

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 16th April 2013

Time: 10.00am – 11.25a.m.

Present: Chairman: Councillor N Clarke

Councillors I Bates, D Brown, S Count, M Curtis, D Harty, L W McGuire
T Orgee, M Shuter and S Tierney

The Leader in his introductory remarks in welcoming members of the public to the meeting also took the opportunity to request a few moments of silence as a mark of respect for:

- a) the victims of the Boston Marathon terrorist outrage the previous day,
and then a further short period of silence as a mark of respect:
- b) to the former Prime Minister, Baroness Thatcher who had died the previous week.

755. MINUTES

The minutes of the Cabinet meetings held on 5th March 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

756. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Harty declared a non statutory disclosable interest in line with paragraph 10.1 of the Members Code of Conduct in report number 7 on the agenda (Minute 761) titled "Prescribed Alterations for the round House Primary School, St Neots" as a school governor at the said school.

757. PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

758. TRANSPORT DELIVERY PLAN 2013/14

As the report was not available/finalised/authorised for despatch five clear days in advance of the meeting, the chairman agreed to exercise his discretion under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to allow the above titled report to be considered. It was not possible to provide the reports earlier for the reasons indicated below.

Reasons for Urgency

The Plan needs to be approved at this meeting so that work can progress on implementing the programme for 2013/14.

Reason for Lateness

More consultation required between lead members and officers, and more technical work was required to refine the programme.

Cabinet received details of the Transport Delivery Plan 2013/14 with the draft document provided separately and referred to as Annex A in the main report. This replaced the former Network Service Plan in setting out the maintenance programme for the County's roads. The Plan also fulfilled the Council's requirements to publish an implementation plan for its Local Transport Plan (LTP) as the Transport Delivery Plan brought together the Council's works on transport networks in 2013/14 into a single document, based on the LTP priorities and the Council's Business Plan. The Plan identified programmes for major schemes, cycleways, minor improvements and maintenance, based on the Local Transport Plan.

It was highlighted that the criteria used for the prioritisation of maintenance schemes were currently divided into the following four categories (with the detail set out in paragraph 1.6 of the introduction to the main Transport Delivery Plan document):

- Economic Development
- Persistent Problems
- Road Safety
- Community Impact.

Each of the schemes had been scored between 0 and 3 to each category with 0 being the lowest, 1 some fulfilment of the category, 2 reasonably fulfilling the category and 3 significantly fulfilling the category.

It was highlighted that for maintenance schemes, the initial Plan (Annex A of the officer report) only included schemes for the first six months of the year scoring 10 or above, having been prioritised in accordance with the existing criteria to be implemented (with the exception of those pending a review of the traffic signal switch off trials). This split programme was in order to allow for a review of the prioritisation process so that where local Members had identified the priority bids for their communities these could be reflected in a revised scoring process, as currently there was concern by the Administration that local knowledge / preferences was not being fully taken into account.

The Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure provided illustrations of where local knowledge could be useful and should be taken into account. One was Bateman Street, Cambridge which local residents in the division believed was the worst in Cambridge but which never featured on final shortlists as it never scored highly enough in the existing categories. He also highlighted that he had recently been invited to a meeting of Willingham Parish Council to discuss the need for repairs to the B1050 where different proposals for repairs, all at considerable cost were discussed and where the parish suggested an off-road solution might be more appropriate. This proposal was in recognition that the foundations of the road were inadequate and therefore any attempt at repairs on the existing road would require expensive work to the underlying foundations.

The review was proposed to be undertaken over the next few months and a programme for the second half of 2013-14 would be brought to Cabinet at a later date. The prioritised list was to be considered against the wider programme of maintenance schemes and other projects such as the Street Lighting PFI and 'Connecting Cambridgeshire Superfast Broadband' to ensure co-ordination of works at similar locations to prevent roads etc being dug up on more than one occasion.

It was also highlighted that in recognition of the success of the new Local Highway Improvement Schemes (LHIS) programme, additional funds had been identified from residual funds from previous LTP settlements not required, as funding had been secured from external sources and £275,000 of these funds was being recommended for allocation to LHIS to double the current allocation in all district council areas and the market town category.

The Leader of the Council made reference to current uncertainty regarding how much the County Council may need to contribute to the A14, in the context of recent statements from the City Council relating to their not wishing to contribute to the funding package, and the need to retain flexibility for this or other changes.

He raised the need for an additional recommendation to agree a delegation to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure to be able to take account of currently unknown variables that might impact on the current Transport Delivery Plan.

The Chairman now invited other Non-Cabinet Members who had requested in advance to speak on this report the opportunity to provide their comments. Councillor Bourke indicated that Councillor Gymer, who was the first on the list, had contacted him to pass on her apologies as she was unable to attend due to work commitments.

As the next speaker on the list, Councillor Bourke was invited to speak. He began by welcoming the long overdue investment set out in the Plan. He then expressed his 'serious reservations regarding recommendation b) of the report (proposing to review the prioritisation scheme to ensure that the schemes which local members had highlighted as being a priority for local communities could be reflected within the scoring scheme) if this involved giving local members greater priority in any revised criteria.

Expanding on the above he indicated that while his Group could support minor tweaks or local member involvement which helped refine the detail of a scheme, he expressed great concerns regarding any proposals to change the scoring mechanism away from an empirical based approach to one that involved giving greater weight to effectively those "who could shout loudest". While he recognised the importance of localism, in his opinion local consultation should be undertaken early in the process and that there was a further role of the local community in monitoring the effectiveness of schemes. He indicated that the Administration needed to stick to evidence rather than "fiddling" with the criteria, suggesting that Cabinet were changing the rules as they did not like the results it had produced.

He also made the point that any suggestion that spend in Cambridge could be

withheld if Cambridge City Council did not contribute funding for the A14 “would be an extraordinary decision”.

In response one Cabinet Member challenged Councillor Bourke to provide any evidence of the statement that Cabinet did not like the current results, pointing out that Cabinet had no problems with the list of schemes before them and while not having an issue with Councillor Bourke disagreeing with Recommendation b), were instead trying to look to creating a structure that gave more weight to including the views of local members / the local community. Councillor Bourke in response indicated that there was conflict between the strategic view looking at evidence such as safety, benefits to the economy etc and then giving equal weight to local members whose views were often subjective. He suggested that Cabinet would not be sending back the criteria for further consideration if they liked them, as currently drawn up.

In being asked to provide an example to illustrate his viewpoint, Councillor Bourke suggested that there could be a case in two adjacent divisions where one scheme drawn up to alleviate a higher local accident rate but which also had an important economic benefit was passed over for a scheme prepared to alleviate issues in an area with a lower accident rate and lower economic benefit as a result of local members “throwing their weight behind the second scheme” so it became the preferred scheme”

In response, it was clarified that there were currently no firm proposals for the new criteria, a review was being suggested in order to prepare more detailed proposals, which if amounting to a key decision, would require approval by Cabinet. The aim was not to create a new individual category with a higher rating than any of the existing four categories, but to develop one that would allow members to talk to parishes / local people to seek to obtain what their particular preference was in relation to any competing local schemes. The aim was to give local people some influence over schemes being proposed and also take account of the valuable input in relation to their own local knowledge / particular local features, that officers and Members from outside the area might not be aware of.

Councillor Jenkins was the next Member on the list invited to speak. He suggested that the paper was good in parts, going on to say he supported the existing four criteria as they allowed the scoring process to be objective, while also having sympathy with views that on occasion worthy schemes were outscoring important projects. What worried him was that the list of schemes presented, were not supported by any evidence/ data in relation to their greater viability compared with those schemes which had been rejected. This he believed was a bad example of opaque government and he would have liked to have seen an additional appendix providing the said, supporting information. He also expressed surprise that all the investment appeared to be in the north of the county and would have been better able to accept this if he had seen the rationale used to score particular schemes.

In response the Leader made the point that just because certain schemes were not currently in the Plan this did not mean that they had been rejected, highlighting that as had been indicated earlier in the debate, the list of schemes in the Plan before the Cabinet only included the highest scoring schemes. These were recommended for

approval at the current time to allow officers to start them and not delay them in waiting for the further review of remaining schemes, as the report from it was not likely to be for a number of months. He explained that he was also disappointed as a local member that no schemes had been included from his electoral division but the fact was the worst condition roads were located in the north of the county.

In response Councillor Jenkins accepted that the current report was only an interim report, but stated that if all the schemes had been included, some members might not have such concerns with it. As this had been raised as an issue by more than one member, Councillor Clarke was happy to agree that following the meeting officers should ensure all members were provided with a full list including details of the scoring criteria used as soon as practicable

Councillor Stone was the next member to speak, thanking Councillor Orgee the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure for the help he had provided in his area and highlighting that there was a case for saying two roads: Beech Lane in Pampisford and Hunts Lane in Hinxton, were amongst the worst maintained in the County. He also welcomed the additional funding to be allocated to the Local Highways Improvement Schemes Programme.

Referring to page 5 of the Plan he did however express concern that only £131K had been allocated in 2013/14 to Cycleway Improvements for the whole county. He highlighted that in his division cycleways had the support of big business organisations such as Babraham Institute and TWI, referring to one cycleway scheme proposal to run along the A505, as this represented an economic opportunity. He therefore urged Cabinet to provide a clearer steer on whether this particular scheme was to be supported, highlighting that on both sides of the A505 plans had been approved for housing and industrial units which represented a lack of joined up thinking as these would prevent future dualling of the carriageway etc.

In response officers explained that further monies were available for cyclepaths expenditure in the entry on page 8 of the Plan under the title 'Carriageway and Footway Maintenance including Cycle Paths' which included a total budget for the County of over £7m. In addition the 'Integrated Transport Block' and the 'Minor Improvements Programme' also included cycleway monies. It was also clarified that the Plan only included details of the County Council Capital Programme and did not include developer contribution monies or extra central government grants.

As a result of what was being said above, The Leader who had also had issues with identifying all the amounts available for particular categories of spend, requested that Alex Plant the Executive Director for Economy, Transport and Environment should take charge of making the document more user friendly which should include revising the preamble and the Cabinet Member's introduction to make reference to other sources of funding, and explaining if necessary, that some might be accessed later in the year.

Councillor Curtis made the point that monies on cycling tended to be focussed on City deals and that he was due to be meeting with the relevant Minister in the next month to talk about aspirations for cycling and the need to think beyond cities and champion the role rural cycleways had in providing links to accessing businesses /

jobs. Councillor Stone agreed that there was a need for Government to recognise that those cycleways outside cities were not just for leisure pursuits.

Further debate was undertaken regarding the issue of local member involvement in the scoring process with Councillor Tierney highlighting that he had been one of the main advocates for the suggested revised approach, highlighting that there were many types of empirical evidence that local members could also draw on in terms of known rat runs / strategic needs in terms of the local communities. He also highlighted that some rural roads would never score highly enough using the current criteria and therefore there was a need to identify a process which also included local knowledge.

Councillor McGuire made the point that the Network Services Plan had only lapsed in the last month and therefore he hoped the information it included could be utilised for the benefit of local members and would be disappointed if a lot of the previous data was lost as a result of the merger of the two documents used to create the current Plan. He also highlighted that the current Persistent Problems criteria heading had always included input from local members.

Councillor Curtis stressed the point that it was easy to get cycleway projects wrong without local knowledge and that early consultation with town and parish councils before the scheme design stage was vital and this also helped with their support avoiding any impression of a top down imposed scheme.

In terms of spend on cycleways, Councillor Bates reported that £9.5m had been spent in four years which was a huge amount of money and with more to be delivered by seeking to join with other financial packages being made available from Central Government, Europe, districts and businesses.

Councillor Orgee as part of summing up made the point that all the current criteria had an element of judgement in the evidence that was provided and were not based on absolute facts, so the intention to add a fifth local criteria was to add a further judgment category and that as already highlighted, to try to give some chance for well supported local schemes from parishes to come forward for initial consideration. He also clarified that those schemes that already scored the highest (10 or above) from the four existing criteria had already been included in the current plan for approval at the current meeting and were therefore not losing their place as a result of any future proposals.

Cabinet supported the need for an additional recommendation to agree a delegation to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure authorising him to make minor alterations to the Plan should it become necessary due to any uncertainties around funding the Plan.

It was agreed to:

- a) Approve the Implementation of The Transport Delivery Plan 2013/14, including the first six months of maintenance schemes.

- b) Agree to a review of the prioritisation process for maintenance schemes to ensure that the schemes which local members indicated were a priority for local communities could be reflected within the scoring mechanism.;
- c) Agree for a programme for the latter six months of 2013/14 to be brought to Cabinet at a future date.
- d) Approve the allocation of £275,000 from residual funds from previous Local Transport Plans to be allocated to the Local Highway Improvement schemes to double the current allocation to all district council areas and the market town category.
- e) Delegate to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure the authority to make any minor changes necessary to the Transport Delivery Plan.

759. INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – FEBRUARY 2013

Cabinet received the Integrated Resources and Performance Report for the period ending February 2013.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count, outlined particular issues for both revenue and capital budgets drawing Members' attention to the forecast underspend which was now £6.3m, a change in the forecast underspend of -£0.9 m from the previous month mainly due to underspends identified within Children and Young People's (CYPS) and Corporate Services Financing. He took the opportunity to thank all officers / services for their efforts in working more efficiently including not filling vacancies to help towards the savings, highlighting that the majority of the savings had been met through efficiencies, and not cuts to services.

In terms of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance highlighted that 5 out of 12 were green, with the RAG rating representing green for good, amber being okay and red being bad. He particularly highlighted that Libraries in the County had amongst them some of the highest footfalls in the country but the overall rating was only amber due to the high target the Council had set itself. As could be seen in the report many of the amber rating indicators were very close to meeting their target.

He highlighted that Cabinet was being asked to approve a virement of £200k from anticipated vacancy savings across the Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) directorate in the last Quarter of the year to contribute to the Building and Capital budget to help finance the revenue costs associated with mobile classrooms. It was indicated that revised demographic growth, particularly following late applications for school places in September, had resulted in significant pressures on both the revenue and capital costs of the mobiles budget.

The Capital Programme had no major issues to report.

The Cabinet Member paid special tribute to the Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) Services winter gritting team highlighting that during the current severe winter they had undertaken 82 runs compared with 55 to the same period the previous winter. He had also heard many positive comments from local residents and from reports on the radio stating that Cambridgeshire was considered to have looked after its roads very well during the period and especially when compared to the performance of some neighbouring counties. Other Members when making their contributions also congratulated the team on the exceptional service in keeping the roads open during the severe weather period, with one member highlighting that in his division the roads had been superbly gritted day and night. An update by the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure later in the meeting indicated that the final tally was likely to hit 100 runs which was far more than for any previous year and also reflected the investment the Council had undertaken in new vehicles, with four added in the current year and six the year before.

In agreeing to the advance request for Councillor Stone to speak, the Leader of the Council when inviting him to the speakers table noted that this would be his last Cabinet as he was not standing again and therefore he took the opportunity to thank him on behalf of the Council for his excellent fair and impartial chairing of the Audit and Accounts Committee.

Councillor Stone in his introduction also made a point of congratulating the efforts of the County Council's winter gritting team during the recent heavy snows. His particular reason for speaking linked to the point made earlier in the introduction by the Cabinet Member who had stated that many of the savings had been achieved by holding vacancies and as a result of increased efficiencies, as opposed to service cuts. He wished to highlight an example where holding vacancies (from 10 to 8 staff) had led to reduced service provision in relation to public toilets being inconveniently closed at certain times at three of the park and ride sites. He had personally experienced the distress and anger, particularly from elderly people, on the 7a bus service to Babraham Park and Ride site, who after a long bus ride, required such facilities, often as a matter of some urgency. As a result, he was requesting that the two vacancies should be filled in order to ensure these vital public facilities were kept open during the sites' opening hours.

In response, John Onslow Service Director: Infrastructure Management & Operations, ETE, reported that there was currently still an ongoing review of park and ride sites and it was not yet known what its final structure might look like and therefore at the current time it was not considered appropriate to fill current vacancies. While already aware that there was an issue, he would pass on the comments to the attention of Graham Hughes Service Director: Strategy and Development, who had overall responsibility for the park and ride sites. Councillor Stone in response suggested that as there was currently a £800k budget shortfall after bus operator contributions were taken into account, two operatives would not make much difference.

Arising from the report, Cabinet Members provided the following comments:

- Councillor Curtis highlighted that in relation to the Adult Social Care underspend quoted in the current end of February report as being forecast at

£388k for year end (which was already an increase on the previous month which had been a predicted year end underspend of £243k) he was delighted to be able to provide details that the latest underspend for March. This had increased the underspend figure to £454k which was a great achievement and therefore wished to place on record his appreciation to the hard work from Adrian Loades, the Executive Director and his team. This was the first time in a number of years that the Adult Social Care service had come in under budget, as opposed to having to report large overspends. The tremendous effort was congratulated by the rest of Cabinet with one member indicating that it was an almost miraculous result from 9 months ago, with another paying tribute to Councillor Curtis's role in overseeing the improvement. Councillor Curtis responded that while it was a great achievement there was a very challenging year ahead.

- Councillor McGuire, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Engagement made reference to the performance indicator titled "Proportion of customer complaints received in the month before last that were responded to within the minimum response times" as still having a red status. In respect of this, he made the point that this particular indicator was still suffering from a three month data lag, which hid any improvements from the ongoing action that was already underway. As a result, he had discussed with Pat Harding the Corporate Director, Customer Services and Transformation the need to provide more up to date statistics for inclusion in future reports. He also took the opportunity to highlight the excellent efforts of the staff of the Contact Centre on the evening of Red Nose day, who had voluntarily contributed their own time in helping raise money for a very good cause.

It was resolved:

- a) to note the resources and performance information and the remedial action currently being taken; and
- b) to approve the transfer of £200k from anticipated vacancy savings across CYPS to Buildings and Capital to contribute to the revenue costs associated with mobile classrooms.

760. CONNECTING CAMBRIDGESHIRE PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

This report sought agreement to the proposed governance arrangements for the deployment phases of the Connecting Cambridgeshire Programme.

In March 2012 Cabinet approved governance arrangements to oversee the initial phase of the programme. In February 2013, following on from the decision to award the contract to BT, Cabinet requested a review of the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme and project boards to support the deployment phase of the programme.

The report highlighted that since the inception of the Connecting Cambridgeshire Programme in early 2012, the scope of the programme had broadened to include additional digital infrastructure components, including investigation of public access

WiFi options as part of the Super Connected initiative. In recent months central government had also announced an initiative to address “not spots” for mobile voice across the UK. In addition, the first stage deployment of the connectivity which supports public service delivery via the Cambridgeshire Public Services Network (CPSN) Contract had been completed. The success of the multi-agency approach meant there were now additional opportunities to further develop the CPSN services to support innovative and streamlined public service delivery across Cambridgeshire. Accordingly it was proposed that the governance arrangements for the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme should incorporate strategic oversight of the development of all aspects of the digital infrastructure for Cambridgeshire, including fixed broadband, WiFi, public service digital connectivity and mobile voice and data connectivity.

In order to support the procurement phase of the programme and in recognition of the substantial investment of public funds, a robust project approach had been adopted which incorporated the Council’s embedded audit approach within the structure with a Prince 2 aligned project management approach. This included interim audit reporting to the project board and steering group throughout the initial stage of the project. The current report proposed that the existing governance structure and project approach was retained for the deployment phase of the programme, with slight amendments to incorporate the joint working arrangements with BT for the contract delivery and to reflect the incorporation of the Super Connected Cambridge activities.

The shared outcomes of the broadband delivery contract with BT required close working arrangements for success and BT staff were now moving into Shire Hall to help facilitate rollout including liaison with Local Authority planning teams and Highways staff. The overall scope of the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme was considerably larger than the broadband contract rollout. Furthermore there would be a need to retain a commercial oversight of the BT contract to ensure value for money for the public investment. As this required additional contract delivery scrutiny and a clear escalation path to ensure that the broadband rollout delivered to time and within the agreed budget, a joint management board was being proposed with representatives from Connecting Cambridgeshire and BT. The board was to be separate from the Connecting Cambridgeshire Programme Board, which would continue to report to the member led Steering Board for strategic decision making and accountability. The escalation route would be to the Steering Board via the Programme Board.

Members comments included:

- Being pleased to note that Central Government recognised that there were “not spots” (no mobile signal being obtained) that required to be addressed with rural residents still currently suffering from such a lack of coverage. There was discussion that mobile operators were planning mast sharing arrangements which would help alleviate some of the problems. With regard to the Super Connected Cambridge Project clarification was provided that Broadband Delivery UK who set the policy and oversee the funding for the Super Connected Cities programme, have requested that all participating cities review their schemes in the light of emerging guidance about state aid compliance for

WiFi and Ultrafast schemes. It was anticipated that updated guidelines would be issued for the scheme to be reviewed within the next six weeks.

- Requiring clarification of whether all villages in Cambridgeshire were covered by the Broadband contract rollout. In discussion it was confirmed that all villages in Cambridgeshire not covered by commercially rolled out services and paying taxes to Cambridgeshire County Council were included in the scope of the project, even if they were near to the border with another county and if their infrastructure exchange area was in the other county.

It was resolved:

To approve the programme governance arrangements, including setting up a new Joint Management Board Broadband Delivery Contract (BT and CC) as detailed in Section 3 and appendix one to the report.

761. PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE ROUND HOUSE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cabinet received a report seeking approval to proceed with plans to increase the size of the Round House Primary School to provide a total of 420 places by increasing its published Admissions Number (PAN) from 30 to 50 with effect from 1st September 2013 to provide additional places required as a result of the major housing growth planned for St Neots in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

Councillor Downes the Liberal Democrat Education and Learning Spokesperson and the Local Member Councillor Richard West had both confirmed in writing their support for the proposed expansion. In addition the public notice had not received any formal responses or objections.

Referring to the lack of any responses for such a large increase to a school (210 to 420 places) one Cabinet Member queried whether this possibly suggested that there had been insufficient local publicity. In response another Cabinet Member highlighted that in his personal experience parents were the first to complain if they were not happy with the arrangements in a school and therefore suggested that as there were no objections, local parents supported it and therefore Cabinet should also be confident that they could support the expansion proposals.

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the demographic forecast for Reception places for September 2013 and beyond.
- b) Note the fact that no responses were received to the statutory notice published on 6th February 2013.
- c) Approve the prescribed alteration to increase the size of the Round House Primary School to provide a total of 420 places (by the addition of 7 permanent classrooms and an activity space) with effect from 1st September 2013.

762. DRAFT CABINET AGENDA 28th MAY 2013

Members noted the draft agenda for the Cabinet meeting to be held on 28th May orally updated at the meeting with the following changes since the publication of the current agenda with the Leader commenting that he all Cabinet would continue working up to the 2nd May Local Council Elections:

The following two items had been moved to the July Cabinet meeting:

Item 6. Transport Strategy for City & South Cambs Draft Strategy.

Item 7 Cambridge Science Park Station ratification of agreement with DfT

Additional two items added:

For Council decision: Transfer of Democratic and Member Services to LGSS

Key Decision Private and exempt Report: Guided Busway Mediation – delegation arrangements

As it was the last Cabinet meeting before the election the Deputy Leader took the opportunity to thank Councillor Clarke the Leader for the different approach that he had brought to the role in the last two years as the Chairman of Cabinet, which he clarified was in no way a criticism of previous Leaders, but hoped that the public recognised the different approach that had been adopted.

Chairman
28th May 2013