

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: 31st October 2006

Time: 10.00 a.m. – 11.22 a.m.

Present: Councillor V H Lucas (Chairman)

Councillors: L W McGuire, L J Oliver, D R Pegram,
J A Powley, J M Tuck and F H Yeulett.

Also in Attendance

Councillors: *J Batchelor, *M Ballard, A Kent, M
Smith and J West.

* for part of the meeting only

Apologies: Councillors S F Johnstone, J E Reynolds, J K
Walters

244. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

As a result of the absence of both the Leader and the Deputy Leader, a new chairman was required to be elected for the current meeting,

It was therefore resolved to:

Elect Councillor Lucas as the Chairman for the duration of the current meeting.

245. MINUTES 26th SEPTEMBER 2006

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 26th September were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

246. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

247. PETITIONS

None received.

248. ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES (CYPS) SCRUTINY YOUTH SERVICES SUB-GROUP – INTERIM REPORT

Cabinet received a report with recommendations concerning the future funding and structure of the Youth Service, following CYPS Scrutiny

Committee's consideration of the work of the CYPS Scrutiny Youth Service Sub-Group.

The CYPS Scrutiny Committee had agreed to set up a Sub-Group to monitor the development of the Youth Service following the addition through the Medium Term Corporate Priorities (MTCP) process of £303,000 to the Youth Service budget for 2006/07 to fund additional youth workers. The objective of the Sub-Group was to support the Youth Service in moving from a 'Reasonable' Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) rating to a 'Good' OfSTED rating, through investigating and monitoring the Youth Service's quality of youth work and use of resources.

At the invitation of Cabinet, Councillor Batchelor on behalf of the Sub-Group highlighted the key findings arising from the review as discussed at the CYPS Scrutiny Committee meeting on 25 September 2006, which included:

- Evidence of high standards of Youth work in the localities visited.
- Impressive quality of leadership across the locations visited.
- Lack of core funding for the delivery of Youth Service projects.
- A large proportion of Youth Workers within the Youth Service were externally funded leading to uncertainties and presenting risks to the delivery of youth work itself, as well as preventing job security amongst staff externally funded.
- The need for significant development and funding input in order to achieve the professional level of service expected of the Youth Service by 2010.

Having discussed the findings, the CYPS Scrutiny Committee agreed to submit the following representations to Cabinet. The recommendations were in respect of funding prevention measures and strengthening funding as follows:

- a) Recommending that increased incremental funding for the Council's Youth Service is sought through this year's MTCP process. Despite last year's increase of £303,000, the 2006/07 budget of £2.3 million was still significantly below the £4.5 million recommended by the Department of Education and Skills (DfES).
- b) Expressing concern that the Youth Service would still require professional leadership from the centre when locality arrangements were implemented.
- c) Expressing concern that youth work managers could spend up to 40% of their time fundraising, and suggested that this was not an efficient use of their time. It was suggested that fundraising activities should be carried out centrally by appropriately qualified professionals.
- d) Expressing concern that in many parts of the County, youth services did not operate on Saturdays and during school holidays, when they could be most needed.

The recent Oxmoor Fusion programme was highlighted as an example of the positive value that could be achieved of prevention initiatives with young people which had resulted in a reported 48% drop in anti social behaviour complaints and a 43% drop in reported criminal damage. In response, it was agreed that this initiative had been very successful and had also been delivered at Fenland. The intention was to build on this provision and it was hoped that it could be extended across the County.

A Cabinet member raised a question of whether the scrutiny committee would be exploring other external funding sources for the service and also looking into the possible streamlining of bidding processes. From scrutiny's viewpoint, Councillor Batchelor replied that they as they considered that securing additional funding was taking away effort from front line provision, they were suggesting that officers should investigate the feasibility of such youth service fund raising activity becoming an in-house professional officer function.

Cabinet received a suggested tabled response at its meeting. Clarification was received that the £500k funding (note the full figure is £535,051) referred to in the response for the Youth Bank (Youth Opportunities Fund) would be allocated to Cambridgeshire for 2006/7 and would be received by the County Council as 50% revenue funding and 50% capital funding, but would be for young people to determine how the funding was spent.

While Cabinet acknowledged the difficult funding position the youth service found itself in, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services reminded the meeting that the Council was entering into a very difficult budget process and calls for increased resources to services would have to be considered against a background of a severe shortfall in resources expected, as a result of the forthcoming budget settlement. He pointed out that there would be an opportunity to consider budget prioritisation at the forthcoming Children and Young People's Services Budget Advisory Panel to which all members had been invited.

It was resolved:

To agree the following as the response from Cabinet to the specific CYPS Scrutiny Committee recommendations:

- a) The Council has taken steps recently to improve the base funding of the youth service as the sub group acknowledges. The emerging budget pressures relating to making statutory provision for children looked after and social care provision for children with high levels of disabilities will make further investment in the youth service very difficult

in 2007/8. However, the Government has made £500,000 available to support youth banks to enable young people to develop their own activities. The Council has also been successful in being one of the 10 pilot authorities for the Youth Opportunity Cards scheme, which would put considerable purchasing power in the hands of the most disadvantaged young people. Although funding was likely to be time limited, it would create opportunities for engagement in positive youth activities.

- b) In the light of the spending pressures, the Council would need to protect front line delivery and this means specifically that the vacant post to develop the youth work curriculum, support the introduction of accredited qualifications and assure quality will be deleted. As this work is crucial to implementing the post Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) Inspection Action Plan and making progress towards the Best Value (BV) performance indicator relating to accredited outcomes. Therefore there will need to be a re-prioritisation of duties of the other central youth work officer post to undertake curriculum development and quality assurance work.
- c) The County Council will expect locality team managers to ensure their staff achieved an appropriate balance between service delivery and fund raising so that the latter was not out of proportion to the time spent. Often localities were in the best position to raise funding for local initiatives (e.g. joint funding with town and parish councils). Fund raising therefore needs to operate at both county and local level. An example of the former is the Youth Opportunity Card.
- d) If weekend and holiday work was expanded, then activity during term time and the week would need to be reduced. It is the responsibility of locality teams with the resources available to identify local needs and prioritise activities to meet these needs taking into account the need to achieve performance indicators in relation to participation rates and accreditation.

249. COUNCIL DECISIONS

There were no decisions for Council.

250. WASTE PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE (PFI) PROJECT

Cabinet received a report noting the progress undertaken on concluding the Preferred Bidder Letter with Donarbon Ltd, which was required in order to be able to confirm their appointment as the preferred Bidder for the Waste PFI Project.

An oral update provided at the meeting confirmed that a number of outstanding issues outlined in the report were close to being resolved and that a preferred bidder letter was expected to be able to be signed shortly.

It was Resolved:

- i) To note progress with concluding the Preferred Bidder Letter and the arrangements for managing the detailed negotiations with Donarbon.
- ii) To authorise the Deputy Chief Executive (OECS), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Services and the Waste PFI Procurement Board, to sign the Preferred Bidder Letter once any remaining outstanding issues have been resolved.

251. HUNTINGDON TO ST IVES BUS PRIORITY MEASURES – REVISION OF COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER (CPO)

Cabinet received a report requesting approval to the purchase of a revised area of land from the owners of The Falcon Public House, Huntingdon, using Compulsory Purchase Order Powers if a negotiated settlement could not be reached.

Cabinet noted that the purchase of the required land by negotiation had to date, proved unsuccessful and a final without prejudice offer was about to be made. During the course of the discussions and as a result of a further safety audit, it had become apparent that it would be beneficial to acquire a slightly larger area of land than originally planned, to improve the operation and safety of the access onto Walden Road.

The further safety audit showed that traffic exiting the public house onto Walden Road using the current land acquisition proposal would move straight into a cycle lane and therefore the current visibility to carry out this manoeuvre was inadequate in safety terms and to the cyclists/motorists proceeding along Walden Road. Therefore, as set out in the plan included in the report and as further explained by

photographs tabled at the meeting, a further two metres depth of land was required to enable vehicles leaving the premises to be able to see oncoming cyclists.

In reply to questions raised, it was noted that delivery vehicles used both the above-mentioned entrance and also the one in Market Hill, and that the reason for objecting to the County Council proposals would be due to the loss of car parking space.

It was resolved:

To approve the purchase of the larger area of land, (area 48m²) shown on Plan 2 attached to the officer's report, from the owners of The Falcon Public House, Huntingdon, using Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Powers if this became necessary.

252. DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Cabinet received a report setting out progress being made in relation to Cambridgeshire's Disability Equality Scheme.

It was noted that the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) (DDA) placed a duty on all public authorities to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme by 4th December 2006. The Act required public authorities to take a more proactive approach to promoting disability. Like its forerunner the Race Equality Scheme (RES) the Disability Equality Scheme (DES) provided a framework to enable the Council to meet the requirement to promote quality.

The draft DES had been developed in consultation with members of the Physical and Sensory Impairment Board and the Disabled Employees and Members Group. It had incorporated fundamental equality principles and specific disability duties and principles as set out in the County's Disability Strategy. It was considered that it would allow for the most effective use of resources and was considered sustainable within existing budgets, as the Government had provided no new monies for implementing the DES. Any new developments in the future identified beyond what was already included, would have to be considered along with all other proposals for additional funding within the overall MTCP process. Cabinet noted that the scheme would be reviewed annually and progress on the action plan also reported annually.

In response to an additional question raised, it was noted that the County Council was being very proactive with marketing/information being made available, to encourage the increased take up of Direct Payments to help support people in having the maximum control over their lives and enabling them to continue to live in their own homes.

As an update to a question raised at the recent Council meeting, it was reported that the percentage of the County Council workforce (not including those staff employed in schools) who were voluntarily registered as disabled was 2.06% (74 staff).

It was resolved:

- I) To note the contents of the Draft Disability Equality Scheme.
- II) To authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Equality and Diversity, (Cllr Victor Lucas) to approve the final Disability Equality Scheme prior to publication on 4th December 2006.

253. SHARED SERVICES AND THE E-BUSINESS SUITE

Cabinet received a report in respect of a proposal on the way forward for the development of shared services in Corporate Services in order to deliver substantial cost savings.

Plans for making efficiency gains in Corporate Services had been detailed in the 2006/07 Budget Book and Service Plans. These included a total of £1m efficiency gains over three years to be delivered by Strategic Partnerships / Shared Services. The proposed Council's objectives for this area of work were for:

- cashable savings of at least £1m by 2008/09;
- sustainable savings in the future to be delivered by aggregations of scale and/or income from new customers; and
- improvement in performance of transactional processes to industry standard best practice.

During this year, officers had been considering a number of areas where sharing with other authorities could yield savings or additional income for Cambridgeshire, including joint procurement opportunities and sharing capacity in professional services. The results of the work indicated three possible scenarios to achieve the objectives.

Cabinet considered the following scenario options:

Scenario 1: the County Council would procure services from the Shared Business Service (SBS), the joint venture between Department of Health and Xansa, and form the first Local Government customer of a new division. Northamptonshire would consider joining the service as a second customer.

Scenario 2: Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire would procure a partner for a new joint venture via European Union (EU) procurement. The partners agree the governance model and how the control of the new venture will be shared.

Scenario 3: officers would commission Fujitsu, the company that supports the County Council's e-business suite, to implement a shared version of the software so that Northamptonshire could use the same platform. Once implemented the County Council would work together to prepare for a joint venture approach in the future (i.e. as in Scenario Two). Under Scenario Three the County Council would need to engage an additional third party to help us improve processes to realise savings and improve performance within the timescale we are planning and this would have a cost.

While Cabinet noted that all three scenarios could ultimately deliver the benefits the County Council was looking for, it concluded that Scenario One was more likely to deliver them within the timescale sought and on the most cost-effective basis. Scenarios Two and Three were likely to take longer and use greater resources in terms of people and money to implement. The drive to achieve such efficiencies and savings was fully in accordance with the Government's agenda for modernising public services and, more importantly, was about continuing to deliver high quality, low-cost, public services to the people of Cambridgeshire.

It was noted that the example given of a current agreement with a public service was one of the few that had been agreed, but that a number of private sector companies had used a similar model and achieved substantial savings in the back office area. In answer to guarantees sought by Cabinet, officers were able to provide assurances that any contract agreed, would be robust to ensure that the level of savings identified would be achieved. In terms of avoiding risk, the experience and expertise of other organisations that had already used the model would be drawn upon.

Employees and Trades Unions would be involved in the next stage which was a 3 month period for design of the specification for shared business services, including agreement of the scope of the project. Reassurances were provided that the County Council as a good employer intended to ensure that, if the Council were to enter into a partnership with a private sector organisation, any employees to be transferred as a consequence of the decision would receive full legal protection in accordance with TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment Act).

It was resolved:

- i) To endorse the proposal in Scenario One as the preferred way forward for shared services in Corporate

Services to deliver the following objectives:

- Cashable savings of at least £1m by 2008/09
- Sustainable savings in the future to be delivered by aggregations of scale and/or income from new customers
- Improvement in performance of transactional processes to industry standard best practice

ii) To authorise a delegation to the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Services) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services to pursue negotiations with the Shared Business Services (SBS) Joint Venture concerning shared back office transactions, including:

- Sending a non-prejudicial letter of intent to the SBS indicating that the County Council wish to commence negotiations with them for the provision of transactional processing
- Commencing negotiations concerning commercial, governance and financial arrangements
- Commencing formal consultation with relevant Trades Unions and employees concerning the implications of proposed employment transfers
- Preparing to assign the County Council's existing e-business suite support contract to the SBS and developing options for assignment or otherwise of our existing payroll contract
- Developing proposals to lease property assets to the SBS
- Engaging with external auditors to ensure best value considerations can be satisfied.

iii) To receive a further update report at the January Cabinet meeting.

254. TRAVEL FOR WORK STRATEGY / SHIRE HALL TRAVEL FOR WORK PLAN

Cabinet received a report seeking approval for the County Council's Travel for Work Strategy.

Cabinet noted that the Government was encouraging employers to develop travel plans, aimed at reducing car use for travel to work and for travel on work business. Recognising the particular role that the County Council could play as a community leader and to ensure a consistent approach to the development of the County Council's own Travel for Work Plans, an overarching Travel for Work Strategy had been developed. As a clear output from the proposed Travel for Work Strategy, site-specific Travel for Work Plans would be developed and

implemented for the main County Council sites (where there were 50 or more County Council employees).

It was reported that The Travel for Work Survey in October 2005 marked the end of the first Shire Hall site plan. The results from the survey showed that whilst the plan did not manage to meet the challenging targets set, car alone commuting had decreased and there have been increases in public transport use, walking and flexible working. It was noted that as the Shire Hall site was relatively well served by alternatives to the car, there was a strong emphasis in the second Shire Hall Travel to Work Plan on developing the aforementioned alternatives, whilst reducing the attractiveness of drive alone travel wherever possible and practical. It was confirmed that the costs of the scheme were fully contained within existing budget allocations.

During initial discussions on the targets being proposed, there were calls for tighter business mileage targets from those currently proposed. In reply it was indicated that comparative analysis with other county councils showed that the County Council's business mileage was lower and that the target for 2010/11 would be a significant reduction to current arrangements.

With regard to the targets being proposed, there was recognition by Cabinet and officers that the proposed changes represented significant behavioural changes for employees and customers, and would take a significant amount of time to implement. Changes would also need to be sensitive to the needs of staff required to attend meetings etc. A member requested that consideration would need to be given to the greater use of audio/video conferencing to reduce the need for meetings on site.

In agreeing the report, Cabinet received assurances that as part of the set out monitoring arrangements, the targets would be reviewed on a regular basis. Following on from this and taking into account some concerns that the targets could be seen as being not particularly stretching, it was confirmed that further refinements could be made to the agreed targets, following the introduction of improved public transport that could be utilised by staff e.g. the Guided Busway.

It was resolved:

To approve the County Council's Travel for Work Strategy and second Shire Hall Travel for Work Plan.

255. CONSULTATION RESPONSE ON BELL SCHOOL PLANNING APPLICATION

Cabinet received details in respect of a planning application received

by Cambridge City Council on the 31st August 2006 from the Bell School Educational Trust for the development of land (west of Babraham Road, south of Greenlands and south west of the Bell School), to Cambridge City Council.

The site known as the Bell School was one of a number that made up the Cambridge Southern Fringe urban extension as defined in the Structure Plan and the adopted Cambridge City Local Plan, and was allocated for residential development in the latter document. A colour map showing the detail of the application site was tabled.

It was noted that the County Council was a statutory consultee on planning applications and would make representations on the proposals to Cambridge City Council. It was agreed that for the reasons set out in the officer's report and the subsequent tabled addendum, the County Council should object to the planning application. The reasons included:

- Omission of financial contributions to pre-school, children's centre provision and post 16 provision.
- Omitting the requirement for the financial provision for a library and Lifelong Learning Centre
- Omission of contributions for youth facilities and staff.
- Omission of contributions to strategic open space and countryside access.
- Omission of financial contribution towards construction of waste management Infrastructure and particularly a Household Waste Recycling Centre to serve the southern fringe.
- No reference to a temporary waste management facility on site for recycling building materials etc and for the provision of storage facilities for household waste.
- Omission of any provision for Adult Social Services
- No commitment given to sustainable development.
- That the transport assessment submitted with the application was inadequate.
- Unacceptable access proposals.

Concerns were expressed by a member that many of the objections were in relation to omissions in respect of the developer making section 106 provision and asked whether the applicant was aware of the requirements for such provision. In answer, it was indicated that the developer's agent had been involved in the consultation on the Area Development Framework that stipulates the S106 requirements for the development anticipated in Cambridge Southern Fringe. Further to this, the applicant had also participated in the public consultation and the Inquiry for the Cambridge City Local Plan. The current application was to be seen as a first response, requiring further work and negotiation with the applicant to ensure appropriate Section 106 payments were secured.

Reference was made to the local member raising concerns that he had not been consulted at the time of the preparation of the report. The lead member orally reported that since the publication of the agenda, the local member had met with officers and the local member had no specific issues he wished to raise.

It was resolved:

- i) To approve the County Council's consultation response to the Bell School Planning Applications as set out in the officer's report, along with the new additional paragraphs A10.5 and A10.6 set out below to be inserted after the existing Paragraph A10.4. with the other paragraphs in the section to be re-numbered:

A10.5

Following the writing of the Cabinet report a number of questions have been raised about the status of the access arrangements proposed by the developer as part of this planning application. The position is that no formal response has been provided by the County Council on the access arrangements. There is outstanding work required on the Transport Assessment and only when this has been completed will the County Council be in a position to agree a final design of the access arrangements for this proposal.

A 10.6

The County Council will also be assisting Cambridge City Council in consideration of any other transport comments or objections raised during the public consultation on the application.

- ii) To approve authority being given to the Lead Member, Environment and Community Services in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive, Environment and Community Services to make any minor textual changes to the consultation response prior to submission.

256. TOP 30 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2006/07 AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 2

Cabinet considered a report on the Council's "Top 30" Key Performance Indicators for the second quarter 2006/07, noting the progress in relation to the County Council's second Local Public Service Agreement.

Cabinet noted that of the 'Top 30' performance indicators (PIs) for 2006/07, 6 were reported annually and the Council did not yet have results. Surveys for one other indicator would be carried out later in the year. From the remaining 23 indicators, cabinet noted the following trends:-

- 9 PIs are improving
- 6 PIs are maintaining their performance levels
- 7 PIs are worsening
- 1 has insufficient information to determine

The chairman urged Cabinet members to check to ensure that the performance indicators prepared for the report were accurate, as there had been a number of errors in previous reports. The point was made that in respect of the continued setting of higher performance indicator targets, these were imposed by Government and were not those that the County Council would necessarily independently choose to set. It was highlighted that even when indicators were shown as not having been fully met, they usually represented continued improvement of performance and were often higher than for other similar county councils.

Performance against several of the indicators has been highlighted where performance was off target:

In answer to a query raised by a member, Officers agreed to look into whether Key Stage 2 marking anomalies identified by some Huntingdonshire schools was a more widespread concern.

It was resolved:

- i) Note current performance on the Council's Top 30 Key Performance Indicators for the second quarter 2006/07;
- ii) To note the progress towards our second Local Public Service Agreement.
- iii) Officers agreed to look into whether Key Stage 2 marking anomalies identified by some Huntingdonshire schools was a more widespread concern in the County and whether it was having a detrimental impact on overall Countywide targets.

**257. ANNUAL ADOPTION AND PERMANENCE REPORT APRIL 2005/
MARCH 2006**

Cabinet received details of the annual adoption and permanence report for 2005/6.

Cabinet noted that the Local Authority was required to produce an Annual Permanence and Adoption Report setting out developments and changes in adoption and permanent fostering from April 2005 – March 2006. It identified areas requiring further development and major goals for 2006 – 2007. Cabinet noted that the service continued to improve aided by the Invest to saver initiatives now in place.

An oral correction was made to paragraph 5.1 of the officer's report whereby the date in the second line referring to 20 families having been approved, was corrected to being for the year 2003/04 and not 2005/06 as printed in the report.

Cabinet expressed their thanks for the excellent work undertaken by the Adoption Support Staff in their work in supporting people who had agreed to take on adoption responsibilities.

It was resolved:

To note and endorse the annual Adoption and Permanence Report for 2005/06 as summarised in the current officer's report.

258. DELEGATIONS FROM CABINET TO CABINET MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Cabinet received a report detailing the progress on delegations.

It was resolved:

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

259. DRAFT CABINET AGENDA PLAN 31st OCTOBER 2006

It was resolved:

To note the agenda plan as set out on the agenda with the following amendments:

Item 8. "Hills Road Bridge – Public Consultation" - moved to 27th February 2007 Cabinet meeting
Item 18 "Budget Monitoring" will now be an "other decision" report as there will be some virements that require Cabinet approval.

The following were noted as additions since the agenda publication:

Under key decisions a report titled: “Early Termination Discretionary Compensation”

There would be additional reports under other decisions titled:

“Consultation response to Planning Applications for the Clay Farm and Showground Sites Trumpington”

“Growth Agenda: Possible Joint Planning Arrangements”.

There was also likely to be a late information report on the “Local Government Grant Settlement – Immediate Settlement Headlines”

Chairman
5th December 2006