

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: 8th July 2008

Time: 10.00 a.m. – 11.15 a.m.

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

Councillors: M Bradney, Sir P Brown, M Curtis, D Harty, R Pegram J E Reynolds, and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors: J M Tuck

Also in Attendance

Councillors: J Batchelor, D Jenkins and M Williamson.

582. MINUTES 10th JUNE 2008

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10th June 2008 were approved as a correct record.

583. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None

584. PETITIONS - NONE RECEIVED.

585. REPORT FROM CORPORATE SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - MEMBER LED REVIEW INTO THE COUNCIL'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND THE RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

Councillor Williamson, the chairman of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee who had carried out the above titled review, was invited to present the key issues. He highlighted that one of the principal themes of the review had been to emphasise that Community Engagement must be at the heart of what the County Council undertook to do and that it must be considered and embedded in Council procedures as a crucial aspect of the decision making process. The review had looked at what Cambridgeshire County Council did and also examined the approach adopted in other local Councils in order to identify best practice.

Councillor Williamson highlighted recommendations 4 and 7 emphasising the need to establish a more co-ordinated and coherent approach to community engagement based on recognising each partner's geographical service boundaries, while recognising that areas did not necessarily coincide very well with each other. The point was made that in future he would like to see a position where a councillor would only have to attend one meeting, rather than three, which sometimes was the case where divisions overlapped. He expressed regret that recommendation 9 in relation to helping support the work of parishes could not be supported, citing the positive example provided in Essex (provision of grants to parish and town councils to enable them to access information from the Council electronically).

Attention was also drawn to recommendations in relation to the Petitions Procedure to ensure local residents felt more valued, in terms of ensuring lead petitioners received a formal response in good time. It was noted that Group Leaders had recently received and agreed changes to the County Council's Petitions procedure which would now state that the organiser of a petition presented at Cabinet or the full Council meeting would receive a written response, where appropriate, within 10 working days. The Area Joint Committee (AJC) Petitions Procedure and the practice of receiving a report on a petition at their following meeting was cited as a good practice model.

The review made a series of recommendations against categories that the Audit Commission had determined as 'Critical Success Factors' to positive community engagement in terms of:

- Commitment to User Focus
- Understanding Communities
- Clarity of Purpose
- Communicating Appropriately
- Delivering Change and Improved Outcomes.

Cabinet welcomed the review noting that greater community involvement and empowerment was now a priority for central government's vision for local government. On 5th March 2008 Hazel Blears, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had announced plans for a new White Paper on empowerment to be published in the summer, with 'radical plans to unlock talent in local communities and give people a real say on improving local services and promoting active citizenship'. Cabinet therefore needed to ensure that the Government's requirements to be set out in the White Paper were reflected in its response to improving community engagement. Consequently, Cabinet agreed that it was prudent to wait until the White Paper was released before responding to some of the recommendations from the Scrutiny review, and these were reflected in some of the agreed responses.

It was resolved:

- i) To thank the Scrutiny Committee for the work undertaken for the review.
- ii) To endorse the responses provided against each of the recommendations from scrutiny as set out in the report and in appendix 1 to these minutes.

586. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY AGREEMENT 2008-2011

Cabinet received a report seeking endorsement to a new Cambridgeshire Community Safety Agreement covering the period 2008-2011, which if agreed, would become part of the Council's Policy Framework. A revised covering report was tabled providing additional information regarding the four priorities that had been identified as having potential benefit from being addressed at a County Level and the priority themes to be addressed within and across the priorities.

Cabinet noted that an action plan would underpin the Agreement, with the County

Community Safety Strategic Board being responsible for the performance management of the Agreement.

Cabinet noted that following a review of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, a number of changes have been implemented to enable Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships or Community Safety Partnerships to be more responsive to changes in crime and disorder taking place in their areas. To comply with statutory requirements brought in by regulation under the Police and Justice Act 2006, two tier authorities were now required to prepare a county Community Safety Agreement. The legislative changes had also seen the replacement of the 3 year audit of crime in the districts with an annual Strategic Assessment and District level 3 year Partnership Rolling Plans.

Reassurance was requested regarding ensuring co-ordination of local crime and disorder partnerships work and in response, it was indicated that the Action Plan would help to bring together activities undertaken at both district and county level. The drawing up of the Agreement itself had already led to closer working between partners. In response to issues raised regarding whether robust performance management measures were in place, it was explained that the Home Office already required data to be produced on community safety partnerships for comparator purposes, and this information would necessarily have to be sufficiently detailed / robust. Mention was also made of the work being undertaken by the Deputy Chief Executive, Children and Young People's Services on an accountability framework to ensure all appropriate links were taken into account.

It was resolved:

To recommend that Full Council approves the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Agreement 2008-2011 as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

587. OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES (OCYPS) TRADED SERVICES

Cabinet received a report on proposals to address the cumulative deficit of £2574k of former OCYPS traded services.

Cabinet noted that Trading Units operated by the Office of Children and Young People's Services had incurred significant trading deficits over the last few years. Whilst the financial performance of individual Trading Units had varied, the cumulative position had been to leave a deficit of £2574k at the end of 2007/08. A total deficit of £353k was incurred in 2007/08. Whilst this represented an improvement from the 2006/07 trading deficit of £783k and the 2005/06 deficit of £853k, the cumulative deficit had continued to grow. Cabinet was advised that an annual surplus of 2% on traded activity over the next three years was required on prepared business plans, (with the exceptions of Catering, which would have a target of £212k and Cambridgeshire Music, which would be expected to break even) and this was expected to generate a total surplus of £929k. The application of the £1200k corporate reserves, together with the £929k had led to the final cumulative deficit figure of £445k, which it was proposed should be funded from OCYPS reserves.

Clarification was sought outside of the meeting to confirm that the report's figures set out in paragraphs 2.1 and 4.3 showed total growth for the traded units of £10m in the three year period 2008-2011.

Attention was drawn to the very successful 10 out of 10 initiative undertaken by the catering service, which had helped to increase school meals uptake. Cabinet confirmed their support that Cambridgeshire Music, which faced major operational and financial challenges, was a valued service. The investment / developments to be undertaken in order to try to ensure that the service broke even over the next three year period would be to ensure that the future service added value to the children using the service, as well as ensuring that it was better aligned to stated Council priorities.

It was resolved:

To agree that the deficit of £2574k should be addressed through:

- The use of £1200k from the corporate Traded Services Provision
- A contribution of £929k from traded activity surpluses over the next three years
- The use of £445k from OCYPS Office Reserves

CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

With the agreement of the chairman, the agenda order was changed to allow the report on Finance and Performance Monitoring to be considered next.

588. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Cabinet received financial and performance information to assess progress in delivering the Council's Integrated Plan, as well as noting the remedial action being taken by management where performance was falling below target.

Whilst Cabinet noted that it was too early in the year for definitive financial and performance trends to be established, the following issues were highlighted:

- Overall the budget position was showing a forecast year-end overspend of £497k, (0.2%). It was noted that in previous years at the same time, forecast overspends had been higher, yet a budget balance has been achieved at the end of the financial year, so this was not seen as a major concern.
- In Adult Social Care there were some early signs of overspending in Mental Health and Equipment services, partially offset by an underspend on Physical and Sensory Impairment (detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the Cabinet report). The budget build and the phasing of expenditure was currently being examined and this issue was likely to be resolved by the time of the next report.
- In Children's Services there was also a net overspend being predicted, but again the figure was relatively small and concentrated on the Learning Directorate (detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the Cabinet report)
- In terms of key projects Electronic Records Management and Workwise were at Orange (acceptable performance), the first due to transitory recruitment and server capacity issues, the latter because of saving target phasing and decant issues.
- There were no significant balance sheet issues (capital, debt, payment and cash-flow).

- In terms of key indicators, the set agreed last year has been used, although these were due to be reconsidered in September. Also due to the national change in indicator set, there were still certain areas where data had yet to be gathered.
- Sickness absence levels had improved year on year and month on month and were following broadly an established seasonal pattern.
- The number of core assessments completed within 35 days and the number for older people helped to live at home was better year on year, and on target having increased significantly and was seen as a real success story.
- The impact on the Authority of the general economic downturn was being carefully monitored. In terms of debt charges, the Authority was still benefiting by lending cash surpluses at high rates of interest. In terms of inflation, there were some signs of growing pressure. In respect of house building, there were signs of a considerable slow-down. The latter issue was the greatest cause for concern in terms of cashflow as delays on receiving section 106 receipts from developers might result in the Authority having to finance the interest charges on new developments capital infrastructure projects,

It was resolved:

- i) to note the performance and financial information provided and the remedial action being taken where appropriate.
- ii) To delegate responsibility for making any necessary changes to the Council's Scheme of Financial Management arising from the discussions on Trading Units to the Lead Member for Corporate Services, in consultation with the Director of Finance, Property and Performance (as set out in paragraph 4.3.2 of the report)

589. LONG TERM TRANSPORT STRATEGY / TRANSPORT INNOVATION FUND (TIF) - CONSULTATION RESULTS AND NEXT STEPS

Cabinet received a report providing details on the results of the tackling congestion consultation on the original TIF proposal and setting out the possible new way forward, including the formation of a Transport Commission.

It was acknowledged that the press release announcing the Transport Commission, (published in advance of the Cabinet meeting) had been premature, as establishing a Commission was clearly a decision for the Cabinet meeting. (Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything which they considered was likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area).

At the Cabinet meeting it was emphasised by the Cabinet member for Growth and Infrastructure that any decisions on recommendations emanating from the Transport Commission would only be taken by the County Council Cabinet, or the County Council as appropriate.

The report noted that as a result of growth in and around Cambridge, population was estimated to increase in the order of 33% (corrected to this figure from a figure of 45% figure

included in error in the report). As well as houses, there would also be a significant increase in the number of jobs in the county, many of which would be in Cambridge. As this growth would have considerable impacts on the infrastructure of the county, particularly on the transport network, the Council had developed a Long Term Transport Strategy (LTTS) for Cambridgeshire to respond to the transport demands of the growth agenda and this work had been taken forward through the Transport Innovation Fund. Taking into account all elements of the consultation (as detailed in the report to Cabinet), it had become clear that some key organisations, whilst not opposed to the proposals, wished to see changes to the specific measures set out within the TIF bid.

It was recognised that more work was required to be undertaken in terms of developing the detail of the Commission's remit and that a further report would need to come back to the September Cabinet meeting. Reference was made to the Commission considering some of the specific comments on issues highlighted from the consultation as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report, while recognising that this was not an all encompassing list. In the same light, the initial suggestion for membership of the Commission as set out in 4.5 was not exhaustive and consideration would be given to including other organisations. Reference was made to the Fire and Rescue Service and the Ambulance service also being included in some capacity, perhaps in an advisory role.

Cabinet noted that in undertaking its work, it was intended that the Commission would have regard to the County Council's aim of promoting sustainable growth in Cambridgeshire, as well as the national framework for sustainable development and that these aims would be developed in close consultation with partner organisations and would therefore involve active community engagement. Cabinet noted that if TIF monies were to be taken by the County Council, this would have to be based on a road pricing/ fiscal demand management approach.

It was resolved:

- i) To note the results of the consultation.
- ii) To agree in principle to the establishment of a Transport Commission to consider the merits of the TIF scheme put forward for consultation in October 2007 and the public response to it and to advise from the point of view of the stakeholders represented, whether and how it should be modified to tackle the growing problems of congestion faced by the Cambridge area; and
- iii) To note the outline Terms of Reference attached to the officer's report and to request a further report to the September Cabinet meeting containing the details of the Terms of Reference of the Commission, its possible membership, as well as the timescales for its work and the work programme.

(Note: Subsequent to the Cabinet meeting, 3 members of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee requested that the Cabinet's decision on this item be called-in. This was to be considered by the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 23rd July 2008)

590. ANGLIAN / EASTERN REGION REGIONAL PERMIT SCHEME

Cabinet received a report providing information on Cambridgeshire's proposal to join the

Anglian Regional Permit Scheme (ARPS).

Cabinet noted that the Traffic Management Act 2004 placed a duty on the Authority to secure the expeditious movement of traffic around its network. As the County Council was engaged in a substantial growth agenda which would see major construction across the county over the next 10 years, roadworks and their impact on journey times was an area of significant importance. It was explained that permit schemes would provide a new way to manage activities in the public highway, providing a more effective and efficient alternative to the currently used 'notification system' of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.

Cabinet noted that the Eastern Region was developing a common scheme with benefits as set out in the report. Confirmation was received the fees to be charged, while not intended to generate revenue for permit authorities, would cover its costs subject to the constraints of the Code of Practice. In terms of how often they would be uplifted it was confirmed that they would be reviewed annually by the Department of Transport.

It was resolved:

- To approve the development and implementation of a Permit Scheme for Cambridgeshire.
- To agree that the Permit Scheme is delivered as part of an Anglian / East of England Regional Permit Scheme

591. CAMBRIDGE CENTRAL AREA BUS STOP CAPACITY STRATEGY

Cabinet received a report on a proposed strategy for the provision of additional bus stop capacity in Cambridge City centre to cater for expected growth in bus services.

Cabinet noted that there was a need to deliver enhanced bus services across the county to satisfy the demands arising from the growth agenda. This was particularly true for the fringe developments in and around Cambridge and the proposed new town of Northstowe. In addition, the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway was expected to start operating services in April 2009, with an expectation of increased frequencies and routes, as the new developments came to fruition.

Cabinet was advised that the Cambridge Central Bus Strategy would seek to support the Council's aspirations to promote the use of public transport and the increased bus stop capacity required to accommodate the growth agenda. The Strategy reflected the following assumptions:

- To accept that there will be a long term need for a significant facility in the centre of the city.
- In the short term, work will be undertaken to make the existing stop capacity as efficient as possible.
- In the medium term, work required to be undertaken to improve capacity at the Rail Station.
- In the long term, consideration needed to be given to further improving capacity in the City Centre.

- To involve Cambridge City Council in the detailed discussion as the County Council developed options to deliver the strategy.

To plan for the expected growth in bus services, a Bus Service Strategy was being developed that would set out a dynamic plan to show how the County Council would work with bus operators to meet demand over the next 10-15 years.

It was resolved:

- i) To endorse the bus stop capacity strategy for Cambridge;
- ii) To support work with Cambridge City Council to explore the potential for off-street bus stop capacity; and
- iii) To support the provision of bus stop capacity for Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Services (CGB) services in time for the start of operations in 2009, with the Area Joint Committee (AJC) being consulted.

592. SUPPORTING PEOPLE - EXEMPTION FROM CONTRACT REGULATIONS FOR THE PROVISION OF AN ASSESSMENT CENTRE IN CAMBRIDGE CITY

Cabinet received a report seeking approval to exempt both the current night service and the contract for a new assessment centre in Cambridge City from contract regulations and to waive competitive tendering requirements in order to avoid serious disruption to the overall service to homeless and rough sleepers in Cambridge and to avoid jeopardising the successful completion of the project.

Cabinet noted that Cambridgeshire's Supporting People team has been working in partnership with Cambridge City Council to develop the Zion Baptist Church building into an Assessment Centre to provide more effective assessment, support and resettlement services to homeless individuals in Cambridge City. The Church building, used by 'Jimmys', to provide a 31 unit nightshelter, had been identified by the Communities and Local Government (CLG) department as one of the top 3 priorities for change, due to its dormitory style accommodation. The development had been dependent on a successful 'Places for Change' bid to provide the £3m required for the capital improvements to the building. This had been granted on the basis of a 20 year 'tie in', to ensure that the investment was used to meet Cambridge City's Homeless and Rough Sleepers strategy.

Cabinet was informed that due to the possible competitive tender process and the perceived uncertainty of ongoing funding from the Supporting People programme, the Zion Baptist Church felt that the 20 year 'tie in' would not guarantee that the building would be used for 'the ongoing good work of the church' as insisted by the overseeing body for the church, The Baptist Union. They had however indicated that they be content to let the contract for the new assessment centre go out for competitive tender, if the contract was initially given to Jimmys for a 5 year term (with a possible 2 year extension). This would ensure that the remaining 13 years of the 20 year commitment would stand. It was also therefore necessary to exempt the current contract for the Nightshelter for the same period, to enable the whole service to operate as one.

It was resolved:

- i) To endorse the need to exempt the contract for the current night service and the contract for a new assessment centre in Cambridge City from contract regulations by invoking the following clause of Cambridgeshire County Council Contract Regulations:

Paragraph 3.7 "In exceptional circumstances, the County Council and its Cabinet have power to dispense with any provision of these Contract Regulations."

- ii) To note that the use of a competitive tender process would cause significant disruption and jeopardise the successful completion of the project

593. POST OFFICE CLOSURES

Cabinet received details of the proposed Post Office closures in the county. (The list of the closures was only tabled on the day, as it had been the subject of a Government embargo until 10 a.m. that morning, with the specific details still not having been received)

Cabinet noted that in May 2007 the (then) Department of Trade and Industry announced that 2500 post offices across the UK were to close by 2009, representing around 17.5% of the total network. Of these 1250 were likely to be in rural areas. The Government announcement listed 23 post offices for closure in Cambridgeshire (as set out in appendix 2 to these minutes).

Cabinet was informed that the list of closures in Cambridgeshire was being considered as part of an Area Plan covering Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. For some of the post offices listed for closure, initial proposals for continuing some form of alternative provision had been identified. It was understood that where alternative proposals were being suggested, Post Offices Limited would endeavour to ensure that all existing post offices would not close until the arrangements were up and running. It was clarified that the proposals did not affect the provision of new postal facilities in new communities.

It was reported that publication of the list triggered a public consultation period during which members of the public and community groups and organisations would have a chance to put forward reasons to keep their local post office open. The consultation period was to run until 26th August 2008. Cabinet was informed that to support the communities and businesses affected, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Post Office Network Change Group (CPONCG) (chaired by the Cabinet Member for Communities) had devised a short-term support strategy which was to:

- Enable communities to respond effectively to the public consultation and to challenge where appropriate the criteria for closure.
- Minimise the impact of post office closures on combined post office/shops and other businesses combined with post offices.
- Enable communities losing their post office to access appropriate advice and support on maintaining access to postal and other services.

The work of the group beforehand in lobbying Government had, had the effect of reducing the number of closures from a possible 40 to the number set out on the appendix. Cambridgeshire ACRE and particularly Bob Stone were commended for the work they had undertaken on behalf of the Group, as was the work of the County Council Research Group.

It was highlighted that CPONCG was now encouraging all Cambridgeshire communities affected by the proposed closure of their Post Office to make their views known as quickly as possible during the consultation. Meetings were being organised to brief councillors and MPs on the consultation and how to respond, with the details including dates, times and venues set out in the Cabinet report.

Cabinet expressed their concerns that the policy of Post Office closures continued to impact most heavily on the elderly and those in rural communities who did not have access to transport and would cause them particular hardship. It also contradicted another stated Government priority of aiming to promote well being in the community. They also wished to ensure that the originally stated Government criteria of ensuring people were within three miles of a post office was still being adhered to.

It was resolved

To note the list of Post Offices intended for closure in Cambridgeshire as tabled at the Cabinet meeting and to agree to delegate any actions in support of the short-term support strategy to the Cabinet member for Communities in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, Environment and Community Services.

594. PARTNERSHIP QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORTS.

In order to update Cabinet and enhance accountability of the activities of key strategic partnerships Cabinet received and noted the latest report on the following five partnerships (the Community Safety Strategic Partnership was included in the update report for the first time)

- A) Cambridgeshire Together
- B) The Children and Young People Partnership
- C) Cambridgeshire Care Partnership
- D) Cambridgeshire Horizons
- E) Community Safety Strategic Partnership

In terms of an update on Cambridgeshire Together, the Chief Executive orally updated the outcome of the Chief Executives Liaison Group (CELG) meeting held the previous day regarding discussions on investing reward grant from the Local Public Services Agreement. He confirmed that there was support for the following topics which were common across Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) based on recommendations from the Local Area Agreement Reference Group (LAARG).

- public health issues of childhood obesity and smoking.
- Road safety
- Domestic violence

- Alcohol related harm

The following LAARG Proposals were partially supported

- Older People – supported this proposal except for rogue trader/doorstep crime elements. (These were seen as the core business for the County Council).
- Climate change – limited support, but not for the hub proposal. £50k agreed for a climate change co-ordinator across the County. Options for attracting other resources (e.g. from Cambridgeshire Horizons), were also be explored.

However Community planning/engagement was not supported.

It was noted that CELG's views would be reflected in recommendations to LSPs, Cambridgeshire Together's Board and the Council's Cabinet in due course, once the proposals had been further refined.

595. DELEGATIONS FROM CABINET TO CABINET MEMBERS/OFFICERS

Cabinet received a report on progress on matters delegated to individual Cabinet Members and/or to officers to make decisions on behalf of the Cabinet up to June 2008.

An update indicated that for report 3 “Proposed Transfer of the Archaeological Field Unit to Oxford Archaeology” this action had been completed by 1st July.

596. DRAFT AGENDA FOR 9th SEPTEMBER CABINET MEETING

The draft agenda was noted with the following changes notified since the publication of the agenda.

The following report had been moved to the October Cabinet meeting:

Item 17 “Better Utilisation Phase 1 Proposals”

Attention was drawn to the very large agenda for the September meeting and that it might be necessary to build in a short break if the meeting looked like it will go beyond three hours. It was agreed that Strategic Management Team should continue to keep the number of reports under review.

Chairman
9th September 2008

AGREED FORMAL RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEMBER LED REVIEW

Recommendation	Response
<p>1. The Council has a greater focus on community engagement through implementation of the Improvement Priority to ‘increase opportunities for community participation and involvement’. This should include consideration to strengthening service planning and organisational development arrangements.</p>	<p>Service planning will be strengthened through the next round of the Integrated Planning Process, to ensure a greater focus on community engagement. Organisational development arrangements will be considered by the new Head of Corporate Development when appointed.</p>
<p>WHO: Director of People and Policy / Head of Corporate Development Corporate Services Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: March 2009</p>	
<p>2. Members are supported in their role as Community Champions through the inclusion of community engagement training as part of Members development programmes.</p>	<p>Members development programmes are scheduled to be reviewed, so the inclusion of community engagement training will be considered as part of this.</p>
<p>WHO: Head of Democratic and Members’ Services Deputy Leader WHEN BY: May 2009</p>	
<p>3. A new category, ‘Community Engagement and Consultation’, is added, where appropriate, to Committee reports. Guidance for this category should include reference to the measures taken to inform Local Members about community engagement activity.</p>	<p>The inclusion of ‘Community Engagement and Consultation’ in committee reports will be considered by Strategic Management Team (SMT) as part of their current review of guidance on committee reports.</p>
<p>WHO: Strategic Management Team Corporate Services Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: September 2008</p>	
<p>4. All partners in the Local Area Agreement are encouraged to have regard to each other’s geographical service boundaries when restructuring to minimise confusion and enhance partnership working.</p>	<p>It is recommended that Cabinet agree to refer this to Cambridgeshire Together.</p>

WHO: Cambridgeshire Together Leader WHEN BY: March 2009	
5. The adequacy of the posts currently identified to support the development of Neighbourhood Panels is kept under review.	This will be kept under review through the Integrated Planning Process.
WHO: Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Services Corporate Services Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: Ongoing	
6. The Council works with Cambridgeshire's Districts, Parish and Town Council's in developing Area Profiles that inform Neighbourhood Panels.	This will be put forward for discussion at the Neighbourhood Panels Task and Finish Group, which includes representatives from District, Town and Parish Councils.
WHO: Neighbourhood Panels Task and Finish Group Corporate Services Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: July 2009	
7. The Council reviews the organisational arrangements and responsibilities for community engagement activity, with a view to establishing a more coordinated and coherent approach.	A review of organisational arrangements and responsibilities for community engagement with a view to establishing a more coordinated and coherent approach is fully supported. The Appointments Committee will be reviewing the Council's organisational structure.
WHO: Appointments Committee Leader WHEN BY: July 2008	
8. The Council rises to the challenge of community engagement through the establishment of a comprehensive community engagement strategy.	Development of a strategy for community engagement will be considered after the White Paper has been released, so that the Government's expectations can inform the strategy. It is recommended that this be carried out through a cross-office group, including officers who are working in the field as well as central policy officers.
WHO: Strategic Management Team Communities Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: July 2009	

<p>9. The County Council recognises the important role that Town and Parish Councils have in promoting community engagement, and undertake a comprehensive review of current arrangements, with consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of grants to parish and Town Councils to enable them to access information from the Council electronically • Introducing a Charter outlining the relationships between the County Council and Town and Parish Councils • The provision of facilities that enable all Town and Parish Councils to share a common web address – e.g. www.parish.cambridgeshire.gov.uk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is unfortunately unable to fund grants to Parish and Town Councils from within existing budget. • The recommendation to introduce a charter is welcomed and we will work with the Cambridge Association of Local Councils (CALC) to ensure this is developed. • The potential of the community portal to provide a common web address for all Town and Parish councils will be discussed with CALC.
<p>WHO: Director of Customer Service Communities Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: March 2009</p>	
<p>10. The petitioning policy is amended so that petitioners to Cabinet and Council receive a formal written response, where appropriate, within 10 working days.</p>	<p>Group Leaders reviewed the Council's petition policy at their meeting on 20 June and agreed the proposals.</p>
<p>WHO: Director of Governance Leader WHEN BY: October 2008</p>	
<p>11. There is an expectation that all Members of the Council attend Town and Parish Council and Neighbourhood Panel meetings within their division, or provide reports, about County Council business, in their absence.</p>	<p>It is recommended that Cabinet endorse this and encourage all members to attend Town and Parish Council and Neighbourhood Panel meetings.</p>
<p>WHO: Cabinet WHEN BY: September 2008</p>	
<p>12. A FREEPOST address is provided for use by County Councillors engaging in non-political work.</p>	<p>It is recommended that Cabinet consider this as part of the Integrated Planning Process; however, there will be a need for clear guidance and agreed protocols even if funding can be identified.</p>
<p>WHO: Corporate Services Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: March 2009</p>	

<p>13. A consistent countywide approach is taken to broadening the terms of reference to Neighbourhood Panels to incorporate activity across the Police, three tiers of local government and other public sector partners. In order to emphasise this new approach, consideration should be given to renaming Neighbourhood Panels as Community Forums.</p>	<p>This will be raised with the Neighbourhood Panels Task and Finish Group, in order that the recommendation can be taken to Cambridgeshire Together.</p>
<p>WHO: Neighbourhood Panels Task & Finish Group / Cambridgeshire Together Communities Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: March 2009</p>	
<p>14. Provision is made to develop the Council's website to enable consultations to be conducted online, including a search function and feedback mechanism.</p>	<p>This recommendation is already being incorporated into planned further developments to the Council's website.</p>
<p>WHO: Head of Direct Channel Strategy Communities Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: March 2009</p>	
<p>15. The Council works with District, Town and Parish Councils in engaging with all communities through establishing a presence at large local events across the county.</p>	<p>The Leader has asked the Chief Executive to consider this further.</p>
<p>WHO: Chief Executive Leader WHEN BY: March 2009</p>	
<p>16. The Council conducts a thorough review of the participatory budgeting pilot in Huntingdonshire before extending this activity to other areas of the County.</p>	<p>The Government expectation of participatory budgeting will be clarified in the anticipated white paper. The current understanding is that the Government's ambition is for every Local Authority area to give local people a real say over public budgets by 2012. Therefore, once Government's expectations are confirmed, the planned participatory budgeting pilot in Huntingdonshire will be reviewed.</p>
<p>WHO: Adult and Communities Policy Development Group Communities Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: Upon completion of the pilot</p>	

<p>17. Town and Parish Council plans are more effectively integrated with District level sustainable community strategies. Consideration should be given to developing community plans at Neighbourhood Panel (Community Forum) level.</p>	<p>This will be raised with the Neighbourhood Panels Task and Finish Group, in order that the recommendation can be taken to Cambridgeshire Together.</p>
<p>WHO: Neighbourhood Panels Task & Finish Group / Cambridgeshire Together Communities Portfolio Holder WHEN BY: March 2009</p>	

POST OFFICE CLOSURE ANNOUNCEMENT

The locations of post offices selected for closure in Cambridgeshire and announced on 8 July are as follows. In all 23 post offices in the county have been proposed for closure.

CAMBRIDGE CITY (Total 3)

Regent Street, Cambridge
Hills Road, Cambridge
Trumpington Street, Cambridge

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE (Total 3)

Hall Street, Soham
St Johns Road, Ely
Little Downham (*mobile outreach service proposed*)

FENLAND (Total 4)

Harecroft Road, Wisbech
St Peters Road, March
Benwick (*hosted outreach service proposed*)
Christchurch (*mobile outreach service proposed*)

HUNTINGDONSHIRE (Total 7)

Catworth (*mobile outreach service proposed*)
Earith (*partner outreach service proposed*)
Great Gidding (*mobile outreach service proposed*)
Great Gransden (*partner outreach service proposed*)
Great Stukeley
Holme (*mobile outreach service proposed*)
Ramsey St Mary's (*partner outreach service proposed*)

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE (Total 6)

Arrington (*hosted outreach service proposed*)
Elsworth (*hosted outreach service proposed*)
Fen Drayton
Grantchester
Impington
Over (*mobile outreach service proposed*)

In addition 3 post offices were proposed for closure in the Peterborough City area.

Note:

Mobile outreach service: Mobile Post Office van with counter service inside, parked at pre-determined safe location and available at fixed periods e.g. 90 minutes at specified hours on set days of the week.

Hosted outreach service: Mobile counter position, located in a local community building or business such as village shop, church hall or garage and open specified hours on set days e.g. 2-6 hours per week.

Partner outreach service: Fixed counter or kiosk, located in a retail outlet, shop or café and generally open the same hours as partner's business.