

CABINET: MINUTES

Date: 6th March 2012

Time: 10.00 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

Present: Chairman: Councillor N Clarke

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

Apologies: None

Present by invitation: Councillors J Batchelor, K Bourke, S Hoy, K Reynolds, T Sadiq,
T Stone and S van de Ven

533. MINUTES: 31st JANUARY 2012

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 31st January 2012 were approved as a correct record.

534. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor L W McGuire declared a prejudicial interest under Paragraph 10 of the Code of Conduct in Minute 537, Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Member-Led Review of Home Care Services and Cabinet Response, as his wife was a care worker. He left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

Councillor Bates declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct in minute 545, Wisbech North Ward Drainage Scheme, as a member of the Environment Agency Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

535. PETITIONS

Cabinet received two petitions.

Addressing deprivation in Waterlees ward

The first petition had 54 signatures and read:

Waterlees ward is now in the top 10% most deprived wards in the country. We the undersigned request that the Cambridgeshire County Council Cabinet of 6th March 2012 agree to establish a team charged to develop a co-ordinated long-term plan with the vision to drastically improve the Waterlees ward's deprivation status.

Fenland District Councillor Virginia Bucknor circulated additional information on the deprivation status of Waterlees and addressed Cabinet on behalf of the petitioners.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor L W McGuire, outlined the actions already being taken by the County Council and its partners to address deprivation issues in Waterlees and the wider District and particularly drew attention to the role of the local member, Councillor Hoy. He and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Clarke, invited Councillor Bucknor to work with them to engage the local community fully in taking these initiatives forward.

As there was no relevant agenda item, a written response would be sent within ten working days of the meeting.

Removal of bus subsidies from South Cambridgeshire bus services

The second petition had 498 signatures and read:

We the people of South Cambridgeshire are opposed to the County Council's decision to remove subsidies from our bus services.

Socially necessary bus services are vital in our villages, especially for young people who need access to centres of employment, those with mobility issues who wish to access the wider community and its resources, and for tackling the root problem of 'rural isolation'.

We also believe that the Cambridgeshire Future Transport project, to which some bus funding has been transferred, is fundamentally flawed and not capable of delivering an adequate service.

We call on the Conservative Administration to conduct a systematic review of our residents' transport needs and produce viable alternatives before removing subsidies.

Clare Delderfield addressed Cabinet on behalf of the petitioners, emphasising the importance of bus services for people travelling to work, school, shops and health services and expressing concern that viable alternatives had not yet been developed.

Responding, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Clarke, and the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor Criswell, noted that the County Council itself ran no bus services. 80% of services in the County were delivered on a commercial basis; the Council was having to remove subsidies from the remainder for economic reasons. The Cambridgeshire Future Transport initiative had only just been approved and would be developed flexibly to ensure that real needs were met.

It was resolved

To address the issues raised by the petition as part of the following item.

536. SUBSIDISED BUS SERVICES REVIEW

The Cabinet meeting held on 30th January 2012 had confirmed the decision to phase out funding for all subsidised bus services in Cambridgeshire over three years. Members now considered a strategy for identifying those areas in which subsidies would be withdrawn and the programme for withdrawing subsidies and implementing appropriate alternative services wherever possible.

Five non-Cabinet members spoke on this item:

- Councillor Stone spoke as a local member, noting that his residents would be affected by the first new tranche of subsidy withdrawals. He questioned whether the Council had the capacity either to consult or to assess the social and economic effects of subsidy withdrawals effectively.
- Councillor Batchelor spoke as a local member, also with residents affected by the first new tranche of withdrawals. He expressed concern that County and District Councillors' availability had not been canvassed for the consultation workshops to be held on 15th and 20th March 2012. He drew attention to an earlier petition from Balsham residents and noted that there was almost no public support for the complete withdrawal of subsidies; he asked the Cabinet to listen to public concern about their proposals.
- The Liberal Democrat Transport Spokesman, Councillor van de Ven, emphasised the particular importance of subsidised services in rural areas and expressed concern that community transport, whilst important, did not provide a realistic alternative for all bus users, for example those who travelled daily by bus to work. She expressed concern that no detail was yet available for the public engagement programme and also asked how lessons would be learned and taken forward from the Duxford community transport pilot.
- The Labour Group Leader, Councillor Sadiq, drew attention to an earlier petition from users of the 114 bus service in his division and suggested that this service demonstrated an effective use of subsidy, with £49,000 supporting 39,000 passengers annually. He asked whether subsidies would still be cut if no viable alternative was identified, or if an alternative failed shortly after implementation.
- The Liberal Democrat Group Leader, Councillor Bourke, drew attention to the Administration's stated intention of growing the economy for the benefit of all and expressed concern that if this was to be achieved, then significant improvements would be needed to public transport in Wisbech. He also asked why some of the most cost-efficient subsidised services had been cut in the initial tranche, and when and how the Leader's stated aim of improving transport for Cambridgeshire's residents would be achieved.

Responding to the speakers, Cabinet members noted that:

- Many people did not want bus subsidies withdrawn, but the Council had to make savings of £50 million in 2011/12 and of £43 million in 2012/13.
- Withdrawing a subsidy was not the same as withdrawing a service. It was possible that some currently subsidised services could in future be run commercially and this should be the first line of enquiry. Subsidising some services remained an option for the future, if no practical alternative could be found.
- Subsidies withdrawn in the initial tranche had been those considered likely to have the least impact on the travelling public.

- The Cambridgeshire Future Transport initiative had not yet started; it was proposed to develop the initiative flexibly, putting alternative local solutions in place before subsidies were withdrawn. Two dedicated officers would be leading on public consultation and engagement.
- Given that the decision to withdraw bus subsidies had been taken, the most important point now would be to work constructively with the public on developing alternatives as appropriate.

It was resolved

- 1) To approve the phased programme of subsidy withdrawal on an area by area basis as set out in Section 2 of the report
- 2) To approve a programme to engage in advance with communities in the areas to be affected by subsidy withdrawals, to identify their transport needs and implement appropriate alternative transport services wherever possible
- 3) To approve engagement with alternative transport service providers throughout the County to build capacity in advance of the withdrawal of subsidies.

537. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES: ADULTS, WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBER-LED REVIEW OF HOME CARE SERVICES AND CABINET RESPONSE

Councillor K Reynolds presented the final report of the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee's member-led review of home care services. He thanked Cabinet for their generally positive response to the Committee's recommendations, but expressed some concern that it was proposed only to accept partially recommendations 5 and 6 on staff pay and recommendation 15 on flu jabs for home care workers. In relation to staff pay, he noted that there was some evidence of a link between low remuneration of front-line staff and low levels of care; and the recommendation on flu jabs had been made as a safeguarding issue, since catching flu could be fatal for some elderly people.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Curtis, explained that Cabinet recognised the need for change in the delivery of home care and welcomed the Committee's report as providing additional impetus. On staff pay, the Council could not dictate pay strategy or salaries to home care providers, but could influence outcomes indirectly by changing the style of delivery, for example by using fewer, but better skilled, workers. On flu jabs, he and other Cabinet members recognised the safeguarding issue and agreed to review this recommendation further in consultation with the Director of Public Health.

It was resolved

- 1) To thank the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for an excellent and thorough report
- 2) To confirm the responses to the recommendations as set out in the Cabinet response report, subject to the following sentence being added to the response

to recommendation 15 on flu jabs for home care workers: 'A review of our approach will be conducted by the end of this year'.

538. DATA TRANSPARENCY AND PROPOSED CHIEF OFFICER PAY

Members considered a number of recommendations intended to ensure both greater transparency of Chief Officer pay practice and compliance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

One non-Cabinet member spoke on this item:

- The Labour Group Leader, Councillor Sadiq, highlighted a difference between the Council's draft Chief Officer Pay Policy Statement, which referred to the current ratio of the Chief Executive's salary to the mean salary in the organisation, and both the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency and the Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector, which recommended that the published ratio should be of the Chief Executive's to the median salary. For Cambridgeshire, the mean ratio was 1:8 and the median ratio was 1:10.6. Councillor Sadiq also noted that 853 Council employees were currently paid below the national living wage and asked the Council to consider bringing its lowest-paid employees up to the national living wage.

Responding, the Chief Executive reported that since the publication of the Cabinet report, the Local Government Association had changed its guidance to local authorities on Pay Policy Statements and was now recommending that the published ratio should be of the Chief Executive's to the median salary. He confirmed that for Cambridgeshire, this was 1:11. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Clarke, noted that both the Council's mean and median ratios were well below the recommended ceiling of 1:20.

It was resolved

- 1) To consider the proposed amendments to current Chief Officer Pay Policy and practice
- 2) To recommend the amendments to Chief Officer Pay Policy for Full Council approval
- 3) To recommend the draft Chief Officer Pay Policy Statement for Full Council Approval, in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, noting that the current ratio of the Chief Executive's salary to the median salary in the organisation is 1:11
- 4) To note the recommendation from Strategic Management Team to publish senior officer pay arrangements in accordance with the Localism Act's Transparency Code of Practice.

539. CAMBRIDGE SCIENCE PARK STATION

Cabinet received an update on progress with the Cambridge Science Park Station scheme. Members' approval was sought for scheme development to continue to completion of Network Rail's Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP)

stages 3 and 4. These stages were scheduled to be completed by early 2013 and would include quantifying in detail all costs associated with the scheme. At this point, Cabinet would be asked to make the final decision on whether to proceed with the major capital scheme.

One non-Cabinet member spoke on this item:

- Councillor van de Ven spoke as a local member and asked Cabinet members and officers to keep in mind as the scheme progressed the scope to make links with small local services such as those stopping at Foxton, Meldreth and Shepreth. She also emphasised the need for access and parking at the new station to be addressed as early as possible, for cyclists as well as car drivers, and suggested that the Ely station folding bicycle rental scheme could be replicated here.

Members fully supported the development of the station and emphasised the Council's enabling role in bringing this forward by agreeing to provide funding from prudential borrowing. The new station would promote employment and housing growth, both in the immediate vicinity and in the other parts of the County and country to which it would provide connections. It would also help to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality.

One member asked how, as mentioned in the report, the Department of Transport might incentivise the County Council and Network Rail to achieve early and/or below-cost delivery of the scheme. The Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment Services explained that the mechanism for this had not yet been determined but could be linked to earlier receipt of revenue from station users.

It was resolved

- 1) To note and comment on the report as above
- 2) To note the correspondence between Councillor Clarke and Theresa Villiers MP, Minister of State for Transport
- 3) To note the high-level risk assessment associated with the delivery of Cambridge Science Park Station
- 4) To confirm that the scheme should now be developed to completion of Network Rail Governance for Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) Stage 4.

540. INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 31st JANUARY 2012

Cabinet received the Integrated Resources and Performance Report for the period ending 31st January 2012. It was noted that the forecast year-end underspend was £3.2 million, an increase of £1.8 million from the previous month, due to further savings being identified in Economy, Transport and Environment Services, Community and Adult Services and Children and Young People's Services.

One non-Cabinet member spoke on this item:

- The Labour Group Leader, Councillor Sadiq, expressed concern that a forecast underspend was difficult to justify to the public when a number of services would benefit from additional investment. He drew attention to the £900,000 underspend on Supporting People, linking this to recent contact he had had with a member of the public, who was concerned about reductions to warden support at her sheltered scheme; he sought assurance that all residents affected by such cuts would be appropriately consulted and informed. He also expressed concern at the recent upward trend in numbers of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.

Responding to Councillor Sadiq, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Clarke, emphasised that £43 million more savings would be needed in 2012/13, making it essential to transform services and not just to reallocate any underspend.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Curtis, noted that warden schemes were directly funded from the Supporting People budget. The ring-fencing of this budget had been removed and the allocation of resources was being reviewed. Some changes were proposed, such as giving wardens wider roles in helping to prevent people from needing to come into sheltered housing. Wide consultation would be carried out on proposed changes.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing noted that numbers of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents had been identified by the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board as one of its top four priorities. The Deputy Leader, Councillor L W McGuire, noted that despite the recent increase, the overall trend in the number of incidents over the past ten years had been downwards.

It was resolved

- 1) To note the resources and performance information and the remedial action currently being taken
- 2) To approve the virement of £600,000 from Children and Young People's Services to Corporate Reserves, which relates to transformational funding in the 2011/12 Integrated Plan that has not yet been fully spent, and the return of this funding to CYPS in 2012/13 (see section 3.2 of the report).

541. PRESCRIBED ALTERATION TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THONGSLEY FIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, HUNTINGDON

Cabinet's approval was sought for plans to increase the size of Thongsley Fields Community Primary and Nursery School to provide a total of 420 places, by increasing its Published Admission Number (PAN) from 45 to 60 with effect from 1st September 2012. Members noted that this would help the Council to respond to continuing growth in pupil numbers across Huntingdon, both within the School's catchment area and beyond.

Members commended the Council's schools capital programme, which was effectively meeting the challenges of rising birth rates throughout the County.

It was resolved

- 1) To note the demographic forecast for Reception places for September 2012 and beyond
- 2) To note the fact that two responses were received to the statutory notice published on 4th January 2012
- 3) To approve the prescribed alteration to increase the size of Thongsley Fields Community Primary and Nursery School to provide a total of 420 places (by the addition of three permanent classrooms) with effect from 1st September 2012.

542. DEVELOPING CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTHWATCH

Cabinet received a report on the development of Local HealthWatch in Cambridgeshire, which would replace and enhance the current Local Involvement Network from April 2013. Members' approval was sought for the proposed commissioning process.

As an update to the report, the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Orgee, noted that on 1st March 2012, the Government had submitted an amendment to the Health and Social Care Bill that would change the status of Local HealthWatch organisations from statutory corporate bodies to non-statutory corporate bodies. This would enable local authorities to decide how they should be commissioned and funded, with no requirement to use EU tendering processes.

One non-Cabinet member spoke on this item:

- The Labour Group Leader, Councillor Sadiq, expressed concern that it was not an effective use of the Council's resources to act as a pathfinder for the establishment of a Local HealthWatch organisation, given that the legislation was still emerging and any arrangements now put in place might subsequently have to be revised.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Curtis, the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Orgee, and the Corporate Director: Customer Service and Transformation, noted that Cambridgeshire was one of many local authorities acting as a pathfinder, with Government providing funding for this work. The new arrangements would serve to strengthen the voice of patients and carers and it would be important to put in place the best possible representation for the people of Cambridgeshire.

It was resolved

- 1) To note the requirement for the County Council to establish a Local HealthWatch organisation in Cambridgeshire
- 2) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director: Customer Service and Transformation, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Leader of the Council as Chairman of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, to appoint external specialist expertise to assist in the process of establishing Local HealthWatch

- 3) To endorse the model proposed for the development of Local HealthWatch as set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

543. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE

Members considered a report setting out proposed updates to the Corporate Risk Register, including the addition of two new risks relating to major fraud or corruption and to information management; and the downgrading of a number of existing risks, including the one on formulation and delivery of the Integrated Plan.

The downgrading of risks was welcomed, but it was noted that Cabinet Members and the Audit and Accounts Committee would continue to keep these and all other risks on the Register under close review.

It was resolved

To confirm key updates to the Corporate Risk Register, as set out in the report.

544. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH SUPERFAST BROADBAND PROJECT: GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Cabinet members' approval was sought for the proposed governance arrangements for Phase 1 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough superfast broadband project.

One non-Cabinet member spoke on this item:

- Councillor Stone urged the Council to carry out effective consultation and communication with residents, particularly those who worked from home or ran businesses from home, to ensure that the developing proposals met their needs.

Members emphasised the benefits of superfast broadband to businesses, public services and residents and welcomed progress with the project to date. It was noted that the procurement process was underway and that a programme of demand stimulation would run in parallel with this.

It was resolved

- 1) To endorse the project partnership approach with Peterborough City Council
- 2) To approve the project governance arrangements
- 3) To delegate authority to the Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council to agree the terms of a formal partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding with Peterborough City Council and to proceed with the procurement process up to and including identification of a preferred bidder for the contract or contracts.

545. WISBECH NORTH WARD DRAINAGE SCHEME

Members considered a scheme to improve highway drainage in an area of the North Ward in Wisbech, as part of the wider economic regeneration of the town. It was noted that it had originally been intended to implement the scheme over a five-year period. However, it was recognised that this would have a number of negative implications, including delaying repairs to highways and footways until the drainage scheme was completed. It was therefore now proposed to make additional capital investment to enable implementation as a single rolling programme.

One non-Cabinet member spoke on this item:

- The local member, Councillor Hoy, welcomed the proposals and in particular the implementation as a rolling programme, which would minimise disruption and see roads repaired and flood risk minimised as quickly as possible.

Cabinet also welcomed the proposals and emphasised the need for effective communication and engagement with local residents as the work progressed. It was suggested that the scheme should be publicised to the insurance industry, both beforehand and after completion, to help residents who were currently paying high premiums or could not obtain insurance. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, agreed to follow this up, also involving the Environment Agency.

It was resolved

- 1) To support the development of a highway drainage improvement scheme as shown in Plan 1 as a priority within the additional highway investment programme set out in the Integrated Plan, subject to development of the business case and cost scrutiny, including securing funding contributions from the Environment Agency and developers through the Local Planning Authority
- 2) To ask the Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, to develop detailed scheme design and programming, taking account of the potential wider enhancement of the area
- 3) To support engagement with key stakeholders, including Fenland District Council, Wisbech Town Council, the Environment Agency and the local community in developing the scheme as part of the wider economic regeneration of Wisbech.

546. DRAFT CABINET AGENDA – 17th APRIL 2012

Members noted the draft agenda for the Cabinet meeting to be held on 17th April 2012, including the addition since the publication of the agenda for this meeting of a report on Data Sharing.

547. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was noted that a revised public report for this item had been issued. A confidential appendix had been issued to members only, the content of which was subject to legal professional privilege.

It was resolved

To discuss this item in public and not to make reference to the confidential appendix.

548. PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RED HOUSE SITE: VARIATION OF THE SECTION 106 AGREEMENT

The County Council had been asked by Cambridge City Council to consider whether the extant Section 106 planning agreement for the Red House site on Station Road in Cambridge should be varied. Members noted that the City Council's Planning Committee had formally agreed not to vary the agreement as proposed by the applicant.

It was resolved

- 1) To consider the context of the request for a variation in the extant Section 106 agreement for the Red House site in Cambridge
- 2) To agree to the officers' recommendation that the extant Section 106 agreement for the Red House site in Cambridge should not be varied.

Chairman 17th April 2012