

## COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

**Date:** Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2013

**Time:** 10.30 a.m. – 4.35 p.m.

**Place:** Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillor K Reynolds (Chairman)  
Councillors P Ashcroft, B Ashwood, A Bailey, I Bates, K Bourke, D Brown, P Brown, P Bullen, R Butcher, S Bywater, E Cearns, B Chapman, P Clapp, J Clark, D Connor, S Count, S Criswell, M Curtis, A Dent, D Divine, P Downes, S Frost, G Gillick, D Harty, R Henson, R Hickford, J Hipkin, B Hunt, D Jenkins, N Kavanagh, G Kenney, S Kindersley, P Lagoda, A Lay, M Leeke, M Loynes, I Manning, R Manning, M Mason, M McGuire, L Nethsingha, F Onasanya, T Orgee, J Palmer, P Read, P Reeve, J Reynolds, M Rouse, S Rylance, P Sales, J Scutt, M Shellens, M Shuter, M Smith, A Taylor, M Tew, P Topping, S van de Kerkhove, S van de Ven, A Walsh, J Williams, G Wilson, J Wisson and F Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors S Crawford, D Giles and J Whitehead

### 25. MINUTES – 16<sup>th</sup> JULY 2013

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 26. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

### 27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Members declared disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct and Councillor Shellens left the Chamber whilst the relevant item was discussed:

Councillor	Minute	Details
Bailey	30	Member of the Local Government Pension Scheme
Downes	30	Member of the Local Government Pension Scheme
Hunt	30	Member of the Local Government Pension Scheme
Shellens	34 b)	Director of Luminus

The following Members declared non-statutory disclosable interests under the Code of Conduct:

Curtis	34 b)	Board Member of Roddons
Jenkins	32	Son is a serving Police officer
Reeve	32	Speedwatch volunteer

### 28. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions were received from members of the public.

## **29. PETITIONS**

One petition was presented by a member of the public, as set out in **Appendix B**. The Chairman thanked the petitioner and advised that the Leader of the Council would respond in writing.

## **30. PENSION FUND BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

The Chairman of the Pension Fund Board, Councillor Count, moved receipt of the annual report of the Pension Fund Board for 2012/13. He agreed the following item for further action:

- In response to a question from Councillor Mason, to review the list of active employers of the Fund, particularly to address queries relating to Histon and Impington Recreational Ground Committee, Histon Parish Council, Excelcare and Etheldred House and the Ely group of Internal Drainage Boards.

Council noted the report.

## **31. AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

The Chairman of the Audit and Accounts Committee, Councillor Shellens, moved receipt of the annual report of the Audit and Accounts Committee for 2012/13. He agreed the following items for further action:

- In view of comments made by Councillors Mason and van de Ven on wording within the report relating to the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway and to Cambridge Science Park Station, to ask officers whether any textual amendments were necessary.
- Responding to a point raised by Councillor Reeve in relation to a Parliamentary Select Committee's review of the implementation of superfast broadband elsewhere in the country, to investigate whether the balance of contributions from Cambridgeshire County Council and BT to Connecting Cambridgeshire was appropriate.

In response to a request from Councillor Nethsingha, Council agreed to send a letter of thanks to the former Chairman of the Committee, former Councillor Stone.

Council noted the report.

## **32. QUESTIONS ON POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER ISSUES**

With the agreement of Council, this item was brought up the agenda to facilitate the attendance of the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, introduced the Police and Crime Commissioner's report and received a number of questions and comments on Police and Crime Commissioner issues, as set out in the transcript attached as **Appendix C**. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner agreed to bring these issues to the attention of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable.

### **33. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES' WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14**

The Chairman of Council, Councillor K Reynolds, moved receipt of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees' work programme for 2013/14.

Council noted the work programme.

### **34. MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10**

Four motions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10, as follow.

#### **a) Motion from Councillor Walsh**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Scutt:

This Council notes that:

- The Office for National Statistics recorded the rate of unemployment among those who were economically active and aged 16 and over in Cambridgeshire at 6.3% between April 2012 and March 2013.
- Rates of unemployment – particularly long-term unemployment – remain consistently highest in Fenland, Huntingdonshire and such divisions in Cambridge as Abbey, Arbury, East Chesterton and King's Hedges.
- A pilot project funded by the European Social Fund for 828 long-term claimants of Job Seekers' Allowance ran across Cambridgeshire between 10 January and 18 July 2013.
- The pilot project mandated claimants to attend a ten-hour workshop hosted by Job Centre Plus in several libraries and learning centres. It provided training in interview skills, writing *curricula vitae*, online job-searching and using the Universal Job Match website.
- The replacement for the pilot project, the Skills Assessment and Brokerage course, will only operate in Cambridge Central Library and March Library and Learning Centre.
- The pilot project enjoys widespread approval across service providers, including those at this Council and at learning centres.
- Due to the austerity policy of national government, the available budgets for any replacement are small.

This Council considers that:

- Rates of unemployment remain too high across huge parts of Cambridgeshire.
- All institutions of government have a responsibility actively to reduce unemployment rather than let the market operate freely.
- Funding used to reduce unemployment should not be seen as a cost to the state but rather as an investment.

- Libraries should serve the public good in as many ways as possible and that an increase in footfall involving 818 people across the county is beneficial at a time when libraries are suffering from austerity.

This Council calls upon the Cabinet to:

- Analyse data gathered from the pilot project, noting especially take-up and resulting employment rates.
- Carry out an assessment of a full replacement for the pilot project, including costs and when the replacement can be implemented.
- Produce a viability report for consideration by Cabinet as soon as possible.

Following discussion, the motion was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

**b) Motion from Councillor Bullen**

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

The Council notes that:

- The residents of the sheltered housing scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, may be faced with possession proceedings to be issued by their landlord, Luminus.
- The nature of the said redevelopment of the site would be the provision of Extra Care housing designed for elderly people with a range of dependences (for which substantial Government support is available) but for which only a small number of the current residents may qualify when the new facility is completed. The remainder would be rehoused at various locations throughout the District.
- Some residents may have expended substantial amounts of their own monies in improving their homes over time. Many have been resident there for a number of years and there is a strong community among them.
- Cambridgeshire County Council has already given its support to the proposal to develop extra care housing in St Ives.

The Council considers that:

- It is not in the best interests of the residents, both individually and collectively, for them to be subjected to Court proceedings and to the trauma of being uprooted and settled at varying locations throughout Cambridgeshire.

This Council calls upon the Cabinet to:

- Withdraw any support, financial or otherwise, from Luminus that would in any way cause or contribute to the breakup of this sustainable retirement community; and
- Explore every possible alternative to provide the Extra Care facility that will be required in the future.

The following amendment was put forward by Councillor Nethsingha (additions in bold and deletions struck through):

The Council notes that:

- The residents of the sheltered housing scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close, St Ives, Cambridgeshire, may be faced with possession proceedings to be issued by their landlord, Luminus.
- The nature of the said redevelopment of the site would be the provision of Extra Care housing designed for elderly people with a range of dependences (for which substantial Government support is available) but for which only a small number of the current residents may qualify when the new facility is completed. The remainder would be rehoused at various locations throughout the District.
- Some residents may have expended substantial amounts of their own monies in improving their homes over time. Many have been resident there for a number of years and there is a strong community among them.
- Cambridgeshire County Council has already given its support to the proposal to develop extra care housing in St Ives.

The Council considers that:

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This Council calls upon the Cabinet to:

- ~~• Withdraw any support, financial or otherwise, from Luminus that would in any way cause or contribute to the breakup of this sustainable retirement community; and~~
- ~~• Explore every possible alternative to provide the Extra Care facility that will be required in the future.~~
- **Consider the report from the Scrutiny Committee and the recommendations that it makes;**
- **Ensure that the residents' views are listened to and taken into account.**

The Chairman of Council, Councillor K Reynolds, listened to representations from a number of members. Following deliberation, he ruled that the effect of the amendment was to negate the original motion. He therefore did not accept it.

During the debate, the Chairman of the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Bourke, presented a report produced by the Committee after members had visited Langley Court and Langley Close.

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

[Voting pattern: UKIP, 2 Conservatives and 1 Independent in favour; most

Conservatives, Labour, 1 Independent and 1 Liberal Democrat against; most Liberal Democrats, 1 Conservative and 1 Independent abstained.]

**c) Motion from Councillor Bullen**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Bullen and seconded by Councillor Bywater. Additional wording as indicated in bold below was requested by Councillor Van de Kerkhove and accepted by Councillor Bullen.

The Council notes that:

- Residents of a number of electoral Divisions within the County of Cambridgeshire have expressed concerns regarding the Government's proposals for tolling the A14 and the possible spread of this to other Trunk Roads, as large numbers of vehicle users including heavy lorries, will cease to use those roads and will instead seek to travel cross country and through towns and villages including Huntingdon, Buckden, Brampton, Alconbury, Great Stukeley, Godmanchester and St Ives.
- Among the roads likely to be affected are the A141, the A1123, the A1198 and the A1096 and this will include the Old Bridge at Godmanchester and Huntingdon, the Huntingdon ring road and those parts of the de-trunked A14 leading into and out of Huntingdon and St Ives; **also at St Neots the A1 and A428 and villages along the A428 including Caxton, Toseland, Yelling, Papworth and Little Paxton on the A1.**
- One such likely "rat-run" would pass very near to the St Ivo school in St Ives, Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Hinchingsbrooke School, St Peter's School and several housing estates. There is also the issue of diminution in the value of their properties, upon which many may be relying to fund their retirement.

The Council considers that:

- The impact of the increase in the volume of non-local traffic would have a detrimental impact upon the residents' quality of life in terms of increased congestion, air and noise pollution, vibration and the likelihood of accidents and injuries.

This Council calls upon the Cabinet to:

- Oppose the tolling of any road within the County of Cambridgeshire unless
  - i) Proper and adequate consultation of the communities likely to be most affected has been undertaken and genuine consideration given to their views, and
  - ii) Funding is available to ameliorate the impact of avoidance of the tolled road upon those communities.

Following discussion, the motion, on being put to the vote, was defeated

[Voting pattern: UKIP, most Liberal Democrats, 2 Independents and 1 Conservative in favour; most Conservatives, Labour, 1 Independent and 1 Liberal Democrat against; one Liberal Democrat abstained.]

**d) Motion from Councillor Bullen**

This motion was withdrawn by Councillor Bullen.

**35. QUESTIONS**

**a) Questions on Fire Authority Issues**

The Chairman of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority, Councillor P Brown, responded to questions and comments on Fire issues, in accordance with the guidelines agreed by the Council. The questions and comments are set out in **Appendix D**.

**b) Oral Questions**

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

- The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, agreed to send a written response to Councillor Taylor's questions about the recent improvements to the Lensfield Road/Hills Road junction in Cambridge, specifically whether the phasing of the lights was in any way responsible for the recent accident involving two cyclists, and whether the works had resulted in any drainage problems that needed to be addressed.
- The Leader of the Council, Councillor Curtis, suggested that Councillor Reeve ask the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to look at the recent withdrawal of mammogram screening from rural areas.
- In response to a question from Councillor Chapman, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, agreed to investigate ownership and responsibility for maintenance of West Street, St Neots.
- The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, agreed to provide an update to Councillor I Manning on consideration of whether utility companies could be charged for the time they take up with roadworks, instead of a flat fee, as had been agreed following a motion to Council from former Councillor Whitebread in 2012.
- The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, and the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, agreed to meet Councillor Palmer and officers to consider two accident blackspots on the A142 at Soham.
- In response to a question from Councillor P Brown, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown, agreed to visit staff running the Fusion project on the Oxmoor estate in Huntingdon.
- The Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, agreed to arrange a meeting with Councillor Hickford and officers to consider the A1307 through Linton.
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Yeulett, agreed to send a

written response to Councillor Onasanya on the balance of the Social Fund and the types of request to the Fund being received.

**c) Written Questions**

Five written questions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2, as set out in **Appendix F**.

**36. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

It was proposed by the Chairman of the Council, Councillor K Reynolds, seconded by the Vice-Chairman of the Council, Councillor Kindersley, and resolved unanimously:

- a) To replace Councillor Butcher with Councillor Wisson as a substitute on the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- b) To replace Councillor Topping with Councillor Read on the Constitution and Ethics Committee.

Chairman

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013  
CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Pat Maddock**

The Chairman reports with enormous sadness the death of Pat Maddock, Education Transport Assistant based in the Social and Education Transport Team. The Council's thoughts are with her family, friends and colleagues at this very sad time.

**Alex Plant, Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment**

Alex Plant, the Council's Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment, leaves the Council at the end of November to become Director of Regulation and Competition Economics at the Royal Mail. Alex was previously Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire Horizons and joined the Council on 4 July 2011. He has helped secure millions of pounds of additional investment for Cambridgeshire. He has also played a major role in negotiations with Government on issues like the A14, the superfast broadband project, and in negotiations towards a City Deal. His work on settling the Busway dispute and delivering a major capital programme, as well as planning for major developments such as Northstowe, has been invaluable. He was heavily involved in getting the Local Enterprise Partnership established, and fostered stronger relations between local authority partners, the business community and academia. The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, will be thanking Alex Plant at the meeting for his contribution to the work of the Council over the last 2 years and wishing him well for the future.

**Appointments**

The Council has made the following appointments in Children, Families and Adult Services:

**Service Director: Enhanced and Preventative Services**

Charlotte Black is taking up the role of Service Director: Older People's Services on a two-year fixed term basis. An internal recruitment exercise for the appointment to the Service Director Enhanced and Preventative Services post on the same two year basis resulted in the appointment of Sarah Ferguson who was the Area Manager: Localities and Partnership: South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City.

**Service Director: Learning**

Following Gayle Gorman's departure, Keith Grimwade has been appointed to the post of Service Director: Learning on a permanent basis.

**Service Director: Strategy and Commissioning**

Following the departure of Hannah Woodhouse, Meredith Teasdale, formerly an Assistant Director with Lincolnshire County Council, has been appointed to the post of Service Director: Strategy and Commissioning.

**City Cycle Ambition Grant**

The Council was one of only eight authorities in the country who were successful in securing the City Cycle Ambition Grant. The Council will receive £4.1m of funding for the Greater Cambridge Cycle City project. The funding will be used to deliver seven new high quality

cycle paths in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire with a particular emphasis on links to employment sites to enable more people to cycle to and from work.

#### Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Dispute

The County Council has accepted an offer from BAM Nuttall to settle the dispute over the final cost of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway. BAM Nuttall will pay the Council £33m against the Council's claim of £60m. BAM Nuttall were counterclaiming £43m from the Council. The dispute has therefore been settled substantially in the Council's favour.

#### Directorate of Older People's Services and Mental Health

On 1st October 180 social care staff who provide services to older people transferred from Cambridgeshire Community Services to the County Council and have formed part of the new Directorate of Older People's Services and Mental Health. Charlotte Black has been seconded to the role of Service Director. This is a welcome opportunity for the Council to improve the way in which it supports older people and manages the financial pressures we are facing and we will continue to work very closely with partners, in particular the NHS to achieve this.

#### Councillor Crawford

The Chairman wished Councillor Crawford a speedy recovery following her recent operation.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013  
PETITIONS**

Text of a petition containing 58 signatures presented by Ms Thea Johnson

We, the undersigned, wish to petition the Full Council of Cambridgeshire County Council at their meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

This petition relates to a statutory function of the Council in that the Local Authority is ultimately responsible for Adult Health and Wellbeing.

We are a group of over 50 elderly people who live in this Sheltered Housing Scheme at Langley Court and Langley Close in St Ives. We have Assured Tenancy agreements and the scheme is administered by the Luminus Group based at Brook House in Huntingdon.

We are petitioning the County Council to ask for your help in our campaign to prevent the Luminus Group (our landlords) from demolishing our homes in order to build an Extra-Care facility on the site.

On July 22<sup>nd</sup> of this year, we the residents were invited to a meeting in the communal lounge to hear “some exciting news about the future of Langley Court and Langley Close”. The meeting was well attended. We were indeed excited (new bathrooms perhaps!) Imagine our shock and horror when we were told that Luminus intended to demolish the building in order to replace it with an Extra-Care facility, that our building was old (Langley Close was built in 1978 and Langley Court was added in 1990) and that 95% of the ageing population lived in the community and only 5% were in assisted housing. So we didn’t count? We were informed that this was a government initiative propelled by the need to get elderly long-term patients out of hospital.

While we understand and support the need for such care, we cannot see the sense of destroying the homes of one lot of elderly people in order to build to provide for a different set of elderly people in the future. The common sense solution would be to have both keeping the sheltered housing and building the Extra-Care facility on another site; we understand there are other suitable sites available within the County.

We are all friends and neighbours who value the safety and security in which we live as well as the lively community of which we are a part. We wish to stay where we are, where we have lived for many years and where we have put down roots. We do not wish to be hustled off to who knows where as we have come to rely on each other for support and help which is not always available elsewhere.

For all their assurances, Luminus cannot provide like for like as they can only provide places as they become available and we will be separated from our friends, families, neighbours and some will be even sent to different towns within the County.

We have all been under great stress since the announcement. Elderly people are easily frightened and this whole affair has been and still is like a sword hanging over our heads. Many will agree to go because they cannot cope with the uncertainty.

So we are begging you to use whatever influence you may have and your humanitarian instincts to save us from this fearful infringement of our human rights.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013  
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS**

**1. Question to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, from Councillor Jenkins**

Thank you Chair and welcome to the Assistant Commissioner. Encouraging comments about the use of technology going forward and what he refers to, not reinventing the wheel. I will come back to Robert Peel if I may at the end of my remarks.

One of the things that disappointed me when I read the paper before us, is there doesn't seem to be any mention of the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), which is an essential part of policing at least in the part of Cambridgeshire where I live. They are visible, they are active and people locally believe that they have had a major role in bringing crime down. I do know that the Police, whether it was the Police or the Police Commissioner, conducted a survey on PCSOs which ran until the end of August. One comment on the quality of the publicity around this survey, surprising to say that it was merely three questions, and it's just disappeared; we are waiting for some analysis thereof. There's a bit of concern that there is some thinking about PCSOs that we really ought to know about. The PCSO that we see at large today does just about all the work that the old-fashioned policemen on the beat used to do. They are visible, they engage with the community and they problem solve and as a result of that activity we see reductions in crime, we see an enhanced perception of the Police and a better relationship between the community and the Police and increased confidence in the ability to address crime.

The Police Community Support Officer today has the capability to do something like 90% of what a warranted police officer can do. In fact increasingly they are starting to do things which are delegated to them by the warranted police officer. So if you didn't have the PCSOs, you would have all of those tasks back on the regular police officer's desk, or in his car, or on his tablet. So tinker with the role of the PCSO at your peril. The PCSO has a real part and its role has evolved. I am responsible for a part of the County just north of the A14, Cottenham, Histon and Impington. Within Histon and Impington we have done our own survey, it's not just three questions, it's ten questions and we've got some raw input about what it thinks about the PCSO. I don't think honestly the questions were leading but it is giving us some unsurprising answers. People do think that crime is going down and that is very positive. But the overwhelming response is the people know the PCSO exists, know that he (we've got a man but there are lady PCSOs as well) know that he does a good job and is a major contributor to the reduction in crime and definitely wants to keep him as an alternative to any other form of local policing.

So I said I would come back to Robert Peel. This is all about prevention and you prevent by engagement, problem solving and visibility and that's what the Police Community Support Officer does as part of the community. They are visible and they're known and the person we have had as been there for some years and that stability on the job has contributed. Now we have a body of data which we think will be useful to make decisions about how to go forward. So here is my open invitation to the Police Commissioner, let us have a sensible dialogue about what is planned and let us not make decisions without consulting with the people who are going to be affected. Let us by all means take full advantage of the technology that's around and I do accept what big data does and its predictive power, let's at the same time realise

that it's this hands-on activity locally to build confidence which is so important. So will you please take that back and will you actively talk to us?

**2. Question to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, from Councillor Clapp**

I live in north Wisbech and we've had something told to us, that the Wisbech Police Station might be closing and the offices might be moving out of our town. Would you be able to assure me that it's not the case and Wisbech Police Station will be staying and so will the Police Officers? By the way the PCSOs who work on our patch do a fantastic job.

**3. Question to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, from Councillor I Manning**

Chair, taking into account your comment about operational matters, if you would advise me if this is an operational matter, I hope it isn't and I would like another question if it is. I wanted to raise the concern about taser use and the taser roll out. This specifically relates to the north area of Cambridge where it is allegedly being rolled out, but at the local police priority setting meeting, the Local Area Sergeant specifically said that his unit didn't deal with taser roll out. So basically my question is asking what oversight have you got of where it supposedly being rolled out and whether it is actually being used or not? Because in this case there was a clear lack of information somewhere about who, if anyone, was actually using tasers.

**4. Question to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, from Councillor Reeve**

If the Assistant Commissioner could answer just a couple of points for me, but prior to asking these questions, if he could pass on my thanks to our police sergeant in Ramsey, Sergeant Andy Street, who has worked incredibly closely with the local community, the local Councillors and the Town Council of Ramsey and has actually got to a position where the Council says to him we don't need police officers in our town on certain days because we have managed to get to a point where crime is actually so low and falling that they can cope with that level of prominence. When we need him, we know he will send the officers that we need. So that the old scenario we've got of shouting loud so we get police presence, when you get local policing right as Andy Street has, really does offer some huge solution and benefits.

The two questions I would like to ask the Assistant Commissioner are, prior to the election his boss was very, very keen to promote his support of Speedwatch and also to promote the use of special constables. I would like him to update us if possible just on how those projects are going, primarily with Speedwatch. We saw a huge amount of coverage of him with Speedwatchers prior to the election and I'll make a declaration that I'm a volunteer for Speedwatch, as many Councillors are; and yet after the election our local co-ordinator for Huntingdonshire seems to be increasingly frustrated that the Commissioner and the police force are asking him not to report speeding. After providing the level of service that they require and demotivating volunteers, they are restricting the amount of use of Speedwatch volunteers within our communities to the extent that it's undermined the project completely. I wonder if he has any comments on how that can be improved?

Secondly, certainly Sir Graham has spoken to me over dinner about a huge number of special constables coming on board after he was placed in post and we in UKIP had full respect and fully supported. What numbers have actually come on line?

## **Reply from the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton**

I think one of the most difficult things that we have for Sir Graham and myself coming before you and answering these sorts of questions, they are twofold. The first one is about the nature of our relationship with the Constabulary and it is for us to listen to our community including everyone that we come into contact with, their concerns, the issues that they raise and then to discuss that with the Constabulary about how matters could reflect or handle or deal with those questions that people raise. So that is, if you like the, the first sort of constraint we have, it's this operational issue and I'll refer back to it again in a moment. The second one's the formality of the relationship that exists, or rather nowadays in many respects does not exist between ourselves and yourselves when you are meeting in the form of a Council.

The Police and Crime Panel for Cambridgeshire, which includes representatives from Peterborough and the other Districts as well as being chaired by a member of your Council, is the place where we should be held accountable for what we do. Of course this does not mean that Sir Graham and I aren't delighted to meet any public representative, whenever we possibly can, but to some extent the formality of this arrangement inhibits the ability to answer some of these questions properly. The general philosophy that says that all the action of the police needs to be focused progressively towards the local in many respects because that is a good thing, i.e. the discussion about the balance between PCSOs and Constables is a perfectly valid discussion, but it has to be predicated first of all by the fact that the Chief Constable is responsible for the deployment of his staff to maximise the capacity of his constabulary to deliver what's in the Police and Crime Plan.

In times before last year, the budget for PCSOs was ringfenced. That is not now the case, so it is entirely rational for the Chief Constable to say I need to consider how I maximise the value of deploying my resources. He is in that process; we've not seen his report as yet and that will be considered when we receive it. Certainly we are very conscious that everyone wants to see more contact in their communities to build that type of trust, that acceptance of policing that was at the very heart of the origination of the Constabulary under Robert Peel 200 years ago. So I hope that helps answer the question about those issues.

I'm afraid the taser question has to come down to you speaking with your local Commander and talking through your Neighbourhood Panels and other such things if you want to have local influence upon what you believe is happening there. Certainly we have a note of this, we know that it's an important matter for individuals and for communities and it is the case as I understand it that someone who operates using a taser is under the same constraints as if they were operating a firearm. So this is not an easy proposition, it is not a regular occurrence, it is very infrequent. But I do have to advise you that the police advise us, that surprisingly the mere act of someone having a red dot appear on them causes them to drop all sorts of weapons and to immediately surrender and so this is an interesting phenomenon that I think we should bear in mind as well. But it is not the case that the Constabulary of Cambridgeshire intends to use such things in a haphazard random fashion.

Now special constables were mentioned. We're incredibly in favour of recruiting more special constables. We have been recruiting more special constables but do you know of one of the amazing things that has happened as we've recruited constables, last year we managed to increase the number by 10, not a great number but bearing in mind the restrictions in money, quite a remarkable thing to have achieved; in actual fact most of the recruits into the Constabulary said to come through the special

constabulary and through the PCSOs. So the reality is that on the one hand the bucket has been topped up and on the other it has been emptied into the police force and so it's an interesting situation. I hope that helps give a flavour of some of the answers to those things but I would just say that really the accountability process is something we really need to work with. I would strongly recommend to you all that you work through the Police and Crime Panel, your local Neighbourhood Panels in the areas in which you live and if there is still something that you feel you need to have addressed across the whole of Cambridgeshire then do please make a private appointment to come and see either Sir Graham or myself and we will be most pleased to hear from you.

**5. Question to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, from Councillor Cearn**

Whilst I welcome any innovation that has been taken to give more time to police to be in their communities, I find it utterly astonishing and disappointing that the police force hasn't already looked at those things, given the fact that this is Cambridgeshire and it is the technical hub of the Country with such expertise at our finger tips. I find it astonishing that it has taken this financial crisis to look at being as effective as possible.

**6. Question to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, from Councillor Scutt**

First I would like to convey thanks to Sergeant Jason Wragg and his Constable who work in the north area. They have been extremely good in terms of informing me as a West Chesterton Councillor.

I would like to ask three brief questions if I may. First of all throughout this Country and around the world it is notorious that women are in turn notoriously under-represented in police forces. I would like to ask what efforts are being taken in Cambridgeshire to increase the numbers of women and their existence in all levels of the police force and their undertaking work in all areas of the police force.

Secondly, on pages 4 and 9 of the report, references are made to criminal assault at home and other forms of domestic violence and also to rape and sexual offences. In relation to criminal assault at home and other forms of domestic violence, in another life I was a Criminologist and it was very clear in that work that if a male and a female police officer attend at homes where criminal assaults and other forms of domestic violence are occurring or have been alleged to occur, then the response is far better than if only male police officers go. So I am wondering here in Cambridgeshire if that research is paid attention to and if efforts are being made to ensure that teams of a male and female police officer attend in such instances or the reports of such alleged offences and in relation to rape and other sexual offences.

I note that there are teams now being created that are dealing with these crimes. However, it would be absolutely obvious that if a victim and survivor of such an offence comes into a police station somewhere within the area there won't necessarily be somebody from the rape and sexual offences team there on the spot. Therefore I want to ask what explicit comprehensive and ongoing training programmes are taking place for police at all levels, in relation to the handling of these kinds of rape and other sexual offences.

**7. Question to the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton, from Councillor Kavanagh**

The County Council and City Council are currently contemplating investing huge sums of money in creating 20mph speed zones in the City in particular. Can we have a guarantee that the signs that are going to accompany this initiative won't just be of ornamental value, that the police force will actually be able to enforce the speed limit?

**Reply from the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, Brian Ashton**

I will take those comments I've just heard away with me and no doubt will be drawing such matters to the attention of the Chief Constable, but they have been matters for the public interest.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013  
FIRE AUTHORITY QUESTIONS**

**1. Question from Councillor D Brown to the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Sir P Brown**

I would to start by congratulating the Fire Authority on how comprehensive they have been on consulting on the merger which has now been approved of Burwell and Swaffham Bulbeck fire stations. As a question, though, there are plans for a new £1m build fire station in Burwell and I just wondered whether the Chairman of the Fire Authority could give me an anticipated start date?

**Reply from the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Sir P Brown**

The anticipated start date is January 2014 and the anticipated completion date is August 2014.

**Supplementary question from Councillor D Brown to the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Sir P Brown**

Could the Chairman of the Fire Authority give me any assurances that of the current two stations, neither of them will close before the new one is open and ready for business?

**Reply from the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Sir P Brown**

Chairman, the plan of action is to keep both stations open but if we have the problem that one of the stations runs out of staff, as might be the case, we are talking in terms of Swaffham, that may have to close early; but the anticipation is that both stations will remain open until such time as the build is complete.

**2. Question from Councillor Bullen to the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Sir P Brown**

I was a bit perturbed about the current Chief Fire Officer retiring and then being re-employed but following further investigation and talking to some members of the Authority, I think they should be commended on the savings that have been made by the actions that they have taken. I believe that it's tens of thousands of pounds. So I would just like to commend the Authority on the way they have handled it and the savings they have made by doing so.

**Reply from the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Sir P Brown**

I would just like to say and if there are any other questions about the Chief Fire Officer, I will take them all together, but if not I can answer now.

*[There were no further questions or responses.]*

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013  
ORAL QUESTIONS**

**1. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, from Councillor Taylor**

My question relates to the recent junction improvement works at the Catholic Church in Cambridge at the junction of Lensfield Road and Hills Road. It's a two-part question really. Members will be aware of a recent collision between two cyclists following the introduction of the new lights and that one person was hospitalised. I wonder if Councillor McGuire has any information he can give us about whether that accident was due to the cyclists' negligence or whether it was anything to do with the phasing of the lights, because it is obviously of great concern that somebody was harmed in that way.

The second one is about the drainage. After the heavy rainfall on Sunday the whole area outside the church in the gutters was a bit like "Little Venice", it was completely impassable. I wonder if there have been any problems with the drainage and if so whether those can be addressed while we still have workmen in the area.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire**

Chairman, unfortunately I did not get notice of the question which means I cannot give you an exact answer, certainly to the second part. As far as the drainage is concerned I am not surprised that lots of places looked like "Little Venice" over that period last week but I will follow that up and give you an exact answer certainly to the second part. My knowledge of the accident between the two cyclists, to the best of my knowledge, it was nothing to do with the junction or the pavements lights but I understand that the Leader of the Council has a more recent update so he may be able to enlighten you a bit further, Chairman, so with your permission I would like to let him respond.

**Reply from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Curtis**

*[Recording inaudible due to a fault with Councillor Curtis's microphone. In summary, Councillor Curtis commented that the sequencing of the lights was being checked but that he understood that this had not been a factor.]*

**Supplementary question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, from Councillor Taylor**

Thank you both for your responses and I am sorry that you did not have more notice of the question but the rain only came on Sunday. And I thank Councillor Curtis for undertaking to look into the junction phasing. I accept that it may well have been the cyclists' fault in this case but having spent nearly a million pounds on remodelling the junction, I think we'd all welcome assurances that it is working correctly.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire**

Chairman, I understand Councillor Taylor's point. If I could just suggest that even at the start of these meetings I can always ask an officer to go away and give me an

answer beforehand so it just means that you get an answer here. So that's just by way of explanation, Chairman.

**2. Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Curtis, from Councillor Reeve**

It has come to my attention from constituents that mammogram screening has been withdrawn from rural areas and that people are instead being invited to attend Addenbrooke's to do it. On the basis that this is likely to cause a huge downturn in people being screened, would you join me in speaking to Addenbrooke's about whether this is a wise decision.

*[Recording inaudible due to a fault with Councillor Curtis's microphone. In summary, Councillor Curtis suggested that Councillor Reeve ask the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider this issue.]*

**3. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, from Councillor Chapman**

My division is in St Neots, the County's largest town. For those members who don't know where St Neots is, it is west of Cambridge, a journey on the A428 which can take several hours sometimes. Nestled in St Neots' town centre is West Street, the County's worst road. Until 1974, West Street was maintained by the Urban District Council. Responsibility went to Huntingdonshire and Peterborough District Council, then to Cambridgeshire County Council; in over forty years the street has not been maintained at all. In recent years there have been eighteen planning applications on West Street. On no occasion have any of the officers involved in the planning applications made any objection to the fact that West Street abuts a County Highway. The number of West Street residents has doubled in that time. Town traffic congestion and increases mean that the road has now deteriorated to a dangerous state. Potholes are a metre wide and twenty centimetres deep. Cars are damaged, pedestrians fall and are injured. This disgraceful street is in the centre of our County's largest town and resembles a moon landing theme park. I believe this Council has a duty to residents to resolve this situation. I ask the Portfolio Holder to acknowledge the County's ownership and request that he investigate and resolve this issue of the County's worst maintained road.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire**

Councillor Chapman did mention this to me this morning and I gave him chapter and verse on the history of it. First of all, it is a complicated matter. Obviously I can't acknowledge the County's ownership of it because I do not know whether or not the County owns that road. I did say to him that I would go away and investigate it. I have had another input from another local Member who knows something about the history of this and I think that this has been an issue for quite some time. Clearly my understanding is that it certainly is not an adopted road, therefore we will have to look to see who owns that road. I will investigate it and inform Councillor Chapman in due course.

**4. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, from Councillor I Manning**

I believe this is a question for Councillor McGuire. There was a motion that was passed by, if I may say in an entirely unbiased way, by one of the greatest County Councillors we have ever had, Councillor Whitebread at the November meeting which

was amended but was passed by Council asking for an investigation into a Boris Johnson-style scheme for charging for roadworks. The motion was supposed to report back by the end of that Council. Can Councillor McGuire give any update on what stage that investigation is at?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire**

The clear and simple answer is no because again, I did not get advance notice of the question, otherwise I might have been able to say yes, I can give you an update. But we will check it.

**5. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, from Councillor Palmer**

A question for Councillor McGuire but it does also include Councillor Bates. My request is to meet with Councillor McGuire and Councillor Bates to consider the accident blackspots on the A142 at Soham.

Firstly the junction with Hasse Road and Quy Fen Common has had at least one death, one slight injury and one very serious injury in the last four years. The plans for the Eastern Gateway at Soham include land belonging to this Council and there are plans for 500 houses here. I would like to see a commitment from this Council to helping the provision of a roundabout that would see the closure of the Hasse Road junction and also the East Fen Common junction allowing access to the town solely through the roundabout on the A142.

Secondly the junction at Barway is a very small junction leading to a very small village. However, this junction also serves J Shropshire who are one of the largest agricultural companies in the country and well over a thousand people work there. This junction is inadequate for the traffic that uses it and has had one fatality and many other accidents in the last five years. I very much hope that the very least we can do as a County Council is to light this junction which is use 24 hours a day. I look forward to meeting with Councillor McGuire and Councillor Bates and I look forward to some movement on both these issues.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire**

Councillor Palmer has mentioned his concerns about the A142 and this particular junction previously to me and I have given some statistical information supplied by officers but I understand that this clearly does not meet Councillor Palmer's requirements. However, what I have assured him is that I am prepared to meet and I am sure Councillor Bates will join with me in saying that we will set up a meeting with officers to look again at the particular concerns he has outlined here today.

**6. Question to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown, from Councillor Sir P Brown**

I think yesterday was probably the most productive day I have had since being on the Council. My first visit was to Ely Fire Station and then I did the Market Town Strategy meeting in Huntingdon. But then I had the fortune to go to the most deprived place in my division on the Oxmoor, where I met the Fusion Group, not for the first time. The Fusion Group is a Group that deals with youngsters on the Oxmoor estate and over the past two years it is fair to say that the staff running it have had a really rough time

in terms of cuts in funds and everything else. They are so upbeat and they are doing such a good job for the local community. They are hoping to raise this year in excess of £200,000 to keep the club going. I wondered if I can ask Councillor Brown if he might find a moment to come to the club and visit it and pass those words on because I think it is a model for the County and whilst doing so I would like to pay tribute to Kerrie Tonks and her team who have done so much to keep it going.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown**

Thanks to Councillor Brown for those comments and yes, we will certainly get something the diary as soon as we can.

**7. Question to the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, from Councillor Hickford**

It is about the A1307 and for those of you who do not know about the A1307, it is in the southeast of the County and it is a bypass that runs through the village of Linton. It is a marvellous bypass but there is a pinch point. I would like to ask Councillor Bates in light of the South Cambridgeshire Transport Strategy that has just finished that the A1307 isn't neglected or forgotten with everything else that is going on with roads in South Cambridgeshire at the moment.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates**

Thank you for appraising me first thing this morning. I think that perhaps the central way forward would be to arrange a meeting. I am aware of other letters that have been flowing on this particular issue which involves not only County Councillors but also Members of Parliament and I think the way forward actually is to have a meeting and I will duly ask officers to arrange the meeting to discuss the issues that the local Member brings to our attention.

**8. Question to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown, from Councillor Downes**

This is a question for Councillors Harty and Brown I think together and it is to do with the consultation that has just started on the reductions in services to the Children's Centres which as you are aware has just started. There is a proposal to reduce expenditure by £1.3 million, about 22% of the budget.

Now there is a great deal of concern about this because it affects both children's social care and education as well. I think the introduction of Children's Centres was one of the positive achievements of the last Labour Government and it has been greatly valued. The trouble with this reduction, and I don't disagree with the need to save some money, but the trouble with this reduction is that it has a two-fold impact. First of all, it may mean that young people and families who would have been helped may not be helped so that is bad news for them; but it is a false economy, because by saving money now, the likelihood is that those children we don't help when they are little will cost us, cost the County Council, more when they become old and in special needs or social care. Now I understand the financial pressures but can you, are you aware of the depth of concern and can you give me any assurance at all that you will do whatever you can to make sure those reductions are kept to a minimum?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services,  
Councillor D Brown**

Thank you Councillor Downes. Let me assure you that yes, we are very conscious of the financial position that we are in and as was mentioned at Cabinet, we do have to look at everything very critically. What this consultation is not about is wholesale closure of Children's Centres. We do need to save money, this is a straight fact of life. We will need to be looking at more targeted services from our Children's Centres. Interestingly enough, as an aside that was given to me in informal feedback from the Peer Review we had in last week on Safeguarding and Children's Services, was how surprised they were about the generosity, shall we say, of our current Children's Centres.

It is a sign of the tough financial situation we face, as I say we are not looking at wholesale closures, we are working very closely with the staff, the whole point of doing this consultation to see where ideas are to get that kind of figure down. Just for Councillors' benefit for those who aren't aware, currently we have forty Children's Centres across the County each of which is individually managed, managed separately. One of the ideas in the consultation is can we look at a form of hub and spoke model to look at that management so that we can still deliver services where they are most needed but I cannot stand here and say we will still be able to deliver everything we currently are.

**Supplementary question to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown, from Councillor Downes**

Thank you for that answer. You have done what I really wanted you to do which is to alert everybody to the seriousness of that, potentially. I think most of us have Children's Centres in our Divisions and I think it is important for us to go and see them and to talk about the implications because let's be quite clear, what happens to a child up to the age of five actually matters more than what happens after five. I mean we fuss and fuss and fuss about schools and structures and Mr Gove and all the rest of it, but most of what happens to a child is influenced by what happens in those first five years, that is well evidenced and so we must be very careful that we don't do anything which will seriously undermine their long-term chances so let's all take that on board in a non-party way.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services,  
Councillor D Brown**

Whilst I don't always agree with Councillor Downes, I agree with everything he said just then.

**9. Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Curtis, from Councillor Mason**

Just a few days ago, I went outside this building, got on a bus and sat next to Councillor Curtis on the way to Histon, on the Guided Bus Service. I will give Members one guess as to the subject of conversation between us at that time but basically the Cambridge new railway station was under discussion but the more important matter was the fact of the liability for repairs on the Guided Busway. Since then, Cabinet has met and has had a recommendation from Scrutiny Committee that they wish to take over the responsibility for the investigation of the Guided Busway, for the scrutiny of that project. When that was presented to Cabinet, Councillor Curtis rejected that request from Scrutiny and my question really is, in view of what has happened now, in view of the answer I've been given at long last with regard to the

cost of the accident at Longstanton and in view of the fact that the legal action is now over, would he please give reconsideration to that decision and allow Scrutiny to do the investigation as they requested in their report.

The reason for asking that is that I think that an examination by Scrutiny with all of their powers, would actually gain credibility with the electors and tax-payers of this County. I do not hear much support for the alternative that Councillor Curtis has proposed with a Cabinet-defined and virtually led investigation, although that was supposed to be independent. So my question is would you please reconsider that request from Scrutiny to get this investigation on a much wider and proper basis within the Constitution?

**Reply from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Curtis**

*[Recording inaudible due to a fault with Councillor Curtis's microphone. In summary, he said that he would not change the arrangements for the commissioning of the review. The review would be independent and would focus on the lessons to be learned.]*

**Supplementary question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Curtis, from Councillor Mason**

Will the scope of the investigation cover the ongoing maintenance and problems with the guideway because that is where this Council will inherit a huge liability?

**Reply from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Curtis**

*[Recording inaudible due to a fault with Councillor Curtis's microphone. In summary, Councillor Curtis reminded Council that BAM Nuttall remained responsible for any construction defects of the Guided Busway.]*

**10. Question to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count, from Councillor Jenkins**

At the Cabinet meeting ten days ago, I suppose, when the Park & Ride call in was being discussed, it was generally agreed that the decision should have been a key decision and treated accordingly. Councillor Count, you said that because you're an elected Councillor you didn't have to do consultations to make decisions. Well if you don't have to do consultations for a key decision, exactly when would you think doing consultations is appropriate?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count**

I think there is a slight difference between your version of what I said and what I remember saying. What I was referring to was the fact that I was elected as a Councillor to make decisions; sometimes I make them on the basis of consultations, sometimes I make them on the basis of officer recommendations and sometimes I fly by the seat of my pants. It all depends on what sort of decisions they are. At no point in time did I say that key decisions did not require consultations, so I'm sorry, I think that you are misquoting me. One point that I did make about decision-making was I was prepared to put my head above the parapet when difficult decisions come along. I noticed again today that the Liberal Democrats, barring I think one exception, on the subject of Langley Court decided to bury their head in the sand rather than come to a decision. I mention that as particularly irksome because the Chair of the Scrutiny

Committee took on the role of Scrutiny as a delegated responsibility to two people. So he was 50% responsible for a report that recommended one way and then sat on his hands with the rest of the group when it came to decision. Unprepared to make decisions and consultations are absolutely appropriate at the right time and that's not what I said what you quoted.

**Supplementary question to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count, from Councillor Jenkins**

I would congratulate Councillor Count on a pretty clever answer. I don't agree that I misquoted him but never mind, I was having a little bit of political fun. But nevertheless congratulations on being able to step all the way from there to Langley Court in St Ives. No I don't have another question but I'll take the opportunity in respect of Councillor McGuire's earlier comment about everywhere flooded on Sunday. High Street, Histon always flooded, it did not flood on Sunday because of some excellent remedial work done a month or so before by Alex Plant's department, so well done to those people.

**11. Question to the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Yeulett, from Councillor Onasanya**

The County is now administrating the Social Fund, which is specifically related to severe financial hardship and has now been cut very severely, when delegated from Westminster to County level last year. I wanted to ask Councillor Yeulett whether he can advise given the cuts, what the balance of the Fund now is and also the types of applications that are being considered.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Yeulett**

As you rightly say the fund provides help in kind to people and it's recently been transferred to the County Council. Some of that stuff is perhaps if people are moving home they provide a fridge or a cooker or curtains, it's help in kind. I haven't got any actual details to hand at the moment but I can get those communicated to you and to the Council. It is undersubscribed.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 15<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013**  
**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Question from Councillor Onasanya to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count

Since this County Council recently voted to rule out withdrawing from national pay bargaining, will Councillor Count confirm that the Cabinet is no longer considering this option as part of its upcoming staffing budget proposals? Will Councillor Count also acknowledge that this Council's staff have, on average, received a real-terms pay reduction of around eight per cent over the past three years and will he therefore guarantee that this Council's staff will not receive an absolute pay reduction as part of the Cabinet's planned cuts to the staff budget?'

Response from the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count

This question by Councillor Onasanya refers to a previous motion raised by Councillor Bullen in July 2013 to withdraw Cambridgeshire County Council from national pay bargaining. At the July Council meeting, I made it clear that I considered the motion to be premature and had the potential to negatively affect ongoing negotiations with employee representatives. The Council rejected that motion on this basis, not that we would never consider this. The possibility of coming out of National Pay Bargaining remains as one of the options the Council must consider in order to meet required savings. The question also asks to acknowledge that employees will not receive a pay reduction as a result of a real-terms pay reduction of 8% over the past three years.

The pay reduction Councillor Onasanya refers to is in effect the national public sector pay inflation freeze, which has affected all sectors including this Council over the last three years. We have to acknowledge that national pay inflation has had an impact but this is a much wider economic issue and I am not going to comment or agree with the statement about the percentage impact of this. This Council has this year, when the national position has changed on pay inflation, paid the majority of our employees the same increase and also locally awarded our professional colleagues and managers a similar pay increase. Significant numbers of our employees have had increases in pay increments as they progress through their contractual grade over this period.

On future direct pay reductions Councillor Curtis has already communicated his preference not to pursue this option further after considering feedback from employees. This was communicated to all employees by Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive in his blog (24 September).

We have also made it clear that, aside now from direct pay reductions, we need to continue to examine all options including changes to employment conditions so that the County Council could make savings to avoid affecting frontline services. Currently the consultation process is ongoing and the next negotiation meeting with the recognised Trade Unions is scheduled for 23 October 2013.

Question from Councillor Cearns to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count

Given the precarious situation of community projects in the current economic climate, will the Council explore the proposal of ring fencing its current community funding commitment in the Budget?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count

Although we are aware of and appreciate the good work that community budgets help to deliver, any revenue funding that is ring fenced restricts the Council's ability to undertake a strategic view of relative priorities. We have fought long and hard to remove the shackles of ring fencing which facilitates decision making at a local level in accordance with the needs of local people. The re-introduction of a self-imposed ring fence would be a retro grade step for the Council. We are seeking to remove all-ring fencing to improve local democracy.

Question from Councillor Mason to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire

I refer Councillor McGuire to the minutes of Council Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> March and to the statement, in answer to my public question, that the operation of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway is "cost neutral" to the Council. Will he now give full details of the actual amounts received, the date/s of these payments from Stagecoach in the Fens and Whippet, in respect of access charges levied under the operators contract, together with amount and date of the bus company insurance settlement to cover the cost of repairs to the guideway following the accident at Longstanton in 2012?

Background information can be found at:-

<http://www.mike-mason.net/docs/guidedbus/County%20Minutes%2026%2003%20ccl1303.pdf>

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire

The detailed breakdown of operator access charges is commercially confidential so it is not possible to identify it separately for the two companies operating on the Busway. However, taking the two operators together, the total access charges paid for financial year 2011/12 were £349,571.86 and for financial year 2012/13 were £597,733.85. These figures on a rolling basis, cover the full operating costs of the Busway.

The total of the insurance settlement from the bus operator following the incident at Longstanton was £91,262.77. This covered all costs incurred by the Council.

Question from Councillor van de Ven to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count

What steps are being taken by the Council to increase secure cycle parking on the Shire Hall Campus? The cycle cage in the car park underneath Castle Court can accommodate six bicycles. Discussions with Travel for Work officers might generate some good ideas and would help the Council to do more in terms of leading by example.

### Response from the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates

At present we have two lockable bicycle cages providing 12 spaces located at either end of the staff car park underneath Castle Court that can be used by staff along with in the region of 80 cycle spaces which consist of a mixture of covered cycle shelters and uncovered cycle racks throughout the Shire Hall Campus. The current spaces provide adequate provision for employees and visitors to the campus, however as we rationalise our property portfolio and move more staff onto the site we will continue to review the cycle spaces available working with our colleagues in the Travel For Work team so that, as opportunities present, we can seek grant funding for more secure provision.

### Question from Councillor Jenkins to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire

What plans does Mac McGuire have to enable guided bus users to be able to use one ticket on all operators without financial penalty? At present the traveller must buy a ticket for a particular operator before he/she gets on a bus.

### Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire

The competition regulations governing the operation of bus services outside London require that each operator sets their own fares and makes collusion between operators on fare setting illegal. The Council has some powers to put in place multi-operator ticketing arrangements but cannot impose these on operators without their agreement. Extensive discussions were held with operators regarding multi-operator tickets for the Busway. Issuing multi-operator tickets from the ticket machines was discussed at length but it was not possible to identify a means of reimbursing the operators that was equitable, practical, and most importantly acceptable to the bus operators. The multi-operator smartcard was therefore developed as an alternative for regular travellers. This automatically reimburses the operator each time it is used.

I agree that full multi-operation of tickets is desirable and we are working to achieve this. Discussions are ongoing with the bus companies to identify if this is possible but as any changes do require agreement by both operators, at this time, it is not possible to put a timescale on the introduction of an alternative system. I will keep members informed as this work progresses.