

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 13th January 2015

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 11.35a.m.

Present: Councillors I Bates (Chairman), R Butcher, J Clark, E Cearns (Vice-Chairman), Cllr B Chapman, D Divine, D Harty, R Henson, J Hipkin, N Kavanagh, A Lay, M Shuter, A Walsh and J Williams.

Apologies: Councillor J Schumann

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

78. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 25TH November 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

The Minutes Action Log Update was noted.

79. PETITIONS

None were received.

80. NORTH CAMBRIDGE CYCLING AND WALKING IMPROVEMENTS – TO REPORT CONSULTATION AND SEEK APPROVAL TO PROCEED

This report provided details of safety proposals for cycling and walking improvements and measures to improve traffic access from junctions adjoining Arbury Road.

The report set out proposals centred around reducing high traffic speeds, measures to improve pedestrian and cycle crossings and alleviate inadequate path widths, and measures to prevent further serious accidents (which had included fatalities) at mini roundabouts at two junctions joining Arbury Road. The report explained the options that had been considered for traffic calming, pedestrian crossings, changes to junctions and improvements to foot and cycleways to address local issues raised by members with the designs having benefitted from the involvement of local members. The report also provided the results of the consultation exercise undertaken with local residents and the local primary school in the area.

The proposals for approval were at Arbury Road/Kings Hedge's Road junction were to:

- Surface the informal path across the verge on the corner of Kings Hedges Road and Arbury Road.
- Provide a new pedestrian and cycle controlled crossing over Arbury Road, just north of St Catherine's Road. This would link with the shared-use foot/cycle way on the west side of the junction. The new crossing would also improve access to the Meadows Community Centre.

As the frontage of St Laurence's School in Arbury Road was a busy area at each end of the school, the following measures were being proposed, which included those aimed at providing valuable space for pedestrians, cyclists and pram pushers:

- Widen the paths outside the school to improve walking and cycling access by narrowing the layby and removing hedging.
- Narrow the road, remove existing speed cushions, centre line and islands.
- Move the zebra crossing away from the St Albans Road junction and closer to the school.
- Convert the zebra crossing to a 'cycle zebra' to allow pedestrians and cyclists to have priority crossing the road.
- Replace the mini roundabouts at the two junctions (Arbury Road/St Albans Road and Arbury Road/ Mere Way) with changed priority junctions.

City Councillor Mike Todd-Jones spoke in support of the report recommendations, especially the proposals in relation to Plan 3, which he highlighted were welcomed by the majority of local residents, while acknowledging that there were different views from local members both from the County and District, as to the best way to achieve the improvements. He explained that from his point of view he did not have an issue with shared use paths. He explained that all local members wished to see improvements made and requested that the County Council officers should continue to consult with them on the detail of the schemes going forward. **Action: for Mike Davies**

In response to questions of clarification, one Member asked how many fatalities there had been at the junctions referred to over a number of years, and whether they involved cyclists or pedestrians. While the local councillor did not have this detailed information to hand, he made reference to the death of a motorcyclist at the St Albans Road junction which had received widespread press coverage and was very near to the local primary school.

Cambridge Cycling Campaign views were recorded in the officer's report and had the support from some of the local members. The Cycling Campaign were represented at the meeting by Martin Lucas-Smith who explained that while the Campaign supported the principle of measures which helped better safeguard children, they could not support the provision of shared use paths, as such facilities brought conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. Their view was that they should not be provided as part of new safety initiative schemes in urban settings. He provided details of their alternative proposal for a cycle route. He suggested that the Committee should approve the principle of the schemes but that officers should be asked to come back with a revised scheme that avoided shared use paths.

In response the officers explained that the schemes as set out in plans 2-5 of the report had been designed to make cycling and walking safer within the restrictions of the

space available and that large sections of Arbury Road were not wide enough to accommodate segregated cycle and pedestrian provision due to the built up nature and where thereby by necessity shared use. Officers also highlighted that taking more land on sections of Arbury Road where it was available would be a far more expensive option and would result in a reduction in much valued open, green space, and would also require the removal of a substantial number of mature trees. Any resulting paths would only carry on for short distances before having to revert to a shared use. The proposal so far as officers where practicable, would widen existing shared paths to provide more room in order to minimise cyclist / pedestrian conflict. In terms of funding for a more elaborate scheme, this could be looked at later, as part of a more detailed scheme supported by City Deal monies. Any delay would jeopardise the stated aim to improve the safety of pedestrians / cyclists.

Members of the Committee in debate expressed views including:

- that the proposal to remove a high hedge next to the school would remove a barrier between children and the path used by cyclists and could lead to increased conflict and potential injury to children.
- whether it would be appropriate to support some aspects of the scheme while asking that others be deferred.
- Concerns were expressed on the shared path use outside of the primary school and the safety of small children, especially at home time when they were excited and could not be expected to be responsible enough to look out for speeding cyclists. One Member having already highlighted the anti-social behaviour of some cyclists who rode at great speed with no regard to the safety of other users.
- One Member asked whether officers could consider the use of flashing warning signs or giving priority to pedestrians over cyclists during school opening and closing times.

In response to the above, officers explained that it was the parents of school children and St Laurence School itself who particularly supported the proposals outside the school. These were on the basis that many of the children were also cyclists and came to school on wheeled transport, often accompanied by their parents. The point was also made that officers believed that fast, confident adult cyclists who currently used the main road would not come off the main road to use the shared facilities, but would continue as currently, to avoid being delayed. The chief basis of the provision of shared use paths was to accommodate children who were being encouraged to get into the habit of cycling to school, without having to mix with motor traffic. The proposed changes outside St Laurence's school would give more room for non-motorised users at busy times and would contribute to encouraging active travel to and from the school.

One of the Members of the Committee who was also the County Council's Cycling Champion, drew Members' attention to the consultation results which showed a large majority of local residents being in support of the scheme proposed in the officer's report.

The Executive Director responding to a proposal to delay approval and to delegate to officers in consultation with local members to look to revising the detail of the scheme further and reporting back to the next meeting, highlighted that officers already believed that the scheme proposed was the best available. He did not believe that further consultation with local members who held differing views on what they would wish to see in a scheme, would result in a revised scheme that would be universally acceptable. Any further consultation would be a further drain on limited officers resources required on other projects with time line constraints. He also made the point that due to the close proximity of the next Committee meeting any request for a revised report would not be able to be brought back to Committee until March at the earliest, as it would take time and officer resources to set up the additional local meetings required. He suggested that the Committee should either agree or reject the scheme at the current meeting.

Councillor Jenkins suggested the Committee should only agree recommendations a), b) and c) of the report and that recommendations d) and e) relating to remodeling the two junctions and changing the road layout and paths outside the school should be deleted with a request that officers undertake further consultation with local County and District Councillors on a revised scheme for those aspects. To further this he moved an amendment that recommendations a), b) and c), should be the subject of one vote and recommendations d) and e) the subject of a separate vote. The amendment was seconded by Councillor Williams and on being put to the vote was lost. The recommendations as set out in the report were then voted on and

It was resolved:

a) to note the consultation results;

and to approve:

b) a new controlled crossing and path at Kings Hedges Road/Arbury Road junction for construction;

c) the widening and resurfacing of paths around Kings Hedges Recreation Ground;

d) remodelling of the Mere Way/Arbury Road and St Albans Road/Arbury Road junctions;

e) changes to the road layout and paths outside St Laurence's School.

81. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN – UPDATE 2014

This report updated members on the outputs of the Cambridgeshire County Council Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) Countywide Update 2014 and its' associated work streams and sought approval to the Multi Criteria analysis methodology for the prioritisation of wetspots and to apply for funding to implement

recommendations in the March and Histon and Impington SWMP Reports and to seek funding from partners towards key work from key stakeholders.

It was explained that the objectives of the Countywide update were to:

- Collate and review additional flood incidents records from 2011 to 2014 made available by the SWMP stakeholders to identify that the initial wet spot list remains appropriate;
- Revise the prioritisation methodology to make use of the updated national surface water flood risk mapping available from the Environment Agency; and
- Produce a revised list of wet spot prioritisation to assist the County and partners in taking action and allocating resources for future investigation via SWMPs.

In 2010, the County Council had developed a Strategic Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) which, following stakeholder engagement, was published in April 2011. The Plan had been based on the data and evidence available at the time, and detailed a prioritised list of wet spots in the County that were vulnerable to surface water flooding. Since the production of the Plan in 2011, more up to date evidence and data had become available, most notably the national flood risk mapping data set available from the Environment Agency. As a result, the outputs from the Plan needed to be updated. In addition, in recent years, and most recently in 2014, instances of surface water flooding had occurred providing additional data with which to appraise the priority of the wet spots.

Tables in paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 of the report provided a prioritised list of the highest scoring areas of the County as well as a separate table showing the Districts of the County including details of their three top priority areas. It was explained that the full lists ran to hundreds of names. One Member asked why March was top of the County Wet List but only third in the district ranked list which was topped by Cambridge City with Fenland only ranked third. It was explained that the Countywide prioritised list was the whole county ranking which was the one required by DEFRA, while the list in 2.5 was just a list of the top three wet areas for each district area that they had asked to be provided and this table was shown in district alphabetical order which was why Cambridge City was top, East Cambridgeshire second, Fenland third etc.

Comments / issues raised by Members included:

- Drawing attention to comments provided by Councillor Mason included as appendix 1 to these minutes.
- On the need to ensure that new developments were built on the basis of adequate drainage infrastructure being provided at the outset.
- One Member explained that poor maintenance of a catch water drain had been the cause of the recent flooding of Ely Cathedral which linked to the increased volume of water running into Victorian drains from new build estates never designed for the volume of water now handled, highlighted the need for a multi-agency approach to ensure those responsible undertook their responsibilities to help prevent future repeats.

- One Member queried that there appeared to be no reference in the report to cross border working. In response it was explained that the Environment Agency had produced a Flood Risk Strategy taking into account the movement of water across county boundaries. In addition different agencies and Councils work together, including joint meetings being convened, to discuss issues on a quarterly basis.
- On the issue of seeking flood grant aid funding to build flood deterrents in advance of developments being built, it was explained that part of the cost benefit calculation to gain Flood Defence Grant Aid was dependent on properties being affected. Therefore areas with properties already built on would qualify, rather than open land that could be developed.
- Seeking an update on the status of the Government legislation on Sustainable Drainage Approval Body implementation it was indicated that the legislation was still going through Parliament, but that the intention was that district councils would be responsible for assessing the drainage provision in new developments and county councils would be a statutory consultee. A report would come forward to the Committee once the legislation had been confirmed.
- One Member expressed surprise that the highest rank priority area based on risk in Cambridge City was shown as Cherry Hinton as this did not reflect local member perceptions of the most at risk flood area. It was explained that the ranking was based on national data from Government which ranked Cherry Hinton in the top 20 wet spots based on previous flooding incidents, the area had flooded several times in the past and several homes were inhabited by vulnerable people. All of which added additional points as to why it had been being fast tracked.

It was resolved:

- a) To approve the Multi-Criteria Analysis methodology for the prioritisation of the wetspots as detailed in the report under section 2.
- b) To approve applying for funding to implement the recommendations of the March SWMP, and Histon and Impington SWMP reports. This would be via the Environment Agency administered 'Medium Term Plan Grant in Aid'.
- c) To seek, as appropriate, partnership contributions toward funding key work from key stakeholders such as Water Companies, private companies, and District and Parish Councils.

82. A14 DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER (DCO) PROCESS AND NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE ON ISSUES RAISED IN THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S CONSULTATION RESPONSE

This report provided an update on progress with the Highways Agency's (HA) Development Consent Order (DCO) Process for the A14 Scheme and on the negotiations to address issues and concern raised by the County Council's Consultation Process. It also sought feedback on the draft 'Relevant Representation to the Planning Inspectorate' response prepared to register the County Council's interest in responding

to the CDO process as set out in Appendix 1 to the officer's report. This had been required to be submitted by 31st December. The timetable for formal submission was now expected during May ahead of the anticipated examination which was likely to commence in June.

It was highlighted that the Highways Agency (HA) was keen to maintain momentum to avoid impacting on timescales for delivery of the scheme (subject to approvals). Therefore, it was likely that timescales for considering the application would be challenging. Officers would be organising briefings with members to ensure due consideration of the issues. To meet the challenging timescales, it was proposed that the Economy and Environment Committee would consider and take the decision on the final submission at a special meeting scheduled for 14th May for which invites would be sent out shortly. The intention was also to hold joint briefings with both Economy & Environment and Highways & Community Infrastructure Spokes and Committees, during April to ensure an integrated approach to consideration and feedback on representations and submissions to the DCO from the County Council.

Section 3 of the report detailed the process and likely timetable. Section 4 set out the progress on key issues in relation to:

- **Requirements and protective provisions** – officers had provided the Highways Agency with a list of topics to be covered by requirements in the DCO as set out in the detail of the report.
- **Asset Management and Transfer** - 20 km of roads were to be added to the Council's responsibilities and officers were discussing the detail as set out in the report.
- **Traffic Forecasts**- To assist with the assessment of the robustness of the HA's model, the County Council were procuring the support of specialist consultants to ensure appropriate expertise and to ensure that areas of concern and agreement could be highlighted in the 'Statement of Common Ground'.
- **Removal of the Huntingdon viaduct** - it was reported that the County Council had continued to raise concerns regarding capacity and safety for those walking and cycling between Hinchbrook and the Station once the viaduct was removed. The HA had confirmed that they were not planning to provide a foot/cycle bridge adjacent to the Brampton Road Railway bridge. A recent meeting the HA had confirmed that the footpath would be 3m wide, and on the basis of their most recent counts and assessment, they consider that this level of provision was adequate for those walking and cycling in this area. This would be tested by the County Council especially given that this was such a busy key route linking to a school and hospital.
- **Ecological Issues** - Officers had raised concerns over likely impacts on Buckden Gravel Pits County Wildlife site (CWS) and potential impacts on River Great Ouse CWS.
- **Archaeology** - Officers were keen to ensure that the HA expedited the work required to inform the mitigation design for archaeology /historic environment and legacy works, in time for the submission of the DCO. Discussions have been ongoing and the archaeological assessment would form part of the Environmental Statement (ES), and the HA confirmed that they were open to considering possibilities for the display of discoveries or public viewing points.
- **Capacity and resilience to cater for growth** - The HA had confirmed that all known major developments with the exception of Wyton were included in the traffic

forecasts. Wyton had not been included due to it being at an early stage, but was allowed for in general growth assumptions. Bar Hill junction was being designed for Northstowe Phases 1 and 2, but with widened embankments and bridges to allow for Phase 3. Officers are seeking assurances that no cost with build out to Phase 3 will fall on the County Council. Design of the B1050 allows for Northstowe.

- **Borrow Pits** -Discussions are continuing with regard to the borrow pits that were proposed to supply construction materials for the scheme. Officers were continuing to work with the HA in order to refine the level of detail and provide a more detailed analysis of any site related issues. Of particular importance, there was a need to establish a clear management strategy for restored sites to ensure that the proposed after-uses were successfully established.

Section 5 of the report detailed the representations that the County Council intended to undertake to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS)

Attention was drawn to a submission to the Committee made by Councillor Bullen which is included as Appendix 2 to these minutes.

Councillor Scutt spoke as a local member and drew attention to the A14 works being an opportunity to address the issue of the gyratory system at Mitcham's Corner which she highlighted currently interfered with local trade and was a danger to cyclists in its current configuration. Any changes here that involved removal of trees required to be taken in consultation with local residents. She also requested that the compound to be built to store machinery for the A14 project should be sited in such a position as to be able to be utilised at a later date for a future park and ride site and include permanent facilities including lavatories. In response officers clarified that the A14 would not come so far into Cambridge as to affect Milton Road. In terms of the construction of a compound this was likely to be convenient to the A14 works rather than being sited on road routes and was unlikely to be in an appropriate location. In response Councillor Scutt made reference to a City Deal report which did have proposals which would affect Milton Road and was highlighting a need for creative thinking in terms of the siting of the Compound. The Chairman indicated that the City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council were aware of the proposals she had outlined.

Members of the Committee's comments included:

- In terms of the list in the section on 'Requirements and Protective Provisions' one Member highlighted that noise appeared to be missing from the list of requirements from the DCO to be further discussed by officers and the HA. In discussion the officers were asked to ensure environmental Issues should be added. In response Head of Transport, Infrastructure, Policy and Funding indicated that the report was a current status update and that officers were looking to develop a local impact report in consultation with district councils. She would ensure noise and other environmental issues were added. **Action: Dearbhla Lawson**
- In relation to the removal of the viaduct while the width of the footpath proposed was relatively wide and while the Vice Chairman recognised that the HA had recently confirmed that it would be increased from 2m to 3m there was a need for officers to still press hard for a proper safe crossing across the A14 for those walking and cycling. In discussion on seeking a wider footpath than the 3m proposed, as this

was a standard width, evidence of the safety need would be required, if officers wished to press for it to be wider still.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the process, timescales and progress with the Highways Agency (HA) on addressing issues and comment on this and the way forward.
- b) endorse the proposed initial response to the Planning Inspectorate (Appendix 1 of the report) to register the County Council's interest in the Development Consent Order (DCO) process.

83. A428/ A421 ALLIANCE

This report updated the Committee on key issues for the A428 and recent announcements regarding investment for the route. The report detailed the progress in establishing an A428/ A421 Alliance of partners following the motion approved in September by Full Council with the list of partners who had joined, set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report. The report also sought two member nominations to serve on it to represent the County Council.

The report highlighted those sections of the route which had been the subject of a long campaign for improvements, including the single carriageway section from Caxton Gibbet to St Neots where the route joined the A1 to the Black Cat roundabout. Paragraphs 1.3 to 1.7 of the report highlighted the proposals for improvements to this and other sections.

Specifically highlighted was an announcement from Government made on 2nd December regarding plans for £15bn investment as part of the Highways Agency Road Investment Strategy (RIS) to 2021 and in the outlined areas for investment included the 'Dualling of the A428 to create a continuous 'expressway' from Cambridge to Bedford and Milton Keynes, to support of the growth of some of the fastest-growing towns and cities in the corridor' and 'dualling of the remaining single carriageway section between Caxton Gibbet west of Cambridge and the M1, including a grade separated junction at the A1 Black Cat roundabout'. The scheme was likely to come forward towards the end of the Investment period 2020/21. In addition to this planned investment, an Oxford to Cambridge Expressway Study was planned to consider how a continuous 'expressway' might be created from Cambridge to Bedford and Milton Keynes. The study would focus on the case for extending this expressway from Milton Keynes to Oxford.

In discussion Councillor Chapman in highlighting the huge projected growth in St Neots, Little Paxton / Bedfordshire going forward, proposed that three rather than just two representatives would be appropriate for the Council representation on the Alliance. He proposed this as a formal amendment which was seconded by Councillor Kavanagh and on being put to the vote was agreed by a majority. The lead officer advised that while nominations could be recommended, that Members should note that the Alliance had not yet agreed its terms of reference.

One Member making reference to the proposal for an expressway indicated he would not wish this as an alternative to the Oxford / Cambridge 'varsity line' rail link and that both should be supported and progressed as both were required. In response as reassurance, the Chairman of the Committee indicated that he was the Chairman of the particular group looking at the 'varsity line' and gave assurance that it was still an on-going project which was being taken in two parts Oxford to Bedford and then Bedford to Cambridge. Work on the Bedford – Cambridge section had already begun, but as a considerable section of what had been the previous rail line was no longer there as a result of developments the identification of potential routes was still ongoing. The Chairman indicated he could provide Councillor Walsh with more details outside of the meeting. **Action: Councillor Bates.**

In relation to the Committee agreeing three nominations to the Alliance, five nominations were moved and seconded for further consideration as follows:

Councillor Kindersley (nominated as a local member)
Councillor Kavanagh
Councillor Chapman
Councillor Harty
Councillor Bates

As there were five nomination and three proposed places, each member of the Committee was asked to vote for three members only. The results of the voting were that the three nominations who had received the highest number of votes were duly appointed.

It was resolved to:

- a) To note progress with establishing an A428/A421 Alliance to lobby for improvements on the route;
- b) To note investment plans for dualling the A428 and plans for a study into potential for an expressway from Cambridge to Oxford and;
- c) To agree to nominate three representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council for the Alliance as follows:
 - Councillor Ian Bates
 - Councillor Barry Chapman
 - Councillor David Harty

84. OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS

This report updated the Committee on the business planning process and timetable for final decisions which it was asked to note and made associated recommendations. It included an update on the financial overview, proposals agreed by service committees, the consultation process, and the Strategic Framework.

Section 2.4 to 2.7 provided details of the Capital Programme including a list of several further amendments to borrowing which had resulted in revised borrowing levels and revenue debt charges as set out.

It was highlighted that during the current business planning cycle the General Purposes Committee (GPC) had retained £2.5m revenue funding to be allocated against significant pressures as they emerged. On 2 December 2014 GPC had agreed the allocation of this resource which had resulted in an additional allocation to Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) of £0.5m. Within ETE, the allocation of the additional funding required to be agreed between this Committee and Highways and Community Infrastructure. Discussions within the two committees had identified four areas of savings that if reprieved, could make a significant difference to local communities. For Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee these related to three areas: Winter maintenance, Street lighting and Community Grants and Trading Standards, while this Committee had identified 'Fenland Learning Centres' as a priority area.

The Committee was therefore asked to agree the sum of £179,000 for the priority area 'Fenland Learning Centres' to help protect the existing number of learners. It was highlighted that this money would support the service for 2015/16 but with the very tight budget restrictions in future years, officers could not give any guarantees for this service area beyond 2015/16.

It was resolved:

- a) To note the remaining milestones in the Business Planning Process,
- b) To confirm the use of additional funding identified through the General Purposes Committee on 2nd December 2014 to reinstate the funding to Fenland Learning Centres of £179,000 to protect the existing numbers of learners as set down in paragraph 3.4 of this report for inclusion in the Budget for the Committee to be considered by General Purposes Committee on 27th January 2015

85. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT NOVEMBER 2014

This report provided the Committee with an opportunity to comment on the projected financial and performance outturn position as at the end of November 2014.

It was highlighted that:

- at the end of November, ETE was forecasting a year end underspend on revenue of £540,000. The cost centres under the stewardship of the E&E Committee were however forecasting a year end overspend of £118,000.
- An overspend of £270,000 was forecast on Park and Ride, where usage of the sites has been lower than the anticipated level since the introduction of the parking fee. This situation is being closely monitored, but it remained too early to determine if the initial downturn in numbers was temporary or whether usage would revert back to previous levels.

- At the end of November, ETE was forecasting a yearend underspend on capital of £27.262 million.
- There were five significant areas of forecast underspend for which this Committee had responsibility, four, in relation to the Science Park Station, the Connecting Cambridgeshire project, the Guided Busway and the Huntingdon West of Town link road had been discussed previously.
- The new underspend was in relation to Cycling Schemes where the Department for Transport had agreed that Cycling City Ambition Grant could now be rolled into 2015-16, which meant that schemes funded from this source could be undertaken to revised timeframes.
- Of the eleven performance indicators for the Committee three were currently red, one amber and seven green. One of these, in relation to County matter planning applications determined within 13 weeks was expected to be red at yearend.
- The two other indicators that currently had a status of red were in relation to the number of local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area and the percentage of complaints responded to within ten days.

Members commented as follows:

- In relation to the appendix and paragraph 4.3 - Amber indicators - Adult Learning and Skills section - indicator on the number of people completing courses to improve their chances of employment or progression in work in the (2014/15 academic year) – one Member sought clarification on the length of courses and whether they were courses of more than a year duration. In reply it was indicated that the courses were of varying lengths and the statistics identified those completing courses in 2014/15.
- One Member expressed concern at the complaints statistics on passenger Transport in relation to parking machines and queues at the park and ride sites. which were contributing to failing to achieve the challenging 90% target of providing responses within 10 days. In response, the Executive Director agreed that the performance required improvement but the bigger issue was in relation to the feedback system currently operated by the Council which the Director: Customer Service And Transformation, was looking into, as it was often the case that complainants were not being passed to the Service in a timely manner to be able to achieve the target. A report would be coming back to General Purposes Committee on the issue.
- Another issue was in relation to the target being exceeded for the percentage of invoices being paid on time and that while this was commendable, whether this was having a negative effect on the Council's cashflow. In response it was indicated that as most payments to suppliers were automated, there was little effect on the Council's cashflow and it was important for small suppliers to receive early payment. It was noted that the expectation from central government

was that all invoices should be paid on time with the 97% target being an agreed local target.

- There was a query regarding whether it was possible to identify the identity of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and whether any could be classed as being in the same category as persistent complainants, as the experience of a district council had been that they received many FOI requests from a small number of sources which tied up a lot of officer resource to answer them with the final result in many cases being that the answer was not accepted. In reply it was agreed that there were a small number of organisations /individuals who made multiple requests, but as they often related to different issues, they had to be dealt with individually. What would help reduce costs was if general questions could be asked without an FOI, as these could be answered more efficiently and cheaper by telephone or an e-mail reply without recourse to what was a bureaucratic system. The issue was if an enquiry came in via the FOI route, it had to be dealt with in accordance with those procedures. **Action: The Chairman / Vice Chairman to look at the current complaints / FOI procedures to see if any streamlining could be suggested.**
- Page 6 paragraph 4.4 – a Member welcomed the fact that 7,700 additional jobs had been created but indicated that these needed to be quality, full time jobs as opposed to zero hours jobs / part time jobs. In response it was indicated that the statistics did not identify the type of jobs these represented.
- From page 11 with reference to the drop in patronage at park and ride sites since the introduction of parking fees, there was a question on what officer action would be required if this drop continued. In response it was indicated that the shortfall in the expected income from 'park and ride would be covered from within the ETE budget as a whole. It was highlighted that if the fees had not been introduced, the Council would have been looking at a shortfall of another £800k, which would have required additional savings and further very tough decisions on cuts to be made to offset this, as this had represented £800k additional income having been received. It was indicated that a report on Park and Ride was scheduled to come forward to the next meeting.

It was resolved;

To review and comment on the report.

86. ELY SOUTHERN BYPASS – ELY BYPASS PROJECT BOARD - APPROVAL OF TWO COUNTY COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

This report sought approval to the appointment of two members to the Ely Southern Bypass Project Board.

The appointment of Councillor Rouse as the local member to the Board had already been proposed in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and the Committee was asked to formally agree the appointment.

For the second non local member nomination Councillors Lay, Jenkins and Shuter were duly moved and seconded as nominations for further consideration by the Committee. Following a vote on the three nominations, Councillor Shuter received the most votes and was duly confirmed as the second appointment to the Board.

It was resolved:

- a) To approve the appointment of County Councillor Michael Rouse, as Local Member for Ely North and East, to the Project Board as set out in section 2.1.
- b) To agree to appoint Councillor Shuter as the non-local member to the Project Board

87. SERVICE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN

The following updates were orally provided by Democratic Services:

- Ring Fort Path moved again and was now scheduled to be considered at the 10th March Committee meeting.
- The title of the report from Colum Fitzsimons due to go to 10th March meeting has been amended to read: Developer Contributions Practice Guide
- the title of the Northstowe report also for 10th March Committee had changed to: 'Northstowe 2 Section 106 Heads of Terms (provisional)'

In discussion, additional reports were requested to be added.

It was resolved:

- a) To note the Agenda Plan as amended with oral updates provided at the meeting by Democratic Services
- b) To request a report be programmed on the Quality Bus Partnership agreement.
- c) To programme an update report on the progress following the agreed Motion from Council to revive the Cambridgeshire Future Transport Member Steering Group for the purpose of actively promoting a coordinated, multi-disciplinary strategic approach to Community Transport, and
- d) To agree that an updated Plan should be circulated to the Committee Members after the meeting.

88. DATE OF NEXT MEETING 10 A.M. 3RD FEBRUARY 2015

Noted.

Chairman
3rd February 2015

Agenda Item 5 Surface Water Management Plan Update 2014. Comments from Councillor M.J. Mason. Cottenham Histon and Impington Division

Para 2.10 2.11 As one of the local members I have been directly involved with Histon and Impington Parish Council in producing the data and historic observations to assist in preparation of the Pre Appraisal Report.

This document responds to the historic problems encountered in the village over many years with serious flooding in 1978, 1988, 2001, 2003, 2005 and again last year. It has been well received locally and I wholeheartedly support the recommendation to take it forward for FDGiA application.

Para 2.12 Whilst the suggested potential solutions of upstream flow attenuation and channel capacity improvement on Award Watercourses Nos. 164 (Histon) and 165 (Impington) would undoubtedly benefit properties and infrastructure in Histon and Impington, we should not lose sight of the downstream catchment benefit for Oakington and Cottenham. This whole low gradient catchment (Beck Brook/Cottenham Lode) will be at risk from development at Darwin Green, NW Cambridge, Northstowe, Impington and very importantly, the A14 upgrade works. The Committee should also note that Histon and Impington Parish Council, supported financially by local charities and volunteers, have in recent years carried out substantial channel and environmental improvements at the confluence of 164 and 165 at Histon Village Green. As riparian owners they are currently involved in further improvement works at this location and are assisting CC Highways Bridges Section and South Cambs.DC with de-silting works in the long B1049 culvert. This work will assist in the long term management of flood risk.

At a recent meeting hosted by Highways Agency at Huntingdon I have drawn the attention of their drainage consultant to the publication of the Histon and Impington PAR. Since the County Council are contributing £25M of local taxpayer's money to this upgrade, I would respectfully suggest that the Committee instruct Officers to pursue contribution from the Highways Agency. This request should also form part of the County Council response to the A14 Environmental Statement recently published.

Furthermore, as the document is now published with this agenda on CCC Web Site, it should be entered as a core document for the City and South Cambs. Local Plans Joint Examination in Public, for the information of and discussion by all participants. A very recent Statement from Eric Pickles has made it absolutely clear that these plans and documents will be considered as **material evidence** in the preparation of local plans and in determination of planning applications. The statement from Government also indicated that as a Lead Local Flood Authority, the County Council will become a statutory consultee on local planning policy with effect from May 1st 2015. Submission of this document to the current Inquiry Process would clearly signify the Councils' intention and justify the cost of its production.

ITEM 6 - A14 Development Consent Order (Dco) – Process and Negotiations Update on Issues raised in the County Council's Consultation Response – Comments From Councillor Paul Bullen

I refer to the above agenda item which will be discussed by members of the Economy & Environment Committee on Tuesday 13th January 2015.

As submitted, I have serious concerns regarding the value, benefit and environmental impact of the scheme in its present form.

Many members of my constituency have stated that this project has been treated entirely as a National Infrastructure Development and that regional or local issues have not been given the hearing that they deserve. In addition, concerns have been raised regarding the £100M local contribution some of which is being taken from the pockets of local Council Tax payers to pay for the scheme and their opinion is that you can't have it both ways. If, as already stated, this is a significant national project, then the full funding should be met by central government. Serious concerns have been raised, with me, by many residents of Huntingdon, Houghton, Wyton and St Ives regarding the removal of the viaduct and the impact that this will have on local roads and especially the A1123. It is believed that people transiting the A14 from the North will not make the longer journey on the new A14 but will 'rat run' via the A141 and the A1123 to re-join the current road at either St Ives or Fenstanton. It is genuinely believed that the current plan will cause more congestion on local roads than we have at present and that the A1123 will become 'grid-locked' for many hours of the working day.

Residents of Brampton, Buckden and the Offords have expressed concerns regarding the impact of the new road on their lives and they are especially concerned about air pollution, light pollution, noise pollution, dust and drainage and flooding as well as the impact of the scheme on the value of their homes. To place so many new lanes of traffic so close to existing villages is simply absurd.

I firmly believe that local voices have not been properly heard during the consultation period and that there is, even at this late stage, a lower impact, better value option available for the upgrade of the existing A14 which will take into account all of the local concerns and enable the current road to be upgraded.

The current scheme just doesn't stack up. If the promised improvements are made to the A428 offering the desired alternative route to the A1 and, if the current infrastructure is improved rather than re-routed, a cheaper alternative solution could be designed within the required timescale. Any suggestion that as we have already spent millions on the planning and, therefore, have to plough on regardless and spend even vaster sums seeing the scheme through irrespective of better alternatives is a nonsense.