

## COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

**Date:** Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016

**Time:** 1.30 p.m. – 6.00 p.m.

**Place:** Shire Hall, Cambridge

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

Apologies: B Ashwood, L Harford, D Harty, S Hoy, G Kenney,  
and J Whitehead

### **265. MINUTES – 18<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER AND 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2016**

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> October and 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

### **266. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

### **267. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **268. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Council noted four questions received from members of the public as set out in **Appendix B**.

### **269. PETITIONS**

One petition was presented by a member of the public. **Appendix C** sets out the text of the petition and the debate.

### **270. ITEM FOR DETERMINATION FROM GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

#### **Treasury Management Report Quarter 2**

It was moved by the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, Councillor Count, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Hickford, that the recommendation from the General Purposes Committee as set out on the Council agenda be approved.

In response to request from Councillor Shellens, the Chairman of General Purposes Committee agreed to provide a written response detailing the Council's current borrowing level and the ceiling that the Council was potentially able to borrow to.

It was resolved unanimously by a show of hands to:

approve the Treasury Management Report.

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

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

- i) note that Councillor David Harty had not been able to attend meetings of the Council due to ill-health since his attendance at full Council on 19th July 2016;
- ii) extend its best wishes to Councillor Harty; and
- iii) approve Councillor Harty's non-attendance at meetings of the Council due to ill-health up to the County Council elections on 4th May 2017 pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

*[Voting pattern: Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Independents and 1 UKIP in favour; seven UKIP against; two UKIP members abstained.]*

**272. REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE – GREATER CAMBRIDGE CITY DEAL MODIFICATION TO THE JOINT ASSEMBLY AND EXECUTIVE BOARD STANDING ORDERS TO IMPROVE THE HANDLING OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

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

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i) agree that the Standing Orders for the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly and Executive Board be modified in accordance with the draft Standing Orders as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to the report respectively.
- ii) authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairwoman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to make any other minor or consequential amendments to the Constitution necessary for, or incidental to, the implementation of these proposals, including the two technical recommendations proposed by Constitution and Ethics Committee.

*[Voting pattern: Conservatives, Labour, Independents in favour; Liberal Democrats and UKIP against]*

**273. MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10**

Three motions had been submitted under the Council Procedure Rule 10.

## **(a) Motion from Councillor Lucy Nethsingha**

The following Motion was proposed by Councillor Nethsingha and seconded by Councillor Bullen. The motion included an amendment proposed by Councillor Count which was accepted as an alteration to her motion by Councillor Nethsingha and agreed by the meeting without discussion.

*Additions in bold and deletions in strikethrough*

This Council notes:

- the changes to gritting routes in Cambridgeshire, published on 14 October 2016.
- ~~—— the prediction of freezing weather this winter resulting from movement of the polar vortex.~~
- **that the information provided when the decision was taken by committee and ratified by Council to reduce the routes was incorrect and misleading**
- **the predicted savings from gritting reduction was overestimated and unrealistic**
- **the recent budget figures show the predicted saving from gritting will not be achieved**
- **the expected flexibility for local adjustments has not been incorporated**
- **the different approach needed in accessing the importance, funding and method of keeping cycle-ways and footpaths gritted**
- **the information originally provided regarding benchmarking with other authorities has proved to be inaccurate**

~~This Council believes the extent of gritting proposed is inadequate for the safety of Cambridgeshire residents and will leave a considerable number of villages completely isolated in the event of ice or severe snowfall.~~

This Council ~~also~~ believes that ensuring the **strategic** roads remain open during periods of bad weather, is crucial to ensuring the economic prosperity of the County.

This Council therefore asks that the Chief Executive reinstate ~~as many of the gritting routes from last year's gritting~~ **routes in their entirety** ~~plan as possible, particularly roads to local secondary schools and roads that keep villages connected to the highway network,~~ using money from the Council's general reserves to fund any shortfall above the budgeted cost, up to an additional £650k. **the required amount.**

**This Council also welcomes the Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee decision to reconvene the Highways Maintenance Cross Party Member Working Group to review the criteria used to allocate road gritting resources in future years. This council also asks that group to review and make recommendations on the future gritting of cycle ways and footpaths in delivering our strategic ambitions. Furthermore this Council will work with other authorities to consider increasing routes for gritting where a case and funding is agreed.**

Following discussion, the motion as altered on being put to the vote was carried unanimously by a show of hands.

**(b) Motion from Councillor Julie Wisson**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Wisson and seconded by Councillor Downes:

This Council notes that:

- Improvements to the A14 and continued growth in rail travel are both to be welcomed but major schemes often have local consequences that are not necessarily seen as part of the bigger picture;
- traffic modelling for the A14 shows that after the scheme is completed, there will be an increase in the amount of traffic using the A1 south of Brampton through the Buckden roundabout putting further pressure on what is already a pinch point and as a result, congestion will increase;
- traffic using the level crossing between Buckden and Offord numbers 2000 vehicles per week, 450 pedestrians and many cyclists and this causes serious congestion on Offord High Street and Buckden Mill Road while the level crossing barriers are down;
- Level crossings, particularly on high speed lines like the East Coast route pose a safety risk to both rail users and motorists and pedestrians;
- Network Rail has previously acknowledged that for safety reasons and for reasons for increased efficiency for faster trains closure of the level crossings on the East Coast mainline from London to Doncaster are necessary with alternative crossing routes provided. However, following a consultation period in 2015 Network Rail then shelved the scheme proposal to provide alternative rail crossing routes for financial reasons;
- This situation will only get worse as the amount of trains on this line and across the level crossing increases as a result of improved frequencies and new services.

Therefore, this Council calls upon Network Rail to:

- Reconsider its previous decision on alternatives to the crossing between Offord and Buckden and identify how this situation will be resolved as a matter of urgency.

Further, this Council asks that:

- The Council's Chief Executive writes to Network Rail expressing concern over the pace of the Level Crossing replacement programme on the East Coast Mainline and particularly in relation to the crossing between Offord and Buckden and requests that a programme for the replacement of this crossing is identified as soon as possible; and

- Officers arrange a meeting with Network Rail to express the concerns of this Council and discuss how these issues can be addressed.

Following discussion, the motion on being put to the vote were carried unanimously by a show of hands.

**(c) Motion from Councillor Paul Bullen**

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

This Council notes that:

- on 16th February 2016 a decision was made to switch off and/or dim the street lights throughout the county of Cambridgeshire and that any Town or Parish Council could, if they so wished, pay a fee to Cambridgeshire County Council to have their lights kept on.

This Council believes that:

- the decision to switch off lights in villages, towns and cities was wrong and that given the large number of concerns from residents, and especially those working shifts or unsociable hours, the decision should be reversed and the lights in residential areas should be kept on during the hours of darkness.
- in order to make savings, street lighting in the rural roads outside villages, towns and cities in Cambridgeshire can be switched off in accordance with current policy.

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- reverse the decision made on 16th February 2016 to switch off and/or dim the street lights throughout the county of Cambridgeshire, in villages, towns and cities, and to fund any budget shortfall from the General Reserve for the Financial Year 2016/2017.

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

*[Voting pattern: 15 Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats, UKIP and 3 Independents in favour; 3 Conservatives against; 5 Conservatives and 1 independent abstained.]*

*[Note: Councillor Amanda Taylor indicated post meeting that she had voted for the motion but it had not been picked up by the new electronic system. She asked that this be recorded in the minutes]*

## **274. QUESTIONS**

### **a) Oral Questions**

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

- In response to a question from Councillor Amanda Taylor, Councillor Bates, Chairman of Economy and the Environment Committee, agreed to provide a written answer on the statistics regarding accidents attributable to floating bus stops.
- In response to a question from Councillor Giles, a written answer would be provided by Councillor McGuire, Chairman of Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee, regarding an update on the negotiations between the district councils, and in particular Huntingdonshire District Council and this Council regarding contracts for grass cutting.
- In response to a question from Councillor Sales, a written answer would be provided by Councillor Bates, Chairman of Economy and Environment Committee, regarding Park & Ride charges.
- In response to a question from Councillor Mason, a written response would be provided by Councillor Count, Chairman of General Purposes Committee, regarding the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway legal proceedings.
- In response to a question from Councillor Dupre, a written answer would be provided by Councillor Bates, Chairman of Economy and Environment Committee, regarding Highways England temporary routing plans for the A14 works for phase 2.
- In response to a question from Councillor Leeke, a written answer would be provided by Councillor Bates, Chairman of Economy and Environment Committee, regarding the additional concessionary fare costs resulting from concessionary bus pass holders changing buses operated by Stagecoach from Milton Park & Ride site to Addenbrooke's and on to Babraham Park & Ride site.

### **b) Written Questions**

No written questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2.

**Chairman**



**COUNTY COUNCIL – 13TH DECEMBER 2016  
CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PEOPLE**

**Former Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire**

Mr James Crowden CVO, the former Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, died recently at the age of 88. A memorial service was held on 5th December at Ely Cathedral which was attended by the Chairman and Vice Chairwoman of the Council.

James Crowden was Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire from 1992 – 2002, serving as the Queen's representative in the ceremonial county of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. During his term of office, he hosted over 150 Royal visits to the county and was honoured to welcome the Queen to the county on 6 occasions. Mr Crowden was a larger than life character who will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

**AWARDS**

**A youth council made up of children in care has won a top national award for its work to improve outcomes for children and young people.**

The Voices Matter panel, who are either in care or have been in care themselves, beat 500 entries for the *Children and Young People Now* magazine awards in the 'Children in Care' category.

Entries had to meet the criteria for a local authority or care provider that has done the most to improve outcomes for looked after children or young people in residential care, foster care or other types of placement. The judges were looking for in particular for examples of exceptional teamwork, joint working or activity above and beyond the call of duty.

**Employee Recognition Awards and Employee of the Year -Presentation of Employee of the Year 2016**

This year we have launched a staff recognition scheme to recognise the hard work and commitment shown by our officers. Members of staff are able to nominate their colleagues if they feel that someone has done something above and beyond, gone that extra mile or demonstrated outstanding customer service.

Over 100 staff members from across the organisation have been successful in receiving the award which speaks volumes to the quality of our workforce. Each have received a £50 voucher and an additional day's annual leave in celebration of their success.

Glen Wakefield and Alex Smith were nominated for the award back in February after a particularly difficult situation arose at the Newmarket Road Park and Ride site. Both Glen and Alex assisted throughout the morning with this, working closely with the police to keep the park and ride services operating and attending to customer queries. This was a particularly difficult and distressing situation for both Glen and Alex and their commitment to customer care was second to none.

Three other staff, Desislava Doseva, Tracy Finbow and Tom Newman also showed remarkable commitment in an extremely difficult situation. All three work in Cambridge



Central library and stayed at the library for two hours after closing time to attend to a distressed customer. Their actions really made a difference to the customer involved and they showed dedication not only to providing an excellent library service but also exceptional customer care.

Two individuals in particular deserved the Council's recognition as employees of the year. Olly Grant and Victoria Bartle have established a successful project called "Siblings Together" which is now in its second year. The project has been funded through the Outlook fund which covers the cost of each trip. The aims of the project are to enable siblings to have fun together, outside of the constraints of formal contacts, away from contact centres, away from Contact Supervisors, away from social workers and away from the fact that they are in care. This has helped the siblings to re-connect with their birth family identity without the complexities of the relationships with parents being involved. The positive experience they have not only helped young people's self-esteem and self-confidence but helped them to develop skills that can be transferable in terms of the young person's personal and professional development, including leadership and teamwork skills.

## **SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS**

### **First 'Recovery Café'**

The first 'Recovery Café' has just recently opened in Cambridgeshire. The Edge Café is an exciting, innovative project based on the front of the Brookfields Hospital Site on Mill Road, Cambridge. The project is a great example of co-production with members of the recovery community coming together to plan and develop the café alongside professionals from Cambridgeshire County Council, SUN Network and Inclusion (Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services). The project supports long term recovery from drugs and alcohol by promoting positive wellbeing, providing volunteering/employment opportunities and a visible demonstration of the benefits of recovery in the local community. The project is run independently of specialist services and is registered as a social enterprise.

## **MESSAGES**

### **Visit by His Royal Highness (HRH) The Prince of Wales and Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall**

The Chairman was honoured to welcome HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall to Cambridge recently, on behalf of the County Council. Their Royal Highnesses were visiting the Fitzwilliam Museum to mark its 200th anniversary and also met staff there from the University Library, which is celebrating its 600th anniversary.



**COUNTY COUNCIL – 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2016  
PUBLIC QUESTIONS****PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
1.	Mr Antony Carpen	Councillor Mac McGuire	What plans does the county council have to digitise its collection of photographs, and what considerations has it made to develop an online service where it can sell large digital reproductions of old photographs and maps currently held in their library and what further considerations have the council made following the initial public meeting last year of the libraries service in developing alternative funding streams, including but not restricted to people donating online?
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Mac McGuire	Mr Antony Carpen	Chairman. I apologise. I have not received a written response to this question but I will make sure that one is given. So I don't have it in front of me, so if the question was asked of me it was not clear and I do apologise for not knowing of that in advance.
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Chairman of the Council	Mr Antony Carpen	Thank you. Thank you very much for coming along and asking your question and the response will be circulated to all members.
2.	Mr Brian Milnes	Councillor Mac McGuire	<p>I question the decision to remove from the default gritting routes, New Road, Sawston, as it includes the entrances and exits to Sawston Village College.</p> <p>At peak times, much of New Road is effectively single lane, due to residents' parked cars. School bus routes on this stretch of road frequently produces gridlock at peak periods (start and end of school). If the roads are not "gritted" with salt, and snowfalls are allowed to lie, there is clearly an aggravated risk of accidents in an area that teems with students on foot, bicycle, car and bus.</p>

			Can the Council please provide the evidence from the risk assessment that concluded in the decision to remove New Road from the gritting programme? Or, was there no risk assessment done for that decision?
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	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<b>Councillor Mac McGuire</b>	<b>Mr Brian Milnes</b>	<p>Chairman. Thank you. This one I do actually have and I was aware that Mr Milnes was going to ask this question. Thank you for your question Mr Milnes regarding the New Road at Sawston in relation to this winter's grit routes. Now I do have quite a substantial answer prepared for me obviously by officers, which describes the programme that we had last year and what was being done for this year but it is such a lengthy report – Chairman both Mr Milne and yourself will indulge me by – if I don't go through the whole detail: you will have had a copy of it, but I'll pick up some of the salient points.</p> <p>So the decision to reduce the number of grit routes was the result of the full Council's approval of the 2016/2017 business plan proposals. The business plan proposals included a £650,000 saving against the winter operation budget. Now, let me explain to you – I'll not go through all the details as I said earlier – I'd say that location of secondary schools has never formed part of the policy for determining gritting routes. Now I know that sounds confusing to people but it's a fact. It never has done; many of our secondary schools are on A and B type roads so they happen to be on the gritting routes anyway. The New Road, Sawston, prior to this winter was classified as a priority 2 route and therefore was included on the list of roads that were gritted each time. Unfortunately, this year the available budget was not sufficient to enable us to include any priority 2 routes on this list. However, all routes that were removed from the 2015/2016 gritting route list have been placed on the secondary routes list. Therefore New Road has moved from the list of precautionary routes, which are gritted every time the forecast indicates a severe frost, to the secondary routes, which are only gritted when a</p>

			<p>forecast is of prolonged cold spell, where the road temperatures fall below zero and when snow and fog are forecast.</p> <p>That's the official answer, but as you've already observed, there is a motion going to full Council today and that is not something which members disagree on. We are going to be carrying out a review if this motion is passed, a review through the Highways Maintenance Working Group, to look at our policy.</p> <p>I hope that part gives you the answer you're looking for Mr Milnes . . .</p>
	<b>Supplementary question from:</b>	<b>To:</b>	<b>Question</b>
	<b>Mr Brian Milnes</b>	<b>Councillor Mac McGuire</b>	<p>I think the important thing for me and other parents that I've shared views with from the petition that we have raised is the question of a risk assessment, rather than the budgetary considerations and so on. So if we could possibly in writing afterwards have a response to that question about whether there was a risk assessment done or whether that was not part of the process. Because it seems to me obvious that not gritting the road is going to increase the risk.</p>
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<b>Councillor Mac McGuire</b>	<b>Mr Brian Milnes</b>	<p>Chairman we will provide a response to that question, but as I say if the motion is passed today which I fully expect it will be, then as part of the review I'm sure we will be looking at all aspects, including how priorities are determined, whether that be through a risk assessment or whatever other criteria. I'm fairly sure that would be – form part of that.</p>
	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Mr Jeremy Caddick</b>	<b>Councillor David Jenkins</b>	<p>As a resident of Cambridge, and a user of local health and care services, I am extremely concerned by the 'Sustainability and Transformation Plan', developed by the NHS and local government officers, for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, that has recently been published. Over the last few years there has been a very worrying deterioration in our local health and care services and experiments in privatisation of services have ended in disaster. I am very concerned</p>

			<p>that on top of huge savings already made, the STP published claims there will need to be a further £547m of annual savings made in the region by 2021. Earlier this year a senior NHS director Julia Simon, who quit shortly after, claimed the STP process is 'mad' and the plans contain a 'lot of lies'. I note that a recent only 16% of NHS finance directors think the STPs are financially achievable (National Health Executive survey). The King's Fund health think-tank is also warning the financial assumptions involved in the STPs require serious scrutiny. Other local councils, such as Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, have refused to sign up to their STP because of the cuts it would involve. Birmingham and Camden councils have led by publishing the plans with full detail.</p> <p>I ask;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When will the Council publish all the necessary appendices and drafts of the local STP to allow proper scrutiny by the public?</li> <li>- What scrutiny has the committee undertaken of the financial plans, and the ability of services to deliver them, involved in the STP?</li> <li>- What assurances can the chairman give to local residents, who have been badly let down by NHS and social care cutbacks already, that saving £547 million annually can be achieved without rationing care or cutting the quality of service?</li> </ul>
	<b>Response from:</b>	<b>Response to:</b>	<b>Response</b>
	<b>Chairman of the Council</b>	<b>Mr Jeremy Caddick</b>	<p>Unfortunately Mr Jeremy Caddick is unable to now attend the Council meeting to ask his question. The constitution states that if the questioner cannot be present at the Council meeting to pose the question, a written question will be accepted and answered in writing. A written response will therefore be sent to Mr Caddick and published on the Council's website.</p>
	<b>Question from:</b>	<b>Question to:</b>	<b>Question</b>

4.	<p><b>Ms Kerry Walpole</b></p> <p>Kerry is connected to the Save Nursery School Campaign. Parent of 3 children, 2 of who have been at Brunswick Nursery School and 1 child who is there currently. She has been instrumental in taking the campaign forward, and is extremely concerned about the future of nursery school. More details on the web site: <a href="http://www.savenurseryschools.org/">http://www.savenurseryschools.org/</a></p> <p>She is also a Governor at Cambridge Nursery Federation (Brunswick and Colleges nursery schools)</p>	<p><b>Councillor David Brown</b></p>	<p>In light of the growing cross parliamentary support for maintaining funding for nursery schools that are led by highly qualified teachers, will the County Council agree to a meeting with the Head Teachers and governing body representatives of the nursery schools in Cambridge with the aim of working together to persuade government to commit to the funding of nursery schools and the need to continue to provide quality education for children and their families?</p>
	<p><b>Response from:</b></p>	<p><b>Response to:</b></p>	<p><b>Response</b></p>
	<p><b>Councillor David Brown</b></p>	<p><b>Ms Kerry Walpole</b></p>	<p>Thank you Chairman. Thank you Ms Walpole for your question. I start off with an apology: some of you might have noticed I'm not Councillor Joan Whitehead. As you will have noticed earlier on, Councillor Whitehead is out of the country so it falls to me to answer your question, to the best of my ability I hope. Firstly, the County Council does share the concerns over nursery school funding. Officers as you will be aware are already meeting with nursery schools, both collectively and individually, to consider sustainable organisational structures for both current and anticipated funding levels. Council welcomes government's extended commitment to nursery schools in its response to the early years funding, the consultation response which was published last week. Specifically the government is providing supplementary funding of £55 million a year to local authorities until 2019/2020, in recognition that maintaining nursery schools bear costs over and above other providers. It's also committed to consulting in regard to the future role of</p>

			<p>maintained nursery schools and how best to secure high quality provision for the longer term. I'm quite clear that much work still needs to be done in this area and in providing sustainable education and nursery provision. I'm also sure that members from the Children &amp; Young People committee will be happy to meet with the nursery sector as you request. However I'm only the Vice-Chairman, I cannot speak for all of them, but I'm sure we will be more than happy to meet with you together with officers. Thank you.</p>
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**TEXT OF A PETITION CONTAINING 155 SIGNATURES PRESENTED BY MR BRIAN MILNES**

“We call upon Cambridgeshire County Council to restore priority to gritting school routes to ensure our children’s safety is not put at risk.

**Petition Organiser Mr Brian Milnes**

Thank you Chairman and obviously under the circumstances the petition may be redundant if the Council is mooted to change the policy adopted in October. So that appears to be the case with what’s been publicly said just recently: there’s an agenda item to do that and frankly, if that goes ahead then clearly the petition will have been answered successfully. So if you’re happy with that, I am too. Thank you.

**Chairman**

Thank you very much. The Leader of the Council will be writing to you after the Council meeting with the Council’s response and members are advised there is no specific debate on this petition. Thank you very much indeed for coming.

**County Council**

**Tuesday 13th December 2016**

**Oral Questions**

**1) Question from Councillor Dr Jocelynn Scutt**

I'd like to address my question to Councillor Count and ask Councillor Count how often he has made a request in writing, orally or in person to the local government minister raising a very serious question of the lack of funding to local government and raising the issue as to the lack of funding which does not enable us to provide services to the residents of Cambridgeshire that they want, need and deserve and number two, how often has he made this request in writing, orally or in person to request further that cuts to local government funding be addressed so that the Cambridgeshire County Council can reinstate the services that those of our residents desperately deserve and require. Thank you.

**Response from Councillor Steve Count**

Thank you Chairman. So, it's quite specific about what I did ask and what I didn't ask and how I asked it. So some of these answers – so generally speaking we're a member of the county council network and I've signed up to the county council network's representations to government about unfair funding cuts to local government etc. So I've joined in through that lobbying. I've made oral representations to the MPs. But one of the things that perhaps is slightly different to the way that you've asked the question is my main line of thought all the way along has been the unfair funding formula that has left us in this state. So instead of saying on behalf the whole country "can you stop making cuts to local government" because there are areas of the country that, I mean you know the parish of Westminster council tax is £600.00 a year. We're taxing £1600.00 because they get a disproportionate settlement to us. So my main line of thrust (*on*) each and every occasion has been "we deserve a fairer funding". Now we know that underneath the new business rates retention scheme which will be coming in, there's going to be a new needs assessment. Now I've made representations there, verbally, orally and through the County Councils Network (CCN), that this needs assessment has to be in place before they roll out the Business Rates Reform. (BRR), because if they don't, I fear that we've just locked in an unfair funding formula that we've lived with for years.

**Supplementary question from Councillor Scutt**

Thank you yes. I wanted to ask this question. I noted that during the last debate, Councillor Count said amongst other matters, for the forthcoming budget, "where's the money coming from" and that he is terrified about next year's budget. I therefore ask, will he approach the Local Government minister and seriously request the Local Government Minister to agitate with the Chancellor, to ensure that the Budget that they bring down enables us in our budget to ensure that we can provide services for the people, not profiteers, for the taxpayer, not the tax avoider, for the taxpayers, not the tax evaders and for the millions and not the millionaires.

**Response from Councillor Count**

Thank you for that well-rehearsed speech and obviously I haven't got a well-rehearsed one in reply, but what I would say is you've kind of missed the boat because the settlement figure for this year comes out by Friday the latest – Thursday the latest – because government

packs up for its winter holidays by then. Right – so there's no chance of me affecting this yet and my biggest fear for this year – the one I'm terrified of – is the risk that we won't get our Rate Support Grant (RSG) grant of £17 million and that was put at risk through the General Purposes Committee (GPC). I voted against not taking the settlement and that means that that is at risk now and if people would have listened to the professional advice of the Section 151 officer on the day that they went against, that would not be at risk. Right – so that's the bit that terrifies me and I don't think any representations I make now which I have made in the past and others have, to ask the Secretary of State not to penalise us for that decision – we will find out this week whether we've got away with it or not and that's the bit that terrifies me.

## **2) Question from Councillor Amanda Taylor**

Question to Councillor Ian Bates as Chairman of Economy and Environment Committee. Floating bus stops are a big concern in Hills Road, the area where I represent. Can Councillor Bates tell us what accidents attributable to floating bus stops he is aware of please?

### **Response from Councillor Ian Bates**

Thank you and thank you for advance notice of the question. Let's start with that and have a good Christmas as well. In short the answer is yes, we do record them and the County Council does have that information. As you are aware, there are more than one or two floating bus stops now and therefore I haven't had time to . . . give a comprehensive answer to all the areas that you mention. Can I just remind members that actually floating bus stops have been in Cambridge since 1967 and also I think when it comes to floating, when we were doing the consultation on Huntingdon Road, there was actually 67% in favour of them? I appreciate that that was Huntingdon Road and that was just one scheme. Can I also actually remind members that when it comes to the floating bus stops, if you're getting off the bus, you are then getting onto a pavement which is your pavement? If you come up against a bus stop which is adjacent to a footpath and a cycleway, you will be getting off the bus and therefore you could be in danger from a cyclist who will be on that path. I understand the question: it would take us quite a bit more time to actually analyse all the bus stops and where the accidents are, but they are recorded with the County.

### **Supplementary question from Councillor Amanda Taylor**

Thank you for your answer. I'm pleased to hear that there are records on accidents but I have been concerned to hear from the cycling team (*inaudible*) that there haven't been any accidents in the (*inaudible*) bit of your reply and also (*inaudible*) rubbish, because I've heard there was a fairly serious accident on Huntingdon Road here (*inaudible followed by hiatus in the recording – 04:02:08 – 04:02:45*).

### **Response from Councillor Bates**

*Recording restarts.* I'm sure Mr Chairman I can comply with that request as there is a member review and I will ask the officers actually to, if you like; make that information available so that the review can take account of it in their review.

## **3) Question from Councillor Derek Giles**

This is a question I think to Councillor McGuire. It's a bit of a back to the future one and pre-season I'm trying to get so well in advance it's unbelievable, but I'd like to talk about grass cutting. Now is not the season for grass cutting, but can you update us on the long running

negotiations between the district councils and in particular, Huntingdonshire District Council and this Council regarding contracts for grass cutting please? . . .

#### **Response from Councillor Mac McGuire**

I will give (*Councillor Giles*) a written response Chairman.

#### **4) Question from Councillor Peter Reeve**

It's to the Leader of the Council. Would he consider discussing with me outside this meeting support for my concern around the use of libraries over the Christmas period? A number of volunteer groups have spoke to me, in particular in my own patch, but I believe elsewhere as well, about how they want to open the library over Christmas or in between Christmas and New Year on the regular days that they would, and this Council is standing in their way, claiming that it wants to make cost savings by keeping the library closed to volunteers running it over that period. Which I think goes against our Transformation Policy, goes against just about everything we're trying to achieve in encouraging people to stand up and work with their community and their point is over the Christmas period, here's an opportunity where people aren't working, might come out when normally they're locked away at work and don't have the opportunity to experience Job Club and the access to the facilities that these volunteers are providing.

#### **Response from Councillor Steve Count, Leader of the Council**

Thank you Peter. Before I enter into those discussions, could you copy me in to all the emails and conversations you've had with the Chair of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee or the officers that you've had on this subject, so I can brief myself get myself up-to-date, and then with Mac or leaning it over to Mac, we'll see how we progress from here.

#### **5) Question from Councillor Paul Sales**

Thank you Chair. I wish to raise the tone of things and I'd like to ask a question about consciousness and conversions. Seen a lot of conversions this afternoon and the road to Damascus is both well-lit and gritted apparently. When will a conversion come into the consciousness of the party opposite, that increasing the charges to the City Park & Ride was a bad idea?

#### **Response from Councillor Ian Bates**

I'm not going to follow that Mr Chairman. I think . . . that would be a definite mistake . . . would not give (*Councillor Sales*) the credit that he deserves from that little comment. Park & Ride charges I think you know has been well discussed, well debated. I think it will be sensible for me to give Councillor Sales a written answer.

#### **6) Question from Councillor Michael Shellens**

Last week I had the undoubted pleasure of welcoming to my Overview and Scrutiny meeting at Huntingdon Council three more members of the senior management team than are here today with us and we received a very useful briefing on the County's budget situation. During the meeting, I asked what was being done to bolster staff morale here, in the face of the inevitable cuts in numbers. I was told that there was widespread enthusiasm, in recognition of the widespread opportunities, and excitement in participation in change. That seemed to me to be a Nelsonian "I see no ships". Later that week, I was wandering around the corridor of Shire Hall like a lost soul and I fell into conversation with a senior officer of this

Council and we chatted about new parking arrangements. "Is there any room for us on Council days?" I said. "Oh they'll just close it to staff." "Where are the staff going to park?" "Oh they don't care." In the light of that window into staff morale, do you have anything to add to the answer given at Huntingdon?

### **Response from Councillor Steve Count**

Thank you Councillor Shellens. Yeah. It is disappointing that you found one particular incident of one particular comment that's not to your liking and I'm sure that will be replicated throughout the organisation in various different pockets. But there has been a change in this organisation. A change for the good and you've only got to go to the workshops that I go to: you've only got to go to the induction that I did this morning over in Trumpington: you've only got to speak to the officers to recognise the change and the transformation that is going through this Council is far better than the series of cuts that we'd inevitably have been left with if we hadn't have gone down this route. The transformation fund, the innovation fund that we've introduced and managed to finance is very well received. Ideas are streaming in from throughout the organisation about co-working, about how to deliver things better. The £1 million that we put in the parish council innovation fund has been extremely well received. Now I know you cannot please everybody every day of the week and I know that's true and I know that staff morale in certain pockets, in certain areas, can be down. But at the end of the day, I think we are on the right path now and because the path is right, the staff morale will and is being galvanised to run alongside it. I truly believe that and I think that we need to embrace change as we've said: if you've read the book 'Who Moved My Cheese' you might get a bit of the idea of what we're talking about. But you know, look at where we were, look at where we are and try and bring the people along with you rather than continue to maintain a mind-set that is very very difficult.

### **Supplementary from Councillor Shellens**

That seems to me to be glass three quarters full. I'm very concerned about my perception, and I talk to different officers from you, a widespread perception of deep gloom and apprehension and I think it behoves us to try and give some comfort to those people.

### **Response from Councillor Count**

. . . I think it is difficult to go out there and say to somebody "I want your morale lifted", you have to do that by actions. Now our new Chief Executive she has put actions in place that's tried to achieve that, alongside transformation thing, and I'll give you an example. What happened at the start of the Chairman's announcements today were the staff recognition awards. You know we gave out some awards, people had done some really good work and it was recognised and that actually filters not just the two in here today, but the fifty others that were on that list, filters out through the organisation. The fact that we have a Council Recognition Board in our Council Chamber filters out through the recognition. The fact that I went to an induction this morning, to greet new people joining the organisation, filters through the organisation. It's by actions that we actually raise the morale, not by moaning about the fact that the financial situation is very difficult at the moment. What we need to do is try and change and try and embrace that change and bring the staff along with us.

### **7) Question from Councillor Mike Mason**

This is a question for the Leader. With regard to the decision taken at the last meeting of GPC, concerning legal action to recover costs from BAM Nuttall, can you say if members will be given an opportunity to further question Capita and Atkins before counsel finally drafts the documents and claims for the court case? The background to this question is contained in my statement at GPC, now recorded in the minutes, in which I expressed concern that

technical questions submitted in writing to Graham Hughes and Bob Menzies had not been answered at the confidential briefing for GPC and E & E Spokes. These were material technical considerations, which should in my view be addressed and clarified before any decision to finalise the claim against the contractor. There are also outstanding legal contractual issues, involving Atkins, Skanska and Capita, which were not fully explained either at the briefing or at GPC. I am deeply concerned that these should be fully resolved, in order that the brief for counsel is as robust as possible. In particular the extent, methodology and cost of repairs should be further explored, in detail, to minimise the risk of challenge and delay by the contractor.

### **Chairman**

Councillor Count . . . the monitoring officer advises a written response is appropriate.

### **Response from Councillor Steve Count, Leader of the Council**

I think I shall give a written response to this Chairman . . . and should I not get asked any more questions, Merry Christmas everyone.

### **Chairman**

. . . Councillor Mason. . . are you happy to leave it at that point?

### **Supplementary Question from Councillor Mason**

In his written response, will Councillor Count please further enquire with Government as to how the busway asset is to be dealt with as soon as we appoint the newly elected mayor and combined authority? Because under the documents that we've been given, they will be responsible for that asset after June.

### **Chairman**

I'm sure that Councillor Count will include that in his response.

### **8) Question from Councillor Ian Bates**

I was going to ask a question about the equipment . . . , but as I think we have answered most of the questions relating to the equipment, about the cost and who . . . I think it's been covered already. . . .

### **9) Question from Councillor Lorna Dupre**

This is to ask Councillor Ian Bates when he expects the Council to receive and circulate to Members, the temporary routing plans for the A14 works for phase 2 and beyond that were promised by Highways England within two months of the briefing meeting they convened in this building on the 18th of July.

### **Response from Councillor Ian Bates**

Obviously that's a response that Highways England are required to do. I'm not entirely sure of all that detail as I stand here at the moment but I think sensibly I will ask the officers to get a written response about our relationship, about the closures etc. So I think a written response will be most appropriate. Thank you.

### **10) Question from Councillor Paul Bullen**

Thank you Chairman. Since putting in this with a paper, I've had an illuminating moment with officers, who've answered my query thank you. And Merry Christmas to everyone.

#### **11) Question from Councillor Sir Peter Brown**

My question is to Councillor McGuire and it is that the residents of Huntingdon and Godmanchester are looking forward to a bright future. The town centre development now reaching fruition and the development of Alconbury Weald is providing a host of opportunities for housing and local employment. These, together with the improvement to the A14, are going to provide a strong economic environment locally. Local businesses and others are determined to make the most of these and in doing so we would ask the County Council to join with us in looking at a long term project to ease the traffic problems on the ring road, possibly by changing traffic flows. Can you say that you will join with me, perhaps in the early New Year, in pursuing a meeting of interested parties so that we can look at some situations which might evolve?

#### **Response from Councillor Mac McGuire**

. . . Sir Peter did give me notice of this question and of course I will join with him and other interested parties as appropriate in the New Year and we'll obviously arrange for that to set up. It's worth taking this opportunity to say, because his opening remarks is that residents of Huntingdon and Godmanchester look forward to a bright future, one of the benefits that will come from the new routing of the A14 is we know, is that the flyover at Huntingdon, the great separated junction will come down. That's the one held up by meccano if nobody's familiar with it, and a new link road will come off of what is the existing A14 but will become the road into Huntingdon, will come onto the ring road. It shouldn't necessarily increase traffic but it will certainly have a dramatic and improving effect on Godmanchester because the traffic will no longer have to travel through Godmanchester to get to Huntingdon.

#### **Chairman**

Thank you Councillor McGuire. So the answer is "yes". . . .

#### **Councillor McGuire**

Yes. . .

#### **12) Question from Councillor Barry Chapman**

I was going to follow on about the comment about being on the road from Damascus, but this is about a slightly different road. It's a question for Councillor McGuire I think. It's about a road – we've talked about street lighting – without street lighting. It's about a road which it would be impossible to grit. It's about a road where we've recently been told it's too dangerous for bin men to go down. It's a road where there is no road. Some of you may have seen about this. It was in the Independent, it was in the Sun and it was in the Daily Mail. And it was covered on local radio and I understand that Channel 5 are now planning a documentary about this road. And they are planning this documentary because of the shameful state that this particular road has been allowed to get into and the absolute neglect by its Councils and I'm talking about both Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council and the endless excuses that are being made to try and wash their hands of responsibility. West Street is a pre-1835 road when the district parish surveyor was created, making it a public highway. Now it's a public highway, it's not an adopted road, no one's seeking to have it as an adopted road, but it is a public highway. It is a road which was maintained and looked after by the urban district council and everyone else in St Neots between 1974 going back to 1835. Either Huntingdonshire or Cambridgeshire

need to take responsibility for this and I would ask that Councillor McGuire join me in asking Huntingdonshire to put an end to the misery being suffered by these poor residents who see nothing but housing development on their empty road.

### **Response from Councillor Mac McGuire**

Chairman unfortunately, Councillor Chapman didn't give me notice of this question. I'm tempted to say I'll give him an answer in writing, but I do know that it's been a crusade of his for a long time: I don't know if that equates to the Damascus thing but the crusades were fought in that same area. I know it's been a long-standing issue for Councillor Chapman: I'm certainly happy if the officers prepare a response. I think he knows the County's position already but I'll reflect on that with the officers Chairman. Thank you.

### **Supplementary question from Councillor Chapman**

My question was whether or not Councillor McGuire would join me in meeting the District Council to resolve this situation, not what their - the Council's - position is on the road. I appreciate that it is a unique position.

### **Response from Councillor McGuire**

. . . Chairman the thing is, I'm always content to meet with other Councillors and if it means being an authority, but I can't honestly say that I can meet with them to resolve the problem Chairman. But I'm happy if it helps to meet to discuss the issue so that both sides fully understand the issues in front of us Chairman.

### **13) Question from Councillor Maurice Leake**

My question is to Councillor Bates and it's about Park & Ride buses. He may be aware that the bus service from Milton Park & Ride site to Addenbrooke's and on to Babraham Park & Ride site has now been cut in two, so that you get the bus into the town centre and then a different bus out to Babraham Park & Ride and Stagecoach have helpfully said that there is no extra cost to the passenger because the ticket is honoured for the second half of the journey. That of course doesn't apply to the concessionary bus pass, so a user now going from Milton Park & Ride to Addenbrooke's clicks their card four times rather than two. It seems to me and I know nothing about these things, that the effect of the change is not just the inconvenience to the passengers, but to extort more money from the County Council for the concessionary bus pass. The question is what discussions has Councillor Bates had with Stagecoach about this change and is he aware of any proposed changes to that system?

### **Response from Councillor Ian Bates**

Thank you. Stagecoach did inform us about the changes, some time ago. We made representations; it's fair to say I think we weren't greatly enamoured with their proposals initially. I think if I - Councillor Cearns will correct me I think he was present when we discussed those - ok they was discussed at Spokes . . . . I'm not aware in respect of the changes in the concessionary element of it ok: that's not been brought to my attention. I'm happy to have those discussions with officers as you might say. I never saw it as a cost-plus for Stagecoach. I saw it perhaps as they wanted to introduce changes and also in their livery and bringing in some new buses as well and that is how it was sold to us. So it was what I call a complete package about the changes, but also about the livery and bringing in new buses on the Park & Ride system across all of our Park & Ride sites. So it was sold what I call in all sorts of manners, but it was then telling us what they were planning on doing.



### **Supplementary question from Councillor Leeke**

. . . I would be grateful if Councillor Bates would inform us of the cost implications of the change. Thank you.

### **14) Question from Councillor Ashley Walsh**

My question is to the Leader and has to do with the announcement to be made by Sajid Javid on Thursday with regard to national government/local government finance settlements. He said that it's possible and he's considering the option of allowing primary tier local authorities to raise council tax by 4% each year by 2019/2020, allowing a compound 8% council tax increase earmarked for social care. Does the Leader hope that Sajid Javid will give us that freedom?

### **Response from Councillor Steve Count, Leader of the Council**

Yeah I've been aware of this. Not the level of detail; I never heard that speech but I've been aware that it's been very much in the news at the moment. I was aware for example that Labour comments that it's very unfair that local councils should pick up the tax burden of adult social care. And that's one of the comments that I tend to agree with, because my representations to Government has been along the lines of in Cambridgeshire, just Cambridgeshire, I'm not talking about the whole of the country, we have a funding formula that is unfair to us and that is a major cause of our financial troubles and therefore if the funding formula was corrected, we wouldn't need to think or contemplate going to our residents for extra money. Now I can't say that's the same for the whole country, so I don't know what the ideal solution is, but I do know that here my heart still lies in the argument that the funding formula is wrong and that would be the primary route that I would pursue to try and get a bit rebalance.

### **Supplementary question from Councillor Walsh**

So, I would press for a Yes or No answer. In the event that the funding formula is not changed, or that the Better Care Fund receives any further funding, which is possible, does he hope that Sajid Javid will nonetheless give us the freedom to choose ourselves whether or not to increase council tax over the next four years each year?

### **Response from Councillor Count**

Yes. Very clear "Yes" to that. The point about having locally elected people I believe is to make decisions on behalf of your local residents and I think that there is an argument to be made for greater flexibility in our decision-making. Now that is not the same as exercising that decision every time, but I do think that we are best placed to decide what is best for our local residents.

### **15) Question from Councillor Peter Downes**

This question was to Councillor Whitehead but she's not here tonight, but Councillor Brown will I think be in a position to answer it as Vice Chair of Children & Young People. It is in fact to do with funding and to ask if he shares with me our regret that the Government has deferred the implementation of the long awaited fair funding formula by another 12 months? That's the first one. The second is, would he join me in urging every member of this Council who is a governor in a school in Cambridgeshire to keep a very, very beady eye open for the consultation which is going to be published later this week or in the next week, which is going to explain what's happening in the funding formula for the future? Because the rumours are that the proposed formula will not be favourable to rural sparsity, which is a very very

important factor in our schools. Now the consultation is planned to bring out an informative for 2018 but I do urge everybody, and you know if you're not governors yourself, tell other governors, because we get overloaded with consultations, but this one really is important because if we miss this one now, the chances of getting another revision of a funding formula in anybody's lifetime is virtually nil. So may I ask you to support me in passing that message on to members?

### **Response from Councillor David Brown**

Councillor Downes you know I'm delighted to join with you in passing that message on to members. Taking the two in reverse order governors please be very (*inaudible*) that your governing bodies as well. Make sure we get lots of input from the county. All the time I've been here the fair funding formula has been right at the top of the list: I'm surprised you didn't say the words "deferred yet again", because that would have been my choice of words. And finally since I've got the floor, thank you to everybody who signed the card for Councillor David Harty: it would be remiss of me not to mention David Harty, and Councillor Peter Downes as well, over many years for lobbying for a fair funding formula for Cambridgeshire schools through their membership of F40.

### **Supplementary from Councillor Downes**

Thank you for those remarks and just to say that we've not been fighting for a fair funding formula for Cambridgeshire. We've been fighting for a fair funding formula for the Country. That is the essential problem: there isn't a fair formula for the whole Country. Cambridgeshire happens not to be very well placed down the league table, but the gist of our campaign for now 22 years is a fair national funding formula. That's what we're on about. Thank you.