises the positive contribution that trade unions and trade union members make in our workplaces. This Council values the constructive relationship that we have with our trade unions and we recognise their commitment, and the commitment of all our staff, to the delivery of good quality public services.

This Council notes with concern the Trade Union Bill which is currently being proposed by the Government and which would affect this Council's relationship with our trade unions and our workforce as a whole, particularly in regard to facility time and the arrangements for deducting trade union membership subscriptions

This Council believes facility time, negotiated and agreed by us and our trade unions to suit our own specific needs, has a valuable role to play in the creation of good quality and responsive local services. Facility time should not be determined or controlled by Central Government in London.

This Council is happy with the arrangements we currently have in place for deducting trade union membership subscriptions through our payroll. We see this as an important part of our positive industrial relations and a cheap and easy to administer system that supports our staff. This system is an administrative matter for the Council and should not be interfered with by the UK Government.

Therefore, this Council resolves:

- to direct the Chief Executive (or delegated officer) to write to Government, on behalf of the Council, to confirm that it is content with the existing arrangements it has with trade unions and does not wish to see them changed.

Councillor Whitehead declared a non-statutory interest under the Code of Conduct as she had been the President of the Cambridgeshire Association of University Teachers.

Following discussion, the motion, on being put to the vote, was lost.

[Voting pattern: ten Liberal Democrats, eight Labour, six UKIP and two Independents in favour; all Conservatives, two Liberal Democrats and one Independent member against; four UKIP and one Independent member abstained]

(b) Motion from Councillor Paul Bullen

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Bullen and seconded by Councillor Reeve:

This Council is mindful of the fact that in the present financial circumstances it is required, as are other public bodies, to deliver the same level of service to its customers with considerably less resources.

However, the legal constraints surrounding the delivery of some of those services have not been relaxed (and nor should they be) as far as some of our most vulnerable residents are concerned. One of the most vulnerable of those service user groups are the children directly "looked after" by this Council, and so too are

the fragile families who require intensive support from us along with the most vulnerable of adults.

The implications for these groups of the Council's lack of resources are compounded by the lack of resources possessed by the other body closely involved in determining the way in which their lives should unfold within a proper timescale, namely HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS).

Unlike local authorities, HMCTS is not democratically accountable to the public and some parts of its work, notably some of the operations of the Family Division, and of the Court of Protection (CoP), are not open to public scrutiny. Under the Presidency of Sir James Munby, some progress has been made and more public law child cases, and CoP cases, are now reported as law on the www.bailii.org website and elsewhere, but these reports are neither easily accessible nor understandable by some of the families concerned.

The situation has been made worse by the limited availability of legal aid, though again Sir James has endeavoured to assist by demanding funding be made available to the most vulnerable of parents, from the local authority involved in the case as the provider of last resort. His point is that the timescales imposed by law on public law child cases have been imposed for a reason, and those timescales should not be exceeded purely because of the lack of resources of the public bodies involved.

Though laudable in intent, of course, this will impose yet further strain on local government.

This Council, as are all other local authorities, is doing its level best to secure the resources needed to fulfil its obligations to these vulnerable children, families and individuals. Though this is an area where a bad Social Services decision, particularly if that bad decision is financially driven, receives massive publicity, it nevertheless means some public scrutiny is in place.

This is not so in the case of HMCTS, whose budgetary constraints - staff redundancies, Court closures, plus the loss of legal aid - can have as great an impact on individual cases in that those constraints can lead to the delaying and possible denying of justice. Those who do protest against these things are not perceived by the public as acting altruistically but in their own interests, specifically the preservation of their levels of remuneration, and nor will they receive the positive mass media coverage a local authority may attract.

It is therefore proposed that this Council requests the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Justice expressing the Council's concerns:

- a. As to the disproportionate impact of HMCTS' cost cuts upon looked after children, insofar as they remain subject to the care regime and without certainty for considerably longer than is needful,
- b. To further open up the Family Court, and the Court of Protection, so that those subject to its/their jurisdiction may freely discuss matters pertaining thereto with their elected representatives and,
- c. That the Press and public may be admitted to its/their hearings subject only to such restrictions on reporting as may be necessary to protect children

and other vulnerable persons.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Nethsingha and seconded by Councillor Downes:

1. In the fourth line of recommendation b. delete “representatives” and insert “MPs”.
2. Delete recommendation c. in its entirety.

Additions in bold and deletions shown in strikethrough to the recommendations.

It is therefore proposed that this Council requests the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Justice expressing the Council's concerns:

- a. As to the disproportionate impact of HMCTS' cost cuts upon looked after children, insofar as they remain subject to the care regime and without certainty for considerably longer than is needful,
- b. To further open up the Family Court, and the Court of Protection, so that those subject to its/their jurisdiction may freely discuss matters pertaining thereto with their elected ~~representatives~~ **MPs** and,
- c. ~~That the Press and public may be admitted to its/their hearings subject only to such restrictions on reporting as may be necessary to protect children and other vulnerable persons.~~

Following further discussion, the amendment on being put to the vote was carried.

[Voting pattern: twenty Conservatives, ten Liberal Democrats, all Labour, six UKIP and three Independents in favour; three Conservatives, and one UKIP against; and one UKIP member abstained]

On being put to the vote, the substantive motion as amended was carried.

[Voting pattern: seventeen Conservatives, all Liberal Democrats, all UKIP, three Labour, three Independents in favour; twelve Conservatives, two Labour against; and three Labour, one Conservative and one Liberal Democrat abstained.]

(c) Motion from Councillor Jocelyne Scutt

The Chairman drew attention to an alteration to the first line of the motion after “This Council further notes:” to replace “to” to “from” after “Any reallocation”. The proposer of the motion and the meeting agreed the change without discussion.

The following motion, as amended, was proposed by Councillor Scutt and seconded by Councillor Crawford:

This Council notes:

- Since 2011-2012, the County Council has been faced with severe reductions in funding from Central Government. Consequently each year the County Council has had no alternative but to reduce services throughout Cambridgeshire, resulting in decreasing provision of essential services to all

residents.

- The impact of “savings” as provided for in each Business Plan for County Council Directorates since 2011-12 is:

<i>All in £000s</i>							
	Children	Adults	ETE	Public Health	LGSS	Corporate	Total
11/12	13,474	24,684	6,740	N/A	1,893	3,561	50,352
12/13	9,839	25,196	3,359	N/A	2,096	1,722	42,212
13/14	7,803	12,488	7,796	250	2,698	957	31,992
14/15	12,102	19,908	1,117	198	487	2,041	35,853
15/16	14,232	8,650	3,991	0	1,178	882	28,933
16/17	26,684		6,551	511	871	940	35,557
11/12 – 16/17 (a year)	175,060		29,554	959	9,223	10,103	224,899

- The provisional savings targets for 2016-17 are not yet final and may change because:
 - Savings may be reallocated to another Directorate.
 - The overall financial position may improve.
 - Savings may be met through increased income instead of service cuts.

This Council further notes:

- Any reallocation from another Directorate means that that Directorate will be obliged to reduce its services even further in circumstances where every relevant Committee and Directorate is at such severely reduced levels of provision that any further reductions may cut into statutorily mandated services.
- There is no real prospect of the overall financial position improving or of increased income due to the economic policies pursued by Central Government and major cuts in funding it is imposing on local authorities including this County Council.
- On current information the further cuts of £26.8 million proposed for this Council’s Children’s and Adults Services of £26.8 million in the 2016/17 budget will have additional consequences in later years so that their cumulative effect would amount to £73.3 million a year by 2020/21.

This Council:

- Regrets the continuing policy of the Conservative Government in imposing severe reductions in its essential funding of local authorities.
- Observes that this policy is responsible for the cuts the County Council is

- being forced to make in all its services, including
 - essential services for the whole of Cambridgeshire, particularly roads and highways (including lighting, pavements and cycleways) with consequent impacts on safety; and
 - social care for vulnerable adults, children and families – reduction and denial of which is unacceptable in a society which claims to be civilised.
- Confirms that successive reductions in the Central Government Revenue Support Grant to the County Council amount to nearly £50m a year from 2013 to 2016 and £86m a year by 2019 when the Revenue Support Grant will have disappeared altogether.
- Notes that the County Council's sustained and substantial efforts to make savings through increased efficiency cannot address the severity of cuts that are impacting on, and with each successive year will impact even more upon, the most vulnerable and needy people of Cambridgeshire to such an extent that they are both devastating and unconscionable.

This Council resolves to direct the Chief Executive (or delegated officer):

- To make strong representations to the Local Government Association to ensure that it takes up the matter directly with Central Government to halt and reverse the cuts that are making the County Council's obligations impossible to fulfil.
- To correspond directly with Central Government in relation to the Revenue Support Grant and in particular the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer to make a case directly to them for Cambridgeshire, similarly focusing on halting and reversing the cuts, so as to fulfil the County Council's obligations as a local authority responsible for the wellbeing, safety and amenity of Cambridgeshire residents.
- To approach the Prime Minister's Office seeking an appointment with the Prime Minister to bring directly to his attention the wish of Cambridgeshire County Council to properly and adequately fulfil our obligations to Cambridgeshire residents and the impediment to this created by his Government's policies.

Following discussion on being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

[Voting pattern: all Liberal Democrats, all Labour, five UKIP and two Independents in favour; all Conservatives, two UKIP and two Independents against; two UKIP and two Independents abstained]

191. QUESTIONS:

a) Oral Questions

Eight questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9.1, as set out in **Appendix C**. In response to these questions, the following items were agreed for further action:

- In response to a question from Councillor Jenkins, the Chairman of Economy

and Environment Policy and Service Committee, Councillor Bates, undertook to meet with Councillor Jenkins in the New Year to look at congestion in Cambridge.

- In response to a question from Councillor Hoy, the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Peter Brown, undertook to ensure that local Councillors including Councillor Hoy were consulted formally on specific proposals for combining Wisbech Police Station with the Fire Station in order to ensure the specific concerns of local residents were taken into account.
- In response to a question from Councillor Sales, the Chairman of General Purposes Committee, Councillor Count, agreed to investigate with officers the best way of dealing with Members' enquiries regarding Council Services.

b) Written Questions

No written questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2.

Chairman

APPENDIX A**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15TH DECEMBER 2015
CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS****PEOPLE****Chatteris By-Election**

The result from the By-Election held on 15th October 2015 for the Chatteris Electoral Division was:

Name	Description	Votes Cast
John Richard Freeman	Liberal Democrat	274
Richard Michael Mandley	UKIP	600
Alan Keith Melton	Conservative	590

The turnout was 23.5%.

Richard Mandley was declared as the duly elected councillor for the Chatteris Division and has signed his declaration of acceptance.

Interim Director for Infrastructure Management and Operations

Christine May, currently Head of Community and Cultural Services in Economy, Transport and Environment has been appointed as interim Director for Infrastructure Management and Operations. This follows the retirement of John Onslow who headed up the Directorate since its creation three years ago.

AWARDS**National Adoption Awards**

The concurrent planning arrangements established by Cambridgeshire County Council and adoption agency Coram Cambridgeshire adoption (CCA) won the Excellence in Practice award at the National Adoption Awards.

Concurrency planning is an approach for young children whereby foster care is provided by prospective adopters of the child. If the birth family, following support are able to get to the point of caring for their child then the child is returned to them. If the view is that the birth parents are unable to care for the child then the child is adopted by the foster carers.

Since Coram Cambridgeshire Adoption was launched in August 2014, 16 babies have been placed for adoption through concurrent planning.

SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

Integrated Highway Management Centre

The County Council's Integrated Highway Management Centre (IHMC) is now operational from 7am to 7pm (previously 7am to 5.30pm), which now enables it to play a greater role in the efficient management of the highway network and increased communication, working alongside key partners such as the Police and Highways England.

Cambridgeshire Equalities Pledge

Cambridgeshire County Council, along with other public services in the county, signed the Cambridgeshire Equalities Pledge last month. The pledge the Council made was this:

"We believe in the dignity of all people and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution that diversity brings to our community. Our aspiration is for Cambridge and the wider region to be safe, welcoming and inclusive".

One way in which the Council will be honouring our pledge in upcoming months will be by marking LGBT History Month in February.

MESSAGES

Royal Visit

The Chairman had the honour of welcoming His Royal Highness The Duke of York to Cambridge, on behalf of the County Council, when His Royal Highness visited Barclays Bank, Clifton Road, Cambridge to open the first Barclays Eagle Lab, on Wednesday 2 December 2015.

The Barclays Eagle Lab is a new space for makers and digital artists in Cambridge, and is operating as part of Barclays UK-wide [Digital Eagles](#) initiative, to foster creativity, making and design.

APPENDIX B**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

From Antony Carpen to Councillor Roger Hickford, Chairman of Highways and Community Infrastructure Policy and Service Committee

Buses I am on regularly get blocked on the Hills Road / Lensfield Road junction by the big Catholic Church in Cambridge. Many years ago there used to be a box junction and box junction penalties. No longer, and with no enforcement, drivers regularly block the junction to traffic going north/south from Hills Road/Regent Street.

- 1) Who needs to do what to get that box junction re-instated irrespective of the merits of whether it should be in place or not particularly focussing on the process here and if it is the County Council can Councillors and officers take action?
- 2) Who would be responsible for enforcement and in particular getting the message to anti-social drivers who choose to jump the stop line and thus block the entire junction again causing problems for bus timetables and then finally?
- 3) What considerations will Councillors give to proposals for smart traffic management as proposed in the City Deal recent evidence sessions?

Response from Councillor Roger Hickford, Chairman of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee

Thank you Chair and thank you Mr Carpen

We are aware of some blocking issues there and have put four big "Keep Clear" signs there on the 18th October this year and we are reviewing the situation. I think your question is about how to reinstate the box junction and I will give you the written procedure for that after the meeting.

As far as the enforcement is concerned that is entirely down to the Police and obviously we will work in with any cameras necessary at the time and your final point which is the Smart Traffic Management, I saw you were there at the City Deal. That will be considered as part of the call for evidence and naturally I thought personally it was quite a good presentation that was given. So I, along with the other Members of the Assembly and the Board, will be considering them in due course.

Supplementary question from Mr A Carpen

Thank you Councillor. For those Councillors who have not seen the presentation just mentioned in the Councillor's response, I filmed the presentation at the Evidence Session, so would strongly recommend that you watch the presentation, because I certainly found it absolutely compelling. Could I make one request Councillor, that the written response that you provide me, could you publish it on your website and also link it through to your Facebook page and Twitter account so that I can publicise it to people across the County. The reason being is I would like to publicise the procedures so that people across the County, not just in Cambridge, but in places like Huntingdon and Wisbech, if they have ideas of how to improve some of the junctions that are regularly snarled up with traffic, that the procedure is there, crystal clear for them.

Response from Councillor Hickford

I understand the website but as soon as you got to Twitter and Facebook I just completely lost it! No seriously, yes of course we can do that for you, not a problem.

APPENDIX C**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15TH DECEMBER 2015
ORAL QUESTION TIME****1. Question from Councillor David Jenkins to Councillor Ian Bates, Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee**

Not a big question and I am sorry that I have not given you forewarning. This is about congestion in the City again. We spoke at the last Council meeting you recall. Congestion has not got any better. I did attend your Committee but you did not address the current situation. When I asked the question last time you promised a site visit to look at how bad it was. I think in light of the public question we got about the junction in Lensfield Road and Hills Road, it highlights the fact that there is a problem there. It's causing bus cuts, it's causing long journeys into work, to school etc. I think we should follow this one up so early in the New Year. Perhaps we can meet up in the centre and have a look at the problem?

Response from Councillor Bates

I think that is addressed to myself. Perhaps just for information obviously as Members will be aware, the City Deal Executive and Assembly have done the call for evidence. That evidence has now been received and is being analysed. Yes, congestion, everybody I think accepts the fact that there is congestion and obviously that will come forward as I think everybody realises in future about what might be some options to go forward and those obviously will be considered by the City Board, the Executive and also the Assembly in due course. It was very interesting to see lots of good ideas coming forward and I think we need to give some thanks for those people who gave evidence and came forward and I am happy to meet Councillor Jenkins in the future.

Supplementary question from Councillor Jenkins

No supplementary. I would just like to thank Ian for the response. I just think that it is so easy for us to say "City Deal" and that's off in the future. There are some simple things that can be done straight away. And some good quality principles are duly obvious straight away so let's have a look on the ground together.

2. Question from Councillor Samantha Hoy to Councillor Sir Peter Brown, Chairman of the Fire Authority.

I know for the moment that it is all quite high level stuff but there is a proposal to combine Wisbech Police Station with the Fire Station. Whilst I am not against this proposal, I do have a number of concerns that have been raised to me by residents, specifically about access by emergency vehicles onto already congested roads and one that has a school crossing patrol and potential things like that. All that I would ask is that can I at some point as the local Member have some kind of involvement to input those residents' concerns and just be assured that they will be listened to?

Response from Councillor Sir Peter Brown

Before I answer the question, can I make just a quick point and thank the Members of the Fire Authority who are on this Council for their help and support during the year. We have had some very difficult decisions to make and we work very, very closely together all of us and it has all come to fruition, so thank you very much all of you and you know who you are.

The Wisbech problem. I am very pleased that the Police are collaborating with us and moving into the Fire Station. That is good news. I spoke to the new Deputy Chief Fire Officer this afternoon and he has told me that of course we can have time to talk to local Councillors about what is going to happen. At the moment the project is on the shelf but as soon as it comes down from the shelf I will be in touch with you.

3. Question from Councillor James Palmer to Councillor Roger Hickford, Chairman of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee

There is much concern for the plan of this Council to switch off street lighting between midnight and 6am. Can the Chairman of Highways and Community Infrastructure consider the options of lessening the effect on those who use the road network in our towns and cities late at night?

Response from Councillor Hickford

Thank you Councillor Palmer for the question. As you are aware, the residents' consultation has just finished. I do understand the concerns – shiftworkers, night time economy, the fear of crime – all these I am sure will be in the consultation as we go through it.

I have asked officers that they bring the results of the consultation back to the 12th January Committee meeting and I think we all look forward to that and I will suggest that, officers, hold that particular one in the Council Chamber.

4. Question from Councillor Paul Sales to Councillor Steve Count, Chairman of the General Purposes Committee

Chair, I am not sure who is responsible for the Contact Centre. Whichever Chair is responsible it doesn't work! My question is in view of the fact that I have had a very difficult week trying to get some sense out of it, out of anybody there, with one exception, would he consider establishing a separate route into the Contact Centre for Councillors who have enquiries? We do represent people and not to be able to access people we want to talk to is a real difficulty.

Response from Councillor Count

In terms of the Contact Centre, I am fully aware that there has been some large difficulties there in maintaining service for a period of time and I have been there talking to Sue Grace about where we are now and how we are going to move forward.

As we move to the outcome-based model for the entire Council, the front door in terms of things like the Contact Centre are going to become increasingly important for the way that we work and therefore we are looking very closely at how we are going to resource that in future and how we are going to deal with that. As to this specific question of accessing the Contact Centre directly rather than waiting in the queue, I would have thought that this is the kind of services that Members' Services perform at the moment. You can access the Council directly that way and therefore have direct access to officers, but I am not sure what the nuance differences are, but what I shall do Paul if it's alright with you, is to take that question away, look at whether things may be considered differently or whether there is a better answer in the Members' Services realm and take that away and discuss that further with officers.

5. Question from Councillor Lucy Nethsingha to Councillor Tony Orgee, Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

My question is does Councillor Orgee recognise the intense pressure the NHS in Cambridgeshire is under at present and that the failure of the older people's contract with UnitingCare Partnership is in part, a reflection of the huge pressure on our health and social care system?

Response from Councillor Orgee

Thank you for the question and thank you for giving me advance notice of the question.

Yes I do recognise the intense pressure that the NHS in Cambridgeshire is under, but moreover I would say that it is nationally recognised that Cambridgeshire has one of the most financially challenged Health economies in the country. And when I say nationally recognised, that national recognition has been in place for the last twelve to eighteen months so it is something that we have known about for some considerable time.

I must say that there have been a number of summits and meetings involving people at the most senior levels from stakeholder organisations looking at this issue and looking at ways forward. I have to say that I think that some people feel that there has not been as much progress as there should have been in relation to that, because as I say it is an issue that has been known about for well over a year.

In terms of the Uniting Care Contract – I was privy to the e-mail before it was actually sent out about the termination of the Contract, but I have not had any official discussions about the reasons for that termination, as yet. What I would say is that the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have been invited to the Health Committee meeting on Thursday this week, to give us an update and basically what we will be focussing on there I'm sure is making sure that those people who are in receipt of services from that contract are not disadvantaged in any way. So first we will concentrate on the people who are involved, and then at a later meeting, look at the reasons why this contract was terminated.

I should say that yesterday at the Support Group meeting, we also decided that what is said on Thursday to the Health Committee should be relayed to members of the Health and Wellbeing Board and that Contract will also be featuring on the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting agenda on the 14th January.

Supplementary question from Councillor Nethsingha

My supplementary is that given the very close relationship between social care and NHS Care, particularly given the importance of the Better Care Fund, and given what the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board has just said about the extreme pressure that the NHS in Cambridgeshire in particular is under, will he undertake to argue within his Group for the importance of taking the 2% that is available for social care in our Council Tax during the coming months?

Response from Councillor Orgee

Thank you for the supplementary for which I had no advance warning. When it comes to the budget, we need to look at the total picture, the total financial picture within the Council as a whole. We all need to come to decisions on that basis in view of all the evidence in front of us from every part of the Council's activities.

Point of Order from Councillor Ian Bates

Point of Order please Mr Chairman. Can I please have some clarity about the question which has just been asked to the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board? I am not sure that it covers that within our Constitution. I think that question has to be addressed to the Chairman of our Health Committee, but please correct me if I am wrong.

Chairman

It does say the Chairman or Chairwoman of any Committee and yes I do take the point. We are going to have some legal opinion.

The answer is that it is fine. It is a permitted question to the permitted Councillor who is on a permitted Committee. That is the legal advice.

Councillor David Brown

According to our Rules, the supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply and must not introduce new material. Clearly that introduced new material.

Chairman

I tend to agree with you, but in any case we will draw a line under this matter, given that Councillor Nethsingha has worked the system to her advantage.

6. Question from Councillor Graham Wilson to Councillor Mike Tew, Chairman of the Adults Committee

Chairman with your indulgence and with Councillor Bates' indulgence I would like to ask a question of the Chairman of the Adults Committee concerning the provision of social care to the elderly and vulnerable.

Councillor Bailey referred to the good work that has been going on in the Adults Committee about transforming lives and the new ways of thinking and working amongst officers. But officers have also given stark warnings about the growing social care funding gap and we have seen in the Committee's Business Plan papers the impact of the severe cuts in Adult Services that could occur in the next few years, and we have also heard about the chronic under-funding that could drive care providers out of the market or at least refuse to provide services to us.

We have agreed in Committee that we need to invest in preventative services to try, as Councillor Bailey suggested, to reduce the need for expensive packages of care, but we cannot do that unless we have the resources to do it. So my question to the Chairman is will he join me in welcoming the Conservative Chancellor's announcement that would allow us to invest in these preventative services and reduce the risks in some of our other services by imposing a 2% ringfenced increase in the Council Tax?

Point of Order from Councillor Bailey

Point of Order – I believe that is a very personal question to an individual. How can he answer that on behalf of the Committee?

Chairman

We think it is alright.

Point of Order from Councillor Scutt

The 2% will not cover anything related to care.

Chairman

That is not a point of Order

Point of Order from Councillor Whitehead

I have frequently been asked questions by Councillor Downes that start with “Does the Chair agree...” and I think that this is the same kind of question, so it has been allowed in the past it surely should be allowed now?

Chairman

I do agree, which is why I am saying that it is in order.

Response from Councillor Tew

Thank you for the question Graham. What I would like to say is I think everything should be up for discussion and debate, but I do not think it is within the remit of the Adults Committee to make a decision on a 2% rise in Council Tax. I think it is up to the General Purposes Committee (GPC) and Full Council.

Supplementary question from Councillor Wilson

My supplementary will be more a point of information or personal opinion in that I think the gentleman is wrong, because we are the Adults Committee making recommendations to the GPC and we will review the budget put forward to us by the officers and that will include expenditure, but it should also include consideration of where that money is coming from and the Chancellor has specifically given us the opportunity to ringfence 2% on the Council Tax for Adult Social Care. I would not go to Ian Bates as Chairman of whatever to ask whether his Committee supported that or not. I would go to Adult Social Care. I think that is my point.

Point of Order from Councillor Count

Thank you Chair. I believe the way we have set up the Committees is that the Chairman is an independent spokesperson on behalf of the Committee and its views. Every political group has been allocated a spokesperson for the Committees and in the case of where there is a Chair, they also have a Spokes. Now the view that the Chair can give on this matter is one that is decided upon by his Committee and then he voices that out aloud, or her, in another case. As that Committee has not had that meeting yet and made that decision, I suggest that it is improper to ask Councillor Tew to voice an opinion as Chair of Committee to give that opinion on something they have yet to decide.

7. Question from Councillor Peter Reeve to Councillor Steve Count, Leader of the Council

I have had a number of concerns raised with me with regard to the Guided Busway in that an awful lot of people (almost a victim of its own success) are now finding concurrent buses driving past them absolutely full as they approach closer to Cambridge to the extent that, some people are now telling me that they have either given up on the Guided Busway altogether, or that they would actually drive in the opposite direction up the A14 in order to catch the bus further upstream so that they can actually get on it before it is full. I have raised this at Spokes and I appreciate from the perspective of the Council internally that we provide the system and the buses running on it are entirely outside of our control now and its investment and scheduling decision are from the likes of Stagecoach. But, because of the huge amount of investment we have put in this infrastructure, and because of the huge amount of risk we continue to carry going forward as a result of it existing, could I ask the Leader of the Council to approach Stagecoach, see what the intentions are, whether it is scheduling or investment and if constituents' minds could be put at rest, that there is a future for this, so that they do not give up on the Guided Busway altogether?

Chairman

Is Councillor Bates going to answer this?

Response from Councillor Count.

If you will indulge me by passing the question to Councillor Bates who is much closer to this.....

Councillor Reeve.

My question is to the Leader specifically, because it is not a matter that the Committee can resolve it is a matter for(Councillor speaking off mic)

Councillor Count

This is the domain of ETE and the meetings with Stagecoach and I was going to stand up to say that it would be lovely to gloat about the success of the absolutely fantastic Guided Bus but it is much more appropriate for him (*Note e.g. Councillor Bates*) who, I know is already mouthing to me that he has a meeting with Stagecoach.

Councillor Bates

Just for Councillor Reeves information, the Managing Director of Stagecoach will be at our Spokes meeting tomorrow. I would suggest that your Spokesperson, hopefully Roger (*Note: Councillor Roger Henson*) will be attending. I am quite content that, that question is raised tomorrow directly and let's see what response we get. He may have to take it away of course, bearing in mind he is not here today. So I am happy to raise that with him tomorrow.

8. Question from Councillor Anna Bailey to Councillor David Jenkins, Chairman of the Health Committee.

I am reassured to hear from Councillor Orgee about the plans for the CCG Contract to be put onto the Health Committee agenda but does Councillor Jenkins share my concern at the news that the very long and very expensive and very resource intensive procurement process between the Clinical Commissioning Group and UnitingCare Partnership has

resulted in the Contract being cancelled only eight months into its life and will he ensure during the scrutiny process that questions are asked as to how the so called innovative elements of the new service specification will be retained and delivered, so that something of the procurement process can actually be salvaged?

Response from Councillor Jenkins

Chair you will notice that Anna was very careful to talk to me about my management of the process, not my opinion as Chair of the Committee. So well done!

Tony gave a good summary earlier on. Members may be aware that I have just come back from holiday so I was unaware of this fiasco. It did not feature on the front pages of Surubaya Post.

We have the CCG coming to the Health Committee on Thursday and we will be looking specifically then at the support for the ongoing residents who are using the services and we will flag up at the same time of the need to talk to them about what on earth happened to get us into this mess. And at the same time I would suggest, if the Committee would indulge me, that we provide a signal to the CCG to consider carefully all of their other procurements just to make sure that there are not any lessons that they should be learning as they go down that road. It is easy to jump to conclusions about the Health economy in Addenbrooke's and stuff like that as to what has gone wrong and we have got to keep an open mind and give them space to look at what has happened and come up with the correct analysis.

I do share your concern about the innovation and preserving the results of that. I am very concerned that we are half way through a process and there will be an inclination there to go back to the way we did things before, or abandon things halfway through and we have to find a way of moving things on. Let us not second guess them yet – let us leave it until January when we will be talking to them again at Health Committee. Tony and I will be meeting the CCG before Christmas, the Chief Executive there, just to see what is going on and to make sure he is aware of our concern.