

ACTIONS FROM COUNCIL ON 13th DECEMBER 2016

1) PUBLIC QUESTIONS REQUIRING FOLLOW UP WRITTEN RESPONSES

a) MR ANTONY CARPEN

Question raised at Council meeting.

What plans does the county council have to digitise its collection of photographs, and what considerations has it made to develop an online service where it can sell large digital reproductions of old photographs and maps currently held in their library and what further considerations have the council made following the initial public meeting last year of the libraries service in developing alternative funding streams, including but not restricted to people donating online?

Response

Councillor McGuire Chairman of the Highways and Community infrastructure Committee agreed to provide a written response outside of the meeting.

A written response was sent on 6th January reading:

Dear Mr Carpen

Further to your question submitted at the December Council meeting the response to your question which had been prepared but which was not with the Chairman of the H and CI Committee at the Council meeting is as follows:

Response: The majority of the Council's photographic collections and historical maps are held by Cambridgeshire Archives and the Cambridgeshire Collection. There is a professional scanning and digitisation section that carries out commercial commissions as well as satisfying customer requests for copies from the collections, and a scan-on-demand service available. The sale of reprographics from our specialist collections is an important income stream for the Service and images can already be ordered remotely or in person. Low resolution images are available as part of the online archive catalogue, which assists ordering.

There is an ongoing programme of digitisation in order to improve access (putting images online), preserve the items from handling or deterioration (e.g. nitrate negatives) and to meet specific research requests. Due to the fact that the costs of digitisation are high, and staffing is limited, the work has to be carefully prioritised, using volunteers to help scan images.

With our focus currently on developing a new archive centre, there are no plans at present to fully develop an online shop with a basket-based system, but the idea remains under consideration. In the meantime, the Council is working with key partners to increase online images and raise income e.g. work with Ancestry will commence in 2017 to digitise our 19th and early 20th century electoral registers, put them online and then receive a royalty for every image sold.

Full details of how to order an image and price lists are available on our website:

http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/info/20011/archives_archaeology_and_museums/177/archives_and_local_studies/8

In response to the public meeting held last year, Cambridgeshire Libraries have introduced online payments and the ability to donate online, which you can find here: <https://cambridgeshire.spydus.co.uk/SpydusCitizenPay/DONATE.aspx?SES=ANON>

Kind regards

Cllr Mac McGuire

b) MR JEREMY CADDICK

Question raised at Council meeting.

As a resident of Cambridge, and a user of local health and care services, I am extremely concerned by the 'Sustainability and Transformation Plan', developed by the NHS and local government officers, for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, that has recently been published. Over the last few years there has been a very worrying deterioration in our local health and care services and experiments in privatisation of services have ended in disaster. I am very concerned that on top of huge savings already made, the STP published claims there will need to be a further £547m of annual savings made in the region by 2021. Earlier this year a senior NHS director Julia Simon, who quit shortly after, claimed the STP process is 'mad' and the plans contain a 'lot of lies'. I note that a recent only 16% of NHS finance directors think the STPs are financially achievable (National Health Executive survey). The King's Fund health think-tank is also warning the financial assumptions involved in the STPs require serious scrutiny. Other local councils, such as Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, have refused to sign up to their STP because of the cuts it would involve. Birmingham and Camden councils have led by publishing the plans with full detail.

I ask;

- When will the Council publish all the necessary appendices and drafts of the local STP to allow proper scrutiny by the public?

- What scrutiny has the committee undertaken of the financial plans, and the ability of services to deliver them, involved in the STP?

What assurances can the chairman give to local residents, who have been badly let down by NHS and social care cutbacks already, that saving £547 million annually can be achieved without rationing care or cutting the quality of service?

Response

As Mr Jeremy Caddick was unable to attend the Council meeting to ask his question, Councillor Jenkins, Chairman of the Health Committee indicated that in line with Constitution a written response would be sent to Mr Caddick and published on the Council's website.

A written response was sent on 19th December reading:

Dear Mr Caddick

Thank you for your question.

Your concern about the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) is shared by many. Funding of the NHS on the one hand and its clinical performance on the other are challenges which defy easy solutions.

The STP program is an ambitious albeit national response to these challenges and puts responsibility for addressing them in the hands of the 'local NHS' led by the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in concert with the other NHS players and local government. In Cambridgeshire we are fortunate in having to deal with just one CCG. However it is a large one and is also responsible for Peterborough. It (our CCG) appears to have done a good job of bringing together the local NHS trusts together with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council officers. This coordinated working is essential if the STP is to succeed.

The STP itself is a high level document and was delivered by the CCG on time. It was then able to publish it in advance of the date to which it had been working and it has been in the public domain since Mon 21 Nov

In answer to your questions:

1 The basic STP has already been published. By its nature it is a high level plan and short on the detail of 'what will we actually do and when'. Cambridgeshire County Council's Health Committee will, as a part of its scrutiny of it, make available all documents.

2 We have not yet started our scrutiny but when we do it will extend to the financial component of the plan and will certainly address its deliverability.

Members of the Health Committee met with Health Watch last week to consider its scrutiny of the plan which will begin at the Health Committee's meeting this week (Thu 15 Dec 16). This will be very much a 'top level' scrutiny and will be followed at subsequent meetings by more detailed 'deep dives' to allow it to look in more detail at specific elements of the plan. This scrutiny will take place in public.

3 I can't give any assurances because (a) this Council does not have direct line responsibility for implementing the STP, and (b) the CCG can only do what's possible within the funding which it gets from central government.

However what I can say is that the Health Committee will scrutinise the plan and its implementation closely and publicly and that I am encouraged by the work which has been done so far and the extent to which all parties are working together to deliver just one plan for the benefit of the residents of Cambridgeshire (and Peterborough).

Yours Sincerely

David Jenkins

Chairman of the Health Committee

2. PETITION PRESENTED REQUIRING A WRITTEN RESPONSE

The Leader of the Council indicated that he would respond in writing regarding the petition from Mr Brian Milnes reading:

"We call upon Cambridgeshire County Council to restore priority to gritting school routes to ensure our children's safety is not put at risk".

Response

A response was sent on 3rd January 2017 reading:

Dear Mr Milnes

Thank you Mr Milnes for taking the time to present a petition to the Council on gritting routes around schools. This is clearly a very important issue for children's safety and one that I and other Members take very seriously.

As I said at the time you presented the petition, as a consequence of the running order of the Council agenda, there was a full debate on the whole issue of gritting after this petition was heard. As you will be aware, the result of that debate was a unanimous agreement to return the gritting routes to those that existed prior to the reduction that came into effect this October. We use a series of ranked criteria to determine which parts of our road network we grit. Although the presence of a school in itself is not one of the criteria we use to determine gritting routes, the fact that we will now be gritting around 45% of the roads in Cambridgeshire means that most secondary schools will again now be on the precautionary gritting routes. I trust this addresses the concerns you have raised with us and you feel is a satisfactory outcome to the petition.

Steve Count

Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council

Councillor for March North

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3) QUESTIONS / REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RAISED ON INDIVIDUAL REPORTS FROM MEMBERS REQUIRING A WRITTEN RESPONSE

Minute 270 Items for Determination from General Purposes Committee - Treasury Management Report Quarter 2 Question from Councillor Shellens to the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee

A request was made for details of the Council's current borrowing level and the ceiling that the Council was potentially able to borrow to.

Response

The following response was sent later the same day 13th December to all Members;

At this afternoon's Council meeting Cllr Shellens raised a question regarding the extent to which the Council is operating within the overall borrowing powers that it has afforded itself. Please find an extract from the report (contained in the Appendix). As can be seen there is currently £281m of 'headroom' within the system. This is largely due to the amount of internal borrowing that has

been undertaken – some of which has arisen from the Council undertaking the duties of the Accountable Body for two other organisations.

If you require any further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Gross borrowing and the Capital Financing Requirement (estimated borrowing liability excluding PFI)

Original 2016-17 Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) £m	2016-17 CFR (based on latest capital information) £m	Actual Gross Borrowing £m	Difference between actual borrowing and original CFR £m	Difference between actual borrowing and latest CFR £m
642.5	643.3	362.1	280.4	281.2

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4) ACTIONS ARISING FROM ORAL QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9.1,

- a) In response to a question from Councillor Amanda Taylor, Councillor Count, Chairman of General Purposes Committee agreed to provide a written answer on the statistics regarding accidents attributable to floating bus stops.

Response

A response was provided on 26th January 2017 reading:

Thank you Cllr Taylor for this question. This is very topical because as you are aware, the Economy and Environment Committee has just established a Member Led Review for cycle schemes of which Hills Road will be one of the ones considered.

Also as background, I would note that floating bus stops are not actually a new concept. One has been in place in Cambridge since 1967 (Wadloes Road, Cambridge – Abbey Ward). There are also many instances where the layout of cycling infrastructure and bus stops means that people can step off a bus directly onto a shared use path with fast moving cyclists – floating bus stops seek to remove this conflict.

In terms of your question, all reported accidents are recorded, and this information is held by the County Council. To answer specifically the question you have asked, officers will need to plot the precise location of each stop against accidents and review each of the records. This is in hand and will inform the Member Led Review, but I'm not in a position just yet to confirm the outcome as the analysis is still to be completed. I would say, however, that in speaking to officers, I am not aware of any particular evidenced issue with the safety of the floating bus stops although I am aware that some people have negative perceptions of them. I would also note that as part of the post scheme evaluation we were required to do, we commissioned video surveys of the floating bus stops over a period of time and observed no accidents or near misses.

I look forward to wide Member participation in the Member Led Review that will look into this along with other issues.

Ian Bates

Chairman
Economy & Environment C'tee
Cambridgeshire County Council

- b) In response to a question from Councillor Giles, Councillor McGuire, Chairman of Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee, agreed to provide a written answer regarding an update on the negotiations between the district councils, and in particular Huntingdonshire District Council and this Council regarding contracts for grass cutting.

Response

A response was provided on 24th January 2017 reading:

Thank you Cllr Giles for your question regarding grass cutting, specifically with regard to Huntingdonshire.

As you are aware discussions have been ongoing between the County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council regarding grass cutting responsibilities for 2017. The current approach being pursued is to ask Parish and Town Councils if they wish to cut the grass in their area, and (where they express an interest) to work with them to agree the details of what is and isn't cut through discussions at officer level. Hunts District Council has asked us to keep them informed of these negotiations, which we have undertaken to do. For example, St Neots Town Council has expressed a desire to take on responsibility for grass cutting across St Neots, and County Council officers are currently working closely with them to draw up plans showing the grass to be cut and drafting a service level agreement. Huntingdon Town Council has also expressed an interest for taking on grass cutting, however these discussions are still at an early stage.

The ongoing discussions with HDC are predominantly focussing on grass that sits within areas where there is no interest by Parish/Town councils for taking on the responsibility. At present the County Council is, following a recent high level Member and Officer meeting, waiting for confirmation from HDC of their intentions for next year's grass cutting, before proceeding further. It is anticipated that HDCs position will be made clear early in the New Year in order to allow the County Council to plan accordingly.

Regards

Mac

Cllr Mac McGuire

Member for Norman Cross

Chairman, Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee

Cambridgeshire County Council

- c) In response to a question from Councillor Peter Reeve, Councillor Count, Chairman of General Purposes Committee agreed to investigate further regarding his request for Ramsey Library and other Libraries to be open over the Christmas period where there were willing volunteers.

Response

Christine May provided a response to Councillor Count in reply to an email he had sent o officers on the issue raised by Councillor Reeve on 15th December reading:

Further to your email, I can confirm that arrangements have been made for Cllr Reeve to open Ramsey Library for the volunteer session, as requested. We will also respond to any other requests across the county positively, and staff are in the process of checking this, however we are not aware of any other volunteer groups wanting to run sessions.

Regards

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- d) In response to a question from Councillor Sales, Councillor Bates, Chairman of Economy and Environment Committee, undertook to provide a written answer regarding his view that Park & Ride charges were a bad idea.

Response

A response was provided on 26th January 2017 reading:

Dear Councillor Sales,

Further to your question raised at the December Council meeting. Please see my response below.

Thank you Cllr Sales for this question. The decision to introduce the £1 charge for the park and ride sites around Cambridge in July 2014 was part of a series of proposals as part of the Council's Business Plan for that year. The charge hasn't changed since that point and the income raised covers the cost of running the sites that previously came from general Council budgets.

The Economy and Environment Committee will shortly be receiving a report on the charge and any other options for funding the cost of operating the sites. Given that the sites cost in excess of £1m per year to operate, any reduction or removal of the charge would require either a new source of revenue to fund them to be found or a corresponding reduction in funding for other Council services.

Ian Bates

Chairman
Economy & Environment C'tee
Cambridgeshire County Council

- e) In response to a question from Councillor Mason, a written response would be provided by Councillor Count, Chairman of General Purposes Committee, regarding the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway legal proceedings.

Response

An e-mail was sent to Councillor Mason on 9th February setting out the following response to the questions raised. Some of the information has not been included in the extract below as it is confidential business sensitive:

1. Further questions to Capita and Atkins

A full opportunity was given to Members to question Ian Hodgkin, the project supervisor from Skanska, at the briefing session on 11 November 2016. Given Mr Hodgkin's thorough understanding of the technical issues of the project, this was deemed sufficient. At this briefing there was a thorough question and answer session and we are not aware that any questions from Members went unanswered.

If further Member questions arise it may be more proportionate to submit them in writing to Capita, via Officers, given the cost of their representatives' attendance at a briefing.

Group Leaders had a briefing session with Counsel on 17 January 2017 to discuss the Council's action plan.

2. Outstanding technical questions (see note below)

It is understood this refers to your email of 11th November 2016, the day of the Q&A session with Ian Hodgkin and Stephen Furst QC, and that you did get the opportunity to raise your question regarding cracking at the mid-point of the beams. However I am happy to provide a written response to reassure you on these points.

The size of cracks at this location do exceed permitted limits and have been notified as a defect. However structural engineering experts at both Skanska/Atkins and Capita have independently considered the failure mechanisms of the guideway in considerable detail including the programme of investigations and do not share your view that the mid beam cracking is a factor in the displacement of the shims. Indeed the investigations have identified that rather than hogging and sagging of the beams being an issue it is a lack of flexibility that is contributing to shim loss.

Cracking in concrete is not unusual and allowance for cracking is incorporated into the design process in both British Standards and the Eurocodes now in use. There is also a considerable body of knowledge around cracking and its consequence such that

the structural engineering experts have not seen fit to identify the need for testing. Nor do the experts share your pessimistic prognosis provided that the cracks are sealed in due course.

The Quantum advice was not available for the Q&A session but has now been published. The assessment has assumed that the method used to carry out repairs to date in which the beams are jacked up would be used. It may well be that a more mechanised approach will be taken to this in practice and you will recall that the ladder beams were placed by the gantry which included a lifting frame that lifted the beams at their quarter and three quarter points, which had the effect of neutralising the stresses at the mid-point of the beams. A similar approach would be adopted if necessary.

3. Outstanding Legal contractual issues re extent, methodology and cost of repairs

It is our understanding that “legal contractual issues” are not involved in “the extent, methodology and cost of the repairs”, save for issues around the liability for the design of the Option 1 repairs. It would be helpful if Cllr Mason would clarify any questions about contractual issues and repairs in writing.

With regard to Extent, Methodology and Cost:

These (except for methodology) have already been the subject of careful scrutiny and will be the subject of further careful scrutiny.

In the November 2016 report from Capita there is an outline design of parts of the Option 1 solution. Option 1 is (1) superstructure (lift all beams, remove and repair those with underside spalling, restrain all bearings, replace all beams, restrain all beams with new longitudinal and lateral brackets (2) in northern section deepen 821 shallow foundations to full NHBC recommended depth. There is a well developed a method statement for jacking the beams which has been done 64 times since August 2011. Atkins and TQEF appear comfortable with costing the Option 1 works on the information currently available.

If tenders for Option 1 were to be invited on a D&B basis then an illustrative design might have to be developed. However, inviting tenders seems to be some way off.

With regard to Legal contractual issues:

Following on from the above, it is not clear what legal/contractual issues are here being referred to. At the 11th November briefing one Councillor asked (perfectly reasonably) if Capita could act on a CFA to which the answer was ‘no’ (because independent experts must have no financial interest in the outcome).

Bob Menzies

- f) In response to a question from Councillor Dupre, Councillor Bates, Chairman of Economy and Environment Committee, undertook to provide a written answer regarding Highways England temporary routing plans for the A14 works for phase 2.

Response

A response was provided on 23rd January 2017 reading:

Dear Councillor Dupre,

Further to your question raised at the December Council meeting. Please see my response below.

Thank you Councillor Dupre for this question. Officers have recently received route plans and temporary traffic management plans [for the A14](#). Highways England have agreed to run an all member briefing to update on the progress of works and officers will be arranging to send the proposed temporary routing plans to members shortly and have already been in contact with Cllr Dupre on this point.

Ian Bates

Chairman
Economy & Environment C'tee
Cambridgeshire County Council

- g) In response to a question from Councillor Leeke, Councillor Bates, Chairman of Economy and Environment Committee, undertook to provide a written answer would be provided by regarding the additional concessionary fare costs resulting from concessionary bus pass holders changing buses operated by Stagecoach from Milton Park & Ride site to Addenbrooke's and on to Babraham Park & Ride site.

Response

A response was provided on 26th January reading

Thank you Cllr Leeke for this question. In opening, I would note that the decision to change the park and ride routing was a commercial one by Stagecoach as the operator of the service, and was as a result of the unreliability that their cross City services were experiencing. This ultimately affected all passengers using the Milton to Babraham Road service.

In terms of the impact of this on concessionary fares, you are correct in noting that people who now make the full journey from Milton to Babraham Road will need to buy two tickets and as a result, there will be reimbursement twice to the bus company. We are aware of this but it is not possible to change the concessionary reimbursement system as this is set through national legislation. Officers have, however, assessed the likely financial implications of this as follows. The current Milton to Babraham service carries around 1.2m passengers per annum. It is estimated that approximately 40% of these journeys originate at Milton, which equates to 480,000 journeys. On average 25% of journeys across the county are taken by concessionary pass holders and this would therefore be 120,000 journeys. Stagecoach believe that around 15% of all journeys previously involved crossing the city centre, which would equate to 18,000 journeys. Based on these assumptions the additional cost could be around £17,000 per annum for concessionary travel for those travelling from Milton to Babraham to access Addenbrooke's for example. This will fall on the County Council.

On the positive side, the result of this changes is overall improved reliability for all passengers as the delays from the cross city routing have been reduced. Clearly this is of greater benefit for those travellers only doing one leg of the overall route. Officers will review this situation when more data is available and discuss with the bus company if any further changes regarding routing or reimbursement appear necessary.

Ian Bates
Chairman
Economy & Environment C'tee
Cambridgeshire County Council