

HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 15th July 2014

Time: 10.00am to 12.55pm

Present: Councillors Ashwood, Butcher, Connor, Criswell, Frost, Gillick, Hickford (Chairman), Hunt, Kavanagh, Leeke (substituting for Cllr van de Ven), Mason, Palmer, Reeve (Vice-Chairman), Rouse, Taylor, Tew and Walsh

Also present: Councillors P Brown, Bullen, Chapman, Downes, Orgee, Scutt and Williams

Apologies: Councillor van de Ven (Councillor Leeke substituting)

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Criswell declared an interest as a member of Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC), in relation to the following item:

Traffic Regulation Order – Objections associated with parking charges review

10. PETITIONS

The Committee received a petition:

Request for improvements to pavements and roads, Guidlen Morden

Ms Lucy Stevenson, presented a paper petition with 403 signatures, requesting improvements to pavements and roads in the parish of Guilden Morden.

In addressing the Committee, Ms Stevenson commented that the condition of the roads and pavements in Guilden Morden was appalling, particularly the pot holes, and she had gathered 403 signatures in only seven days. Many of the signatories had recounted their own experiences of injuries and problems caused by the roads and pavements in the village, including damage to cars. In the past some of the potholes had been patched, but these repairs had quickly disintegrated. Cyclists faced particular hazards, and there were no pavements around the primary school, meaning that children often had to walk in the road at busy periods. Whilst understanding the Council had tight budget constraints, residents felt strongly that this issue needed addressing, and it had received recent local press coverage.

The petitioner was asked the following questions by Committee Members asked:

- whether the support of the Parish Council or Local Member had been sought prior to the submission of the petition. Ms Stevenson advised that she had not

made such an approach, but both the vicar and Councillor Barry Holme, the Chairman of the Parish Council, had signed the petition;

- whether the road was wide enough to accommodate a pavement near the school. Ms Stevenson was unsure on this point;
- if any of the residents who had had accidents or injuries had reported them, as they would then be recorded in the accident statistics, improving the likelihood of improvements being undertaken. It was confirmed that the accidents and injuries had not been reported.

The Chairman thanked the petitioner for her presentation, and advised that she would receive a full written response within ten working days of the meeting.

11. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER – OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH PARKING CHARGES REVIEW

The Committee received a report on objections to proposed changes to On Street Pay and Display parking charges and time limits in both Cambridge and Huntingdonshire (St Ives, Huntingdon and St Neots). It was noted that the review of these charges had been agreed by Cabinet in October 2013, and following an extensive informal consultation exercise, it was agreed by Cabinet in March 2014 to proceed to a statutory consultation. In response to the comments received during that consultation, the proposals had been changed to remove Aylestone Road, Defreville Avenue, Humberstone Road and Montague Road from the Cambridge streets originally included in the proposals.

Two Local Members spoke on the report:

Councillor Scutt welcomed the report, and she appreciated that officers had listened to the concerns of the residents of Aylestone Road, Defreville Avenue, Humberstone Road and Montague Road in Cambridge, and excluded those streets from the final proposals. As well as believing that the consultation had been inadequate, residents in those streets were concerned that the original proposals would bring commuter parking back to the area. Councillor Scutt suggested a number of possible approaches to addressing the parking problems in the city, stressing that closer working with the City Council was key to making progress. Members noted these comments on the wider parking issues, but pointed out that the decision before them was to determine objections to this particular Traffic Regulation Order.

Councillor Chapman spoke on the Huntingdonshire proposals. He commented that whilst the proposals would have virtually no impact on Huntingdon and St Ives, they would have significant impact on St Neots, particularly the already declining retail sector. He felt that the consultation had been inadequate, with public notices appearing in newspapers which were not circulated in St Neots, and he had not been consulted as one of the St Neots Local Members, nor had Huntingdonshire District Councillors or St Neots Town Council been consulted. In response, officers advised that Huntingdonshire District Council officers and the former Cabinet Member at HDC had been consulted. St Neots Town Council (SNTC) had also been included in the consultation, and the response of the Operations Committee of SNTC was included in Appendix 5 of the report.

Councillor Chapman stressed the need for a holistic approach to car parking, in conjunction with HDC, and whilst noting the rationale behind facilitating car parking in 15 minute increments, suggested that the Street Ranger capacity was not available to enforce this. Moreover, he felt that the previous governance arrangements whereby objections to TROs were considered at the joint County/District Area Joint Committees were more appropriate and should be reintroduced. Officers pointed out that Cambridge City Council and the four District Councils had all been asked if they wanted Area Joint Committee type arrangements reintroduced, and all had declined, with the exception of Cambridge City.

During discussion, some Members expressed concern about the lack of consultation in Huntingdonshire, and suggested that this decision should be deferred, to enable further consultation. They also felt that there should be more information available on the business case and in particular, the financial implications of the proposed changes. Officers drew Members' attention to Section 2 of the report, which outlined the statutory consultation process, and how the County Council had exceeded those requirements. Other Members commented that they were satisfied that the consultation had met the statutory processes and they felt no deferral was necessary, especially as the lack of consultation appeared to be *within* partner authorities, and not between the County Council and those authorities. They also felt that the proposals would not disadvantage St Neots residents, who would have sufficient local knowledge, and be aware of the best parking options in the town. It was further suggested that declining retail business in market towns could not be attributed to increasing parking charges.

The following amended recommendations to those set out in the report were proposed by Councillor Reeve and seconded by Councillor Connor, splitting the recommendations for Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire:

- a) approve and make the Order in respect to parking charges in Cambridge City, with the exception of Aylestone Road, Defreville Avenue, Humberstone Road and Montague Road which will be removed from the proposals;*
- b) defer the proposals for Huntingdonshire and return to the Committee following further discussions with St Neots Town Council, Huntingdonshire District Councillors and local County Councillors;*

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

It was resolved to:

- a) approve and make the Order in respect to parking charges in Cambridge City, with the exception of Aylestone Road, Defreville Avenue, Humberstone Road and Montague Road which will be removed from the proposals;
- b) defer the proposals for Huntingdonshire and return to the Committee following further discussions with St Neots Town Council, Huntingdonshire District Councillors and local County Councillors;
- c) inform the objectors accordingly.

12. SERVICE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE BUSINESS PLAN – ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT

The Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment presented a report explaining the business planning process for 2015/16. The report included an overview of Council-wide issues and then focussed on issues specific to Economy, Transport and Environment, including information about capital funding; savings targets from 2015/16 to 2018/19; 2014/15 and 2015/16 revenue savings and income proposals within the remit of the Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee; and outlined revenue savings and income proposals for 2016/17 to 2018/19. The report also set out the timetable for the Committee's involvement in the development of the Business Plan proposals, including a workshop in August 2014.

Members noted that across Economy, Transport and Environment, £0.5-£1.5 million of the 2015/16 savings proposed were now unlikely to be achievable, constituting a further pressure that would need to be addressed through the business planning process.

Two minor changes to the figures set out on page 5 of the report were noted:

- Total change (Breakdown of changes to expenditure, fees, etc) for 2015-16 should read -3,265 (£'000);
- Total change (Breakdown of changes to corporate funding and transfers to/from reserves) should read +3,625 (£'000).

Members made the following comments on the report:

- commented that a radical, long-term approach needed to be taken to address the financial challenges the Council faced. Most Members commended the report, but some commented that it made for uncomfortable reading, illustrating the difficult choices to be made, especially the possible reductions such as library and winter maintenance services. However, it was suggested that some services could be covered on a voluntary basis, limiting the impact of service reductions;
- discussed the proposed reduction in the Sports & Arts grant, pointing out that this was small but had a significant gearing effect. It was agreed that officers would circulate a detailed response to Members on this;
- noted that the largest potential savings for Winter Maintenance could be achieved by reducing routes treated;
- suggested that Spokesmen should look at previous budget amendments put forward for previous budgets as part of the Business Planning process;
- in response to a question on Guided Busway, noted that planned maintenance was fully covered by the access charge, but that future liabilities were a much broader issue;
- noted that it was expected that Network Rail would fund the Science Park Station, but this had not yet been finalised;
- stressed the need to be more creative in the use of buildings, working with partners, hubs, etc.

It was resolved:

- a) to note the Council-wide financial overview set out in section 2 of the report;
- b) to note the overview and financial context for Economy, Transport and Environment;
- c) to comment on the review of 2015/16 savings proposals and the approach to future savings for Economy, Transport and Environment
- d) to request officers to work with members of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee to develop more detailed proposals for presenting to future meetings of the Committee.

13. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH BUS LANE ENFORCEMENT - CAMBRIDGE

The Committee received a report on objections received to the proposed introduction of civil enforcement of bus lanes.

The background to the proposals, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process was noted. Six objections and one letter of support had been received. Two of the objections had subsequently been withdrawn.

It was resolved to:

- a) approve and make the Order as advertised;
- b) inform the objectors accordingly.

14. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH A1301 CAMBRIDGE ROAD - SAWSTON

The Committee received a report on objections received to the proposed improvement of the junction of the A1301 Sawston Bypass with Cambridge Road in Sawston.

The background to the proposed scheme, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process were noted. Members noted a map showing where the improvements would be made.

Local Member Councillor Orgee spoke on the report. He explained that the proposed improvements were designed to reduce the incidence of vehicle shunts and cycling accidents at this junction. Whilst acknowledging the slight inconvenience caused to some of the properties adjacent to the junction, in terms of access, he and the other Local Member, Councillor Kenney, felt that the improvements were in the greater public interest.

It was resolved to:

- a) approve and make the Order as advertised;
- b) inform the objectors accordingly.

15. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CHURCH ROAD, LEVERINGTON

The Committee received a report on objections received to the proposed extension of double yellow lines on part of Church Road, Leverington, to address inconsiderate parking during school pick up/drop off times.

The background to the proposed scheme, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process, and a map outlining the location of the proposals were noted.

It was resolved to:

- a) approve and make the Order as advertised;
- b) inform the objectors accordingly.

16. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH HIGH STREET, DODDINGTON

The Committee received a report on objections received to the proposed extension of single yellow lines on part of High Street, Doddington, to address inconsiderate parking during school pick up/drop off times.

The background to the proposed scheme, and the outcomes of the statutory consultation process, and a map outlining the location of the proposals were noted. Local Member Councillor Connor indicated his support for the proposed scheme.

It was resolved to:

- a) approve and make the Order as advertised;
- b) inform the objectors accordingly.

17. HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING SERVICE REVIEW

The Committee considered a report on the proposed consultation on the thirteen options identified in the strategic review of Household Recycling Services. These options had been shared with partners, and aimed to avoid 'cost shunting' between authorities, or financial penalties that could arise e.g. from changes to the Waste PFI contract.

Councillor Downes spoke on this item. His main concern was about making best use of the facilities that the Council owned. Buckden Household Recycling Centre (HRC) had been closed a number of years ago, despite being well located in terms of serving local communities. One option posed in the report was charitable/ community groups taking over the running of some of these Centres, and he commented that it was a pity that option had not been available at Buckden at the time, especially as the former Buckden site had now been sublet to other activities,

which means this is no longer an option. In response to a Member question, Councillor Downes was unable to say whether flytipping had increased in the area appreciably following the closure of Buckden HRC, but there was clearly increased costs and inconvenience caused to those living in the communities around Buckden HRC, who had to travel to St Neots or Alconbury.

Arising from the report, Members:

- asked if it was correct that two HRCs in Fenland had been identified for closure, pointing out that Fenland already suffered from a high level of flytipping. Officers reassured Members that no decisions had been taken on any possible HRC closures;
- noted that the County Council was working closely with partners to ensure that increased flytipping and cost shunting did not happen. Members welcomed this, and stressed the importance of working with District colleagues;
- discussed the need to be realistic: given that significant sums of the ETE budget were already committed (e.g. Waste and Streetlighting PFIs, Highways Contract), there were a limited number of areas where savings could come from, so large cuts would be necessary in areas of discretionary spend such as Winter Maintenance, Recycling and Library Services. Officers agreed, commenting that keeping all current HRC sites open was probably not possible in this economic climate. This should be clear in any consultation with the general public;
- asked if it was possible to charge households for disposing of items at HRCs. Officers confirmed that only certain types of waste that were not considered to be 'household waste' e.g. specific hardcore/DIY related waste could incur a charge. Commercial operators were not currently permitted to use HRCs;
- noted that 22 years were left on the Waste PFI contract;
- observed that the daily profile (Option 6) varied between sites, e.g. some were more heavily used at weekends, whilst others had more use during the week;
- suggested that a more imaginative approach could be taken to increase income generation at HRC sites by maximising alternative uses e.g. mobile masts, advertising;
- requested a map showing locations of HRCs across the county.

It was resolved to:

- a) agree the options contained in paragraph 2.4 of the report and Appendix 2 as the basis for consultation;
- b) endorse the approach to consultation set out in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3;
- c) approve the approach set out in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6, including looking at additional savings beyond 2015/16, as the basis for further analysis, to be brought back to committee in the autumn.

18. CROMWELL MUSEUM FUTURE GOVERNANCE

The Committee considered a report on an external review of options for the future of the Cromwell Museum, following the proposed withdrawal of County Council funding to run the museum from April 2016. Officers tabled a letter from Huntingdon Town

Council, dated 8th July 2014, essentially proposing that the County Council transfer ownership of the Museum to the Town Council, who would in turn maintain the building and provide a grant to the Museum Trust. It was agreed that given the late submission of the letter, the implications would not be considered by the Committee at this stage, and that the principles set out in the report recommendations remained the same, although if the decision was taken to enter into an arrangement with the Town Council, this would ultimately impact on report recommendation (b).

Mrs White-Horan, Vice-chairman of the Friends of Cromwell Museum, addressed the Committee. She reminded that a petition signed by over 6,000 people had been presented to full Council earlier in the year, and she was disappointed that there had not been a subsequent debate by Council. She asked why the storage space at Huntingdon Library was limited to five years, and posed various questions relating to the Trust, including its likely responsibilities, costs and timescales. Responding, officers advised that the detail relating to the Trust e.g. options, implications, timescales and costs, would be explored further at the next meeting of the Cromwell Museum Management Committee (CMMC). The use of the Cromwell Museum Art Fund (currently £15,800) had been confirmed by the consultant as an appropriate use of funds, in securing the future of the Museum.

Councillor Downes spoke as Chairman of the CMMC. He felt the late letter from the Town Council, whilst introducing an apparent complication at this stage, would broadly be the way forward. He felt that using the Art Fund to sustain the Museum would be controversial, and more guidance was required. He stressed that the Museum was central for the communal, social and cultural life of Huntingdon and surrounding communities.

Councillor Sir Peter Brown spoke as Local Member, and as Vice Chairman of the CMMC. He explained how all parties had worked constructively together, but there were still issues to be ironed out. The Town Council was very supportive, but he felt it regrettable that the District Council was not more supportive in terms of tourism in the town in general. Whilst welcoming the establishment of a Trust, he felt there were important issues around how voluntary staff were managed, and it was vital that professional support was provided. It was noted that any match funding was likely to come from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and that £2,500 had also been pledged by another local fund.

Arising from the report, Members:

- noted that the majority of the artefacts are owned by the County council, whilst many of the others were the property of the descendants of Cromwell;
- stressed the importance of embedding local ownership, and the Town Council's approach was welcomed, although it was suggested that this should be on the basis of a lease, not a transfer of ownership;
- noted that this was the only Museum the County Council owned, and that it had originally belonged to Huntingdonshire County Council;
- commented that such Trusts usually worked well, especially where they were given support by the local authority, and Trust status often benefitted through attracting more grant funding;
- queried recommendation (c), which suggested a five year lease of space at Huntingdon Library for storage, and asked why this could not be longer or

indefinite. Officers explained that whilst a longer lease remained an option, they did not feel it was appropriate to commit this space long term, especially given its income earning potential and the Council's financial situation.

The following amendment to recommendation (c) was proposed by Councillor Reeve and seconded by Councillor Connor:

To lease museum storage and office facilities in Huntingdon Library and Archive to the new Trust for at least five years at less than best consideration (subject to approval by the General Purposes Committee)

On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

It was confirmed that General Purposes Committee would consider the financial and property (contractual) issues in relation to the Cromwell Museum.

It was resolved to agree to:

- a) the creation of an independent charitable Trust to take over the running of the museum;
- b) leasing the museum building to the new Trust for 25 years on an internal repairing lease at less than best consideration (subject to approval by General Purposes Committee);
- c) leasing museum storage and office facilities in Huntingdon Library and Archives to the new Trust for 5 years at less than best consideration (subject to approval by General Purposes Committee);
- d) the Council bearing the cost of any staff redundancies arising as a result of the transfer of undertakings;
- e) using the Cromwell Museum Art Fund to help fund the establishment of the new Trust;
- f) the Council retaining ownership of its assets within the museum collections.

19. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – OUTTURN 2013/2014

The Committee considered the final outturn report for 2013/2014, for Economy, Transport & Environment.

It was resolved to review and note the report.

20. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – MAY 2014

The Committee received a report setting out financial and performance information for Economy, Transport and Environment as at the end of May 2014. Members noted that Economy, Transport and Environment was showing no outturn forecast variances on either revenue or capital at this point in the year.

It was resolved to review and note the report.

21. SERVICE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS

The Committee noted its agenda plan, including additional changes that had been made since the agenda had been despatched. The Committee also considered the the appointment to the Cambridge City 20mph Board.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the agenda plan, including the updates reported orally at the meeting;
- b) appoint Councillor Ashley Walsh to the Cambridge 20mph Board.