

## **CABINET: MINUTES**

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> March 2009

**Time:** 10.00 a.m. – 12.20 p.m.

**Present:** Chairman Councillor L W McGuire (in the absence of Councillor Tuck)

Councillors: M Bradney, Sir P Brown, S. Criswell, M Curtis, D Harty, R Pegram and J Reynolds

**Apologies:** Councillors J M Tuck and F H Yeulett

Also in Attendance

Councillors: D Jenkins and J West.

At the start of the meeting the Chairman introduced and welcomed Rod Craig, the new Executive Director Community and Adult Services to his first Cabinet meeting.

### **736. MINUTES 24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2009**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2009 were approved as a correct record.

### **737. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The following member declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct.

Councillor J. Reynolds declared a personal interest as the chairman of Renewables East and of the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) with regard to any issues on recycling and to EERA that might appear in reports on the agenda.

### **738. PETITIONS.**

A petition supported by over 1200 people had been received by officers requesting that the County Council grit all major cycle routes in Cambridgeshire during winter to ensure safe travelling conditions for the quarter of the people who cycle to work in Cambridge. Robert Oeffner the spokesperson was invited to address the Cabinet in support of the petition.

He explained that having recently fallen off his bike on black ice, he found it unacceptable that a County that prided itself in being the number one cycling city in the UK, had in his opinion blatantly failed to grit cycle routes no matter how heavily they were used, making reference to other requests for such action and challenging the view that this was due to budget constraints. With reference to children being prevented by parents from cycling on the cycle-paths due to them being too dangerous, his belief was that the County's Transport

Policy was at best incoherent and at worst irresponsible. He questioned the policy of encouraging people to cycle rather than take cars to work while not ensuring that cycle routes were safe. His view was that the County was only considering its own isolated budget and not the cost to society as a whole. He made reference to a person who had required surgery and lengthy rehabilitation after slipping off his bike on ice in December, claiming that in his opinion the "Showing True" Grit article in the March Edition of "Your Cambridgeshire" insulted the thousands of people cycling in Cambridge and was short on factual information. He ended his speech stating that in future on receiving a report from a citizen about an icy cycle route, the county should simply respond by acknowledging the problem and gritting the route within 24 hours.

Having received the petition, Cabinet Members were asked if they had any questions they wished to raise. All Cabinet members expressed their sympathy to any person who had been injured in the recent extreme winter conditions. One Member asked the spokesperson that bearing in mind that the County officers had to prioritise gritting on the road network (with it not being possible to cover the entire County) had he given any consideration to which cycle-ways across the County should be prioritised, bearing in mind the limited access to gritting teams and appropriate machinery. In response, the spokesperson's view was that there would be no need to grit all of the County's cycle ways, with some parts having less usage and that by surveying those people using them in Cambridge and the rest of the network officers would be able to ascertain which cycle routes required gritting.

The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Highways thanked the spokesperson for taking the time to organise the petition and expressed his sympathy regarding the personal injuries he had suffered stating that a policy review of Winter Maintenance would be undertaken in the summer and that there was also a scrutiny committee meeting on the subject the next day. The contents of the petition would be considered as part of the review. He reiterated that the County Council was committed to cycling and while having sympathy with respect to the views expressed by the spokesperson, as there was an extensive cycleway network within and into Cambridge, the whole Winter Gritting Strategy would need to be reviewed. He further indicated that a written response would be provided confirming what had been said.

#### **739. ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

None

#### **740. FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT**

Cabinet received a report seeking endorsement of the proposed Flexible Retirement Policy that has been developed for the County Council to meet statutory obligations contained within the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations of 2008. The Regulations require all employers participating in the Scheme to formulate and publish a formal written policy on Flexible Retirement.

Cabinet was reminded that in December 2007, the Cabinet had recommended that the County Council should consider granting flexible retirement for anyone aged 50 or over where a Directorate wished to retain the skills or knowledge of that individual and the

relevant Director supported the Business Case to retain the individual. The report recommendations were thereafter endorsed by the full Council.

A policy was subsequently developed in consultation with the recognised Trade Unions, Human Resources (HR) and Pension Officers to enable the Council to retain the skills and knowledge of experienced employees. The revised proposals for flexible retirement provide an opportunity for employees to make a more gradual transition from working life to retirement with the policy offering greater support and flexibility to employees reaching retirement age as well as enhancing the Council's reputation as an employer of choice. The new proposed policy provided employees with the option to request;

- a 20% reduction in hours or more; AND/OR
- a move to an associated vacancy with a substantial downgrading of duties, responsibility and grade.

Cabinet noted that the 20% reduction in hours (as opposed to a 50% reduction previously agreed) provided more flexibility, for both employees and managers. The definition of a substantial downgrading of duties (responsibility and grade as a reduction of 2 grades or more) had been accepted in order to maximise the number of employees eligible to apply for this option. It was further noted that due to the costs associated with flexible retirement, the policy would require employees to take a permanent downgrading of role (and/or a permanent reduction in hours).

The following two corrections to the draft policy were reported orally at the meeting:

Page 2 - In the box with the title 'Who can Request Flexible Retirement?' fourth bullet point under the sub-heading 'Aged 50-54' deletion of the date 01 April and its replacement with 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Page 4 - Under the heading Section C on the second line - deletion of the word 'and' and replacement with the word 'any'.

One Member queried a statement in the Resources and Performance section of the Cabinet report, which read "Depending on the employee's age and length of service, the Council may have to make large capital cost payments to the pension fund in order to facilitate flexible retirement." The Member asked how this would be budgeted for, especially as one of the next statements indicated that it was not possible to estimate the full cost implications, as this would be dependent on the number of authorised requests. For clarification, officers indicated that each request would need to be considered by the appropriate officers (a Director of Service) and every case would be judged on its merits and would have to meet the requirements set out in the policy, with no automatic right of approval.

In response to further questions raised, it was indicated that all those meeting the eligibility criteria could apply and that no specific contingency fund was available to finance flexible retirement. Instead, individual services would have to fund the cost of flexible retirement. This funding would come from established capital budgets within each service, which include contingency for pension and redundancy costs.

**It was resolved:**

To endorse the proposed Policy with the amendments referred to at the meeting for onward submission and approval by the full County Council.

**741. THE NEXT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2009-2012 – BIG PLAN 2 AND THE CHILDREN 'S WORKFORCE STRATEGY**

Cabinet received a report to consider and provide feedback on the draft of Big Plan 2 and the Children's Workforce Strategy, which the County Council was responsible for producing, with its other statutory partners. Cabinet was reminded that Cambridgeshire's first Children and Young People's Plan, known as The Big Plan, had been designed to run from April 2006 to March 2009. The purpose of "The Big Plan 2" was to bring prominence to, and provide specific focus to the highest priorities in respect of improving outcomes for children and young people. Cabinet noted that to help with this, a deliberate decision, supported through consultation, had been taken to reducing the number of priorities for the Big Plan 2 compared to the original Big Plan. It was noted that further changes would be made to the document including strengthening the comments in respect of safeguarding children and changing some of the introductory text.

The Children's Workforce Strategy being developed alongside the Big Plan was designed to accommodate any workforce requirements generated as part of the work on the Big Plan and set out Cambridgeshire's vision and priorities for the recruitment, training and development of the children's workforce for 2009-12.

In relation Paragraph 4.2 of the report, a correction was provided that the dates of the two policy development groups referred to had taken place in January rather than in February.

**It was resolved to:**

- i) Endorse the draft of Big Plan 2 and the Children's Workforce Strategy, noting that the section on safeguarding children was to be strengthened and that the Member introduction would be further amended, before final submission to the Full Council meeting.
- ii) Agree to delegate responsibility to the Deputy Chief Executive, Children and Young People's Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, to make final adjustments to Big Plan 2 and the Children's Workforce Strategy before submission to full Council in May 2009.

**742. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT (LAA) ANNUAL REFRESH**

Cabinet received a report presenting details of the new targets and indicators agreed with Central Government for inclusion in Cambridgeshire's LAA annual refresh 2009.

Cabinet noted that Cambridgeshire Together had originally adopted the new Local Area Agreement (LAA) in June 2008. The LAA had originally included 34 priority indicators and targets agreed with central government, 16 statutory targets on educational attainment, and five local priorities. At the time of signing off the agreement in June, there were a number of gaps where targets had not been agreed for those priority indicators where baseline

information was not available, and / or where final definitions were yet to be published by Central Government. Four out of the five priority areas within the Cambridgeshire Vision and LAA contained targets that had been reviewed and negotiated with Central Government as part of the annual refresh. The only theme where no changes had been effected to the targets agreed in June 2008 was in respect of Environmental Sustainability.

An oral update indicated that at the Cambridgeshire Together meeting the previous week two priority areas were discussed for possible inclusion in the LAA under the priority areas Economic Prosperity and Safer Communities. The final decision had been to agree that National Indicator (NI) 171 (new business registration rate) should be included as an additional key priority indicator. This was on the basis that as Cambridgeshire was an engine of growth and its reputation was based on business innovation in the current economic climate, it was important to keep a focus on business support and include an economic indicator as a key indicator. The other new indicator NI 21 (dealing with local concerns about antisocial behaviour and crime issues by the local Council and Police) was agreed as a local indicator. The two new indicators were now fully supported by Cabinet. In addition, it was highlighted that the text of the first paragraph on page 4 of the report was out of date having been written before the meeting of Cambridgeshire Together.

In response to a question raised seeking clarification in relation to when all the missing data would be completed and included in the documentation, it was indicated that the principle targets were fully informed with the rest of the information to be clarified by the summer.

Cabinet in supporting the changes stressed that success would be dependent on working together closely with partners. It was recognised that important documents such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and the Annual Public Health Report would be taken into account in order to help focus resources in the areas to achieve maximum effectiveness.

**It was resolved:**

- i) To agree to adopt the changes effected to the LAA as part of the refresh set out in the Cabinet report, including targets set out for Place Survey indicators.
- ii) To amend the report to reflect that National Indicator 171 (new Business Registration rate) had been agreed as a key indicator (rather than a local indicator) at the Cambridgeshire Together Board meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> March and to delete the out of date information in the paragraph at the top of page 4 of the report.

**743. EXTENSION OF SCHOOL AGE RANGE - THOMAS CLARKSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WISBECH**

Cabinet received a report on proposed modifications to a previous approval published by the Authority to extend the age range of Thomas Clarkson Community College from 11-16 to 11-18 as part of planned developments linked to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. The sought approval for changing the implementation date of the proposed increase in the age range from September 2009 to September 2010 for the reasons set out in the report.

It was reported that the original implementation date for the opening of sixth form provision at Thomas Clarkson Community College had been linked to the College of West Anglia's (CoWA's) planned relocation to March in September 2009. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond CoWA's control, building work would not be completed by September 2009. Cabinet noted that the school's governors had since approached the Authority with a request that the implementation date for the extension of the school's age range should be deferred until September 2010 in order to provide the school with additional time to plan for this important change.

In answer to a question raised on whether this was a result of County Council or Learning Skills Council (LSC) delays, it was reported that while funding came from the National LSC, some of the delay had been as a result of local planning issues. (Councillor Curtis declared a personal interest at this point being the Chairman of Planning at Fenland District Council) In terms of clarification of overall capital funding from the National LSC, this would not be known until after the national review had been completed.

**It was resolved:**

To agree the modification to the implementation date for the approved extension of Thomas Clarkson Community College's age range from 11-16 to 11-19 to be effective from 1 September 2010.

**744. ADMISSION TO CHESTERTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE**

Cabinet received a report seeking views on a request from Chesterton Community College that the Authority reduce the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) from 180 to 150 with effect from September 2010 with the school's case being as follows:

- The school was not over-subscribed and had never been full in any year group for at least the last 10 years.
- Having spare places in all year groups was considered detrimental to the efficient running of the school, leading to inefficiencies in resource management.
- As the school had spare places it was often requested to admit pupils during the course of the year who moved into the City or from other schools, which was destabilising and could have a detrimental effect on school performance.
- The Principal and governors had a responsibility to the pupils and the community they served, and wanted the school to be full from its catchment area and to serve its catchment area pupils better. The Principal had analysed transfer data and established that fewer than 150 pupils had been admitted to Chesterton in recent years from the school's four partner primary schools.
- The school believed that a total pupil roll of 750 (150 x 5 year groups) 5 forms of entry (FE) would be large enough to offer breadth and opportunity, and small enough to provide an excellent personal educational experience for pupils.
- The school had a strong relationship with Manor Community College and was of the firm view that Manor would benefit from Chesterton being able to admit fewer children, as a significant number of pupils from Manor's catchment have historically attended Chesterton.
- Admission of fewer children would reduce the feeling of congestion in the school and the number of complaints received from pupils and parents about feeling crushed in the tight A/B block corridors.

Cabinet noted that the PAN for entry to Chesterton Community College in September 2009 was 180, which provided for 6 tutor groups of up to 30 students and was a new intake limit. For 2008 entry the PAN had been 210, and had been set at this level for several years, but had been reduced to 180, following concerns expressed by the Principal and governors over the appropriateness of the higher intake limit given the physical constraints of the school's site. Cabinet further noted that the number of applications received for September 2009 entry to Chesterton had been more in line with its newly reduced PAN of 180 with a total of 171 applications having been received naming Chesterton Community College as parents' first preference. In addition, 81 applications named the school as parents' second preference, with a further 40 naming the school as parents' third preference. Pupil roll data indicated that there was likely to be a continued need to maintain Chesterton Community College's PAN at 180 to provide for anticipated demand for places from children attending the school's four partner primary schools.

Cabinet fully supported the need to accommodate parental choice wherever practicable, noting that over 90% of parents received their first choice of schools in Cambridgeshire. Cabinet took into account that Cambridge was a growing city and if it agreed to reduce the PAN this would impact on other schools in the city and therefore Cabinet had a duty to take a wider view than that of an individual school. Reference was also made to the views of the City Councillor for East Chesterton who raised strong objections to the proposals from the school with the detail as set out under paragraph 3.4 of the report.

A further consideration taken into account by Cabinet in coming to its decision, was officers' views that the County Council might encounter difficulties at admission appeal hearings proving that further admissions would prejudice the provision of efficient education or use of resources, as the school's existing PAN of 180, was already below the minimum intake limit which the school could accommodate, based on its capacity assessment. A further reduction in Chesterton's PAN and its effect of limiting the number of parents' children being granted a place at the school of their choice could also be expected to result in objections being raised with the Schools Adjudicator and could lead to the Schools Commissioner using powers of intervention under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 in cases where he / she considered that a local authority had failed in a statutory duty or had acted unreasonably.

**It was resolved to:**

- i) Note the case presented by the Principal and governors of Chesterton Community College in support of a reduction in the number of children admitted to the school each year;
- ii) Note the statutory framework within which all admission authorities must operate.
- iii) Note the issues of concern which a reduction in Chesterton Community College's Published Admission Number (PAN) would present for the Authority, the objections received and the views of Cambridgeshire's Admissions Forum; and
- iv) Endorse and agree that the Authority should continue to operate a Published Admission Number (PAN) for Chesterton Community

College of 180 for the foreseeable future.

**745. SHIRLEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, EAST CHESTERTON, CAMBRIDGE UPDATE**

Cabinet received a report informing it of the progress:

- towards the conclusion of a legal agreement between the County Council and the Cambridge Old Schools Trust in respect of the use of the Shirley primary school upper site, Nuffield Road, Chesterton
- with the capital building project to enable Shirley Primary School to operate a 420 place school from a single site (the Nuffield Road site)
- made on delivering the agreement reached with the Trust in 2006 in terms of securing a replacement school for them by September 2011 and the options available to the Council and the Trust now it is no longer possible to achieve this timescale

Cabinet noted that as a result of the rapid decline in the housing market, major development sites were coming forward at a greatly reduced rate and it was believed that there was now no prospect of providing a new school to replace the Trust's interest in the existing Shirley Primary School Upper site by 2011, with a more realistic date now being 2014/15. Ongoing discussions were taking place between the Trust and officers on options for reducing the impact of purchasing the site as set out in 5.1.2 of the report. In response to a question raised, it was indicated that any costs of purchasing had not yet been taken into account in the new five-year Capital programme approved by Cabinet as part of the Integrated Planning Process.

In agreeing the recommendations, an additional recommendation was agreed in relation to there being a need for a further report back to Cabinet.

**It was resolved to:**

- i) Note the formal conclusion of the lease agreement in accordance with its decision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008.
- ii) Note the progress made on delivering the capital building project by proceeding with the enabling works at risk.
- iii) Note that it will not be possible to deliver the agreement reached with the Trust in 2006 in terms of securing a replacement school for them by 2011, the options available to the Council and the Trust, and the outline action plan identified.
- iv) Agree that following the further expected meetings between officers and the Trust's Executive Committee to discuss the options available, that Cabinet should receive a further report in order to be able to make a final decision.

**746. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMPACT AND NATIONAL INDICATOR (NI) 7**

Cabinet received a report advising it of the progress of the Cambridgeshire Compact and in particular the draft Code of Good Practice on Funding and Commissioning and



performance of National Indicator NI7 ('environment for a thriving third sector') by Cambridgeshire Together.

Cabinet noted that the Government had advised that it wished to see all local authorities involved in local COMPACTS by 2006. The Cambridgeshire Compact had been developed by the Cambridgeshire Compact Development Group, which has brought together the County Council with the District Councils, NHS Cambridgeshire and the local voluntary sector lead organisations in the County, being an agreement to improve relationships between the statutory sector and the voluntary and community sector (third sector). The County Council, the Local Area Agreement (LAA) Board and other theme groups e.g. Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (YPSP) and District Councils and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) had all agreed to endorse the Cambridgeshire Compact in 2007.

The original draft was put together following consultation with County, District Council and PCT officers and the third sector representatives. Public consultation on the Code was completed at the end of January 2009 with 25 responses having been received (including some groupings of voluntary organisations). These had been generally supportive and where practicable, with the Code having been further amended to take account of the views received. It was noted that the Code was being taken forward as a priority for the voluntary sector, as it sought to clarify important issues arising from funding activities between the local authorities and local voluntary groups.

There was a request that in future the report should detail how the £22m County Council funding of the third sector in Cambridgeshire referred to in the report was spent. It was agreed that this request could be facilitated by officers and e-mailed to Cabinet Members.

**It was resolved:**

- i) To agree to adopt the Compact Code of Practice on Funding and Commissioning.
- ii) For officers to provide to Cabinet Members outside of the meeting details of the breakdown of the £22m County Council funding of the third sector in Cambridgeshire.

**747. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA) – 2008 SCORECARD**

Cabinet welcomed a report in relation to the publication of the 2008 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scorecard. It was noted that the Audit Commission published an annual scorecard for each top tier local authority summarising performance under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) framework, including a direction of travel assessment as well as scores against each service based on performance and assessment during the period covered.

Cabinet was delighted to note that the final scorecard under CPA showed that overall, the

Council was improving well (an improved standing from the previous scorecard) and was demonstrating 3 star overall performance (out of 4 possible stars). It was noted that the Council's scores would be used as a baseline for the first year of Comprehensive Area

Assessment which was to replace the CPA and which would include other partners' (e.g. district councils) performance.

Particular attention was drawn to the assessments set out in the table in 2.2 of the report on the Council's individual Services and in respect of the Level 1 Assessments the following were highlighted:

- the County Council's 'Use of Resources' achieving the highest possible score of 4
- Children's Services continuing to achieve a score of 3 with performance remaining good
- Adult Social Care moving up from a 2 star rating on 2007 to a 3 star rating in 2008 with outcomes for service users now assessed as good with promising prospects for further improvement.

In the Level 2 Assessments:

- Environment had risen from a score of 3 in 2007 to 4 in 2008. Particular attention was drawn to the Direction of Travel judgement notes stating that recycling rates in the County remained among some of the best in the country, and continued to improve. It was also orally confirmed that only the previous week the Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP) Partnership had been granted Beacon Council Status for waste and recycling in 2006/07 which was awarded to those authorities that had shown innovation and achievement in particular fields.
- It was noted that more work would be required with reference to the level 2 assessment for Culture which had reduced from a score of 3 in 2007 to 2 in 2008. This however had been expected and highlighted previously as a result of changes at the libraries in Huntingdon and Shelford as well as the major refurbishment work being undertaken at the Cambridge Central Library. Reference was made to the work being undertaken by Cambridgeshire Cultural Steering Group, which aimed to widen the cultural opportunities available in schools.

For all the above scores it was recognised that it was the hardworking staff who had achieved the continued high performance / improved score and Cabinet wished to go on record their wish to congratulate all staff for their efforts and to ask senior officers to ensure that they were made aware of Cabinet's comments.

The direction of travel judgement had consolidated the improvements the Council had been making, as further evidenced by the Beacon Award for cutting red tape led by County Trading Standards and the recent improved attainment to level 3 in respect of the Local Government Equality Standard with Cabinet recognising that this achievement was due to the hard work and dedication of the relevant management and staff .

**It was resolved to:**

Formally receive and note the contents of 2008 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scorecard published by the Audit Commission.

## **748. ANNUAL PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT (2008)**

Cabinet noted that one of the roles of the Director of Public Health was to produce an Annual Public Health Report which was an independent report, describing key statistics

relating to the health of the local population and making recommendations for action to improve/maintain population health referring back to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment findings. It was highlighted that the report was distributed widely, including copies being made available to all County and District Councillors.

Cabinet welcomed the findings and recommendations set out in the Report, which was also being submitted to Cambridgeshire PCT (NHS Cambridgeshire) for their approval. In thanking Dr Robin for an excellent report, it was noted that in providing the latest data available, that in an ever changing world and specifically with reference to the County, the Report would be an extremely useful tool to inform and support endeavours to engage with stakeholders and communities on health and well being issues. The report was to be issued in conjunction with the much acclaimed Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

As a result of its importance, an additional recommendation was agreed in order to give greater weight to ensuring that the excellent information produced was utilised in relevant County Council policies / plans e.g. findings regarding population groups at risk of health inequalities, informing the County Council's broader work on access and inclusion etc. It was orally reported that the key findings from the JSNA for children and young people (Section 1.3 of the report) had already been incorporated in the Big Plan (See minute 741).

**It was resolved:**

- i) To approve the joint publication of the Annual Public Health Report (2008) by Cambridgeshire County Council and NHS Cambridgeshire.
- ii) To ask officers to take into account this report and to reflect its findings in respect of any other relevant work plans that may exist countywide.

**749. UPDATED RESPONSE TO HEALTH, ADULT AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY REPORT OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL ISSUES 11-18 YEAR OLDS**

Cabinet received a report with updated responses to the original recommendations set out in the November 2007 Adult, Health and Social Care Scrutiny Review of drug and alcohol issues for 11-18 year olds, as detailed in section 3 of the report.

Cabinet was reminded that the joint County Council and District Council Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee had conducted a Member led review of education and information on drug and alcohol issues for young people aged 11-18 in 2007. The review report had been agreed at the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee meeting on 26th November 2007 coming forward for Cabinet consideration in December 2007. The report had also been presented to the Drug and Alcohol Action Team and to the Children and Young People's Commissioning Group in December 2007 and had been taken to the Primary Care Trust Board in early 2008. The responses agreed at the December Cabinet meeting had been further reviewed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 21st January 2008.

Members welcomed the updated responses, recognising and supporting the importance of the work undertaken, and especially in the light of recent publicity regarding regular drink and drug abuse by children and its continued devastating impact.

**It was resolved:**

To accept the updated response to the Scrutiny report as detailed in section 3 of the Cabinet report.

**750. CONSUMER AND BUSINESS ADVICE POLICY**

In introducing the report, the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Climate Change congratulated Leon Livermore and his team for winning a beacon award for their work on cutting red tape involving a highly successful campaign to cut doorstep crime helping develop no cold calling zones and a registered traders scheme to protect vulnerable people from fraud.

The report provided an update on the Trading Standards Consumer and Business Advice Policies for cabinet's consideration.

Cabinet was reminded that in May 2004, it approved a Trading Standards Consumer Advice policy. This policy was introduced when the provision of frontline consumer advice for the service was transferred to Cambridgeshire Direct. The transfer enabled advice services to be offered to a wider range of consumers, but had raised concerns about the availability of resources in the Trading Standards back office. To address this concern, a more graduated approach to delivery of advice was developed enabling a basic level of service to be offered to all consumers, with those most vulnerable getting a higher level of support and assistance and therefore Cabinet were asked to approve an updated policy.

In respect of the Business Advice Policy attached for comment and approval this was a new policy developed by officers offering differentiated levels of service to businesses depending on the circumstance as well as Trading Standards and the wider corporate priorities.

**It was resolved:**

- i) To agree the details of the updated Consumer Advice and Enquiries Policy (Attached as Appendix A to the Cabinet report) and the new Business Advice, Enquiries and Charging Policy (Attached as Appendix B to the Cabinet report).
- ii) To agree to delegate the power to approve amendments to both policies is delegated to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Climate Change, in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive Environment and Community Services.

**751. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ADULTS SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS**

Cabinet received a report in order to consider the requirements to introduce revised procedures for handling complaints about Adult Social Care Services.

Cabinet noted that in recognition of the difficulties that complainants faced due to the different arrangements in place for Local Authority Social Services and National Health Services complaints, the Department of Health had concluded that there should be one set

of procedures covering social care and health services. As a result, under the new Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints Regulations, any complaint made on or after 1 April 2009 to a local authority about its social services functions or about functions discharged by a National Health Service (NHS) body under a section 75 agreement, required to be handled in accordance with the new Regulations only recently agreed. Cabinet noted with concern that officers were still awaiting the full guidance notes which had still not been published.

It was noted that the Regulations only applied in relation to services provided to Adults, with complaints about services provided to children and young people remaining as currently operated, including the continued use of a three stage procedure.

**It was resolved to:**

- i) Note the requirement from the Department of Health to introduce revised procedures for handling complaints about Adults Social Care Services.
- ii) Agree the proposed arrangements for the County Council to deal with such complaints as set out in the report.
- iii) Agree that the procedures should be reviewed after 12 months operation to ensure they meet the requirements of the Government legislation.

**752. DRAFT AGENDA FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2009**

Noted with the addition of an additional key decision report in respect of the g2g card.

**753. DELEGATIONS FROM CABINET TO MEMBERS / OFFICERS**

Cabinet received a progress report on matters delegated to individual Cabinet Members and/or to officers to make decisions on behalf of the Cabinet up to February 2009.

**It was resolved:**

To note the progress on delegations to individual Cabinet Members and/or to officers previously authorised by Cabinet to make decisions/take actions on its behalf.

Chairman  
21<sup>st</sup> April 2009