

## **CABINET: MINUTES**

**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011

**Time:** 10.00 a.m. – 12.40 p.m.

**Present:** Chairman: Councillor N Clarke

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

**Apologies:** none

**Present by invitation:** Councillors: S Austin, B Farrer, T Sadiq, M Smith, T Stone, S Whitebread and G Wilson.

### **455. MINUTES: 27<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were approved as a correct record.

### **456. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Curtis declared a personal interest under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct in item 4i) Called In Decision : Windfarm Development on County Farms Estate as the vice chairman on Fenland District Council's Planning Committee.

### **457. PETITIONS**

#### **Petition requesting a Pedestrian Crossing on Downham Road, Ely**

Cabinet received a petition with over 930 validated signatures, reading:

“We, the undersigned, petition the County Council to provide a pedestrian crossing for Downham Road, Ely to ensure the safety of parents, children and students, whilst crossing the road to attend two separate schools and a college.

The current situation of a "single road sign" is not considered sufficient protection for our children crossing the road.

We hereby demand that the County Council provide a safe means for our children to cross Downham Road in the form of a Pedestrian Crossing, with pedestrian traffic lights and all necessary road signage for motorists travelling in both directions, as that which is afforded to those pedestrians on the Kings Road, Ely whom attend a single school.

The spokesman Anna Rogers on behalf of the petitioners addressed the meeting highlighting that:

- Her four year old daughter had been knocked over on the above road in February and required hospital treatment, although fortunately she was not seriously injured. The driver involved was not prosecuted as the police investigation concluded no one was to blame as the accident happened at a spot which was not a legal crossing point.
- While there were speed bumps and 30 mph signs on the road, she did not believe them to be adequate, citing the dangers of cars overtaking each other and considered along with many other residents that there was an unacceptable risk of serious injury or death as the schools in the area contained approximately 2,000 students.
- There had been five near misses that she was aware of during the time her daughter had been at the local school
- A woman had been knocked down and killed in an adjoining road the previous week, during a time when traffic lights were out of action.

In response Councillor Criswell the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure responsible for highways safety issues undertook to personally visit the site in order to ascertain and agree the most appropriate course of action with officers. *(Note Councillor Criswell subsequently undertook the site visit accompanied by Anna Rogers and Councillor Sue Austen the local member for Ely South and West)*

**It was resolved:**

That as there was no related report on the agenda, the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure would send a written response to the petitioners within 10 working days of the meeting.

**458. CALLED IN DECISION REFERRAL: WIND FARM DEVELOPMENT ON COUNTY FARMS ESTATE AND RESPONSE**

Councillor Farrer the Vice-Chairman of the Enterprise Growth and Community Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (representing the chairman who had been unable to attend) introduced the report (which the vice chairman indicated he had personally voted against) which sought that Cabinet should reconsider its decision to defer wind farm development on the County Farms Estate and instead:

- Assess potential wind farm developments on the County Farms Estate on a case by case basis.
- Develop guidance to support decision making about wind farm developments on the County Farms Estate.

The Liberal Democrat Spokesman for Localism, Climate Change and Social Justice, Councillor Whitebread spoke on the item acknowledging that the Cabinet response proposed a small concession in terms of the County Council owned estate in relation to small wind turbines. She also made reference to the Cambridgeshire Renewables Infrastructure Framework (CRIF) which was examining the potential opportunities to generate renewable energy in Cambridgeshire *(note: using renewables such as solar panels, wind turbines, and biomass combined heat and power plants)* and hoped the County Council would embrace the opportunities available as well as requesting clarification of some of the points in the response.

The Leader of Council in providing an initial response wished to make clear that the policy decision being discussed was in relation to the County Farms estate, on the basis of the County Council being the appropriate landowner.

In introducing the response the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance made clear that in supporting the original Cabinet decision to defer windfarm developments on the County Farms estate this was being taken on the basis that the Integrated Planning Process was annually reviewed in terms of factors such as environmental considerations and public opinion and in the meantime, it was considered appropriate to prepare guidance for small low impact developments which would also take into account CRIF.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services making reference to the number of large scale windfarms developments already approved in Fenland made the point that localism had spoken on this issue in terms of the level of local opposition received to the original proposals approved by Cabinet in February and in support of the revised Cabinet decision in September.

A number of Cabinet members spoke in support of the revised recommendations, citing the new technologies being developed as an alternative to the very high wind turbines that had been erected on other wind farms which were considered to be far too high and obtrusive in relation to the flat landscape prevalent in Cambridgeshire (*Note for scale often as high as Ely Cathedral*). The proposed guidance would allow the opportunity to consider smaller, less intrusive, more effective energy generation schemes which would be far more acceptable to people living in rural areas and which would also take into account that large turbines might soon be technologically obsolete. The point was also made that there were no significant financial implications from reaffirming the decision made at the Cabinet meeting in September as no assumptions had been made regarding income in the IPP.

**It was resolved:**

- a) To thank the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its recommendations.
- b) To reconfirm Cabinet's original decision to defer wind farm developments on the County Farms Estate.
- c) that the preparation of guidance for a case by case approach to single and small clusters of small turbines / wind farm proposals brought forward by County Council farm estate tenants should be delegated to the LGSS Director of Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance who would consult with the Cambridgeshire Local Planning Authorities.

**459. HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE MEMBER LED REVIEW INTERIM REPORT**

The Chairman of the Review Group set up by the Enterprise, Growth and community Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Councillor Graham Wilson presented a report setting out the interim findings and recommendations of a review regarding road and footpath maintenance.

He tabled a document which set out a summary of the following main findings:

- The County contained 4295km of roads and 7070km of footpaths
- £8m would be spent on road and footpath maintenance in 2011/12 to just hold it as it was.
- 4% of class A roads, 7% of B and C roads were in a condition where maintenance should be considered and approximately 25% of unclassified roads and footpaths required maintenance
- That insurance claims had doubled in the last five years
- without a significant increase in expenditure, the road network would continue to deteriorate
- annual revenue spending needed to double to bring the whole network to a good standard.

The recommendations from the interim review were summarised as being the need to:

- develop an 'asset management' (whole-life cost) approach to highway maintenance.
- improve the current highways contracts and supervisory procedures to increase value for money.
- work with Northamptonshire County Council to reduce back office costs
- substantially increase revenue funding, including a ring fenced budget to address the worst problems.
- use prudential borrowing, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds, New Homes Bonus and other sources of funds.
- focus resources initially on improving all well used parts of the network.
- improve communications to manage expectations and use the network responsibly.
- increase the defect period from one to two years.

The group intended to undertake further work before submitting its final report with the aim of influencing the IPP including:

- Meeting the senior managers of Atkins and seeking their perceptions on current arrangements and their suggestions for improvements.
- Meeting with the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure and lead officers.
- Reviewing alternative sources of additional funding.
- Improving its understanding of the value for money from current operations.
- Comparing the insurance claims costs of the Council with those of other highway authorities.

As an initial response the Leader of the Council welcomed the very thorough report but he and other Cabinet Members queried the statement regarding insurance claims having doubled and the implied assumption that it was as a result of maintenance reductions and presenting it as fact without providing the evidence base / hard science to back it up. Cabinet Members highlighted other factors which could also have had an influence on the increase in claims such as the increase in the number of vehicles on the road and that people had become (partly as a result of advertising from specialist legal firms) more willing to make insurance claims against the Council. Cabinet's view was that this was an area that required more investigation.

Further to the above there was also a query on whether the Council was applying a correct approach to claims received and was not just accepting them without

appropriate investigation. The LGSS Director of Finance indicated that the Council had a very active and successful approach to insurance claims made against it, which was proved by the fact that the insurance premium would be reducing in the next year. As there was further discussion later in the debate, he agreed to share the Principle Insurers annual report with both Cabinet and overview and scrutiny.

The Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure welcomed the report and suggested that the scrutiny working group should meet with the Cabinet Member and senior officers to consider the detail of what is a very wide ranging and complex review to enable the recommendations to be given full consideration as part of the IPP and the review of future service provision.

He highlighted work already being undertaken which included:

- That the Eastern Highways Alliance would be monitoring performance.
- Discussions already underway with Northamptonshire on finding efficiencies.
- That Audit recommendations were already included as part of the review of Highways Services.
- As it had already proved successful as a pilot, rolling out the Highways Warden Scheme.
- A programme was under way to address local concerns and engage with communities.

The point was made that proposals for extra capital investment would have to be considered in the wider context of the IPP and competing bids for capital and revenue resources as well as the statutory responsibilities the County Council had in relation to Adult Social Care and Children's Services.

Reference was made to the need for:

- Effective monitoring of the damage caused by utilities digging up the public highway which were then not always repaired to the appropriate standard.
- Effective monitoring of water companies to effect speedy repairs to prevent increased damage to the highways.
- The usage of roads before undertaking costly resurfacing. A local example was cited of a stretch of road which had been recently resurfaced but was already breaking up at the edges as the road was not wide enough to accommodate two heavy goods vehicles passing each other.

**It was resolved:**

- a) To thank the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its work and advice on this matter.
- b) To agree the responses to the recommendations in the interim report.
- c) To look forward to receiving the final report in due course.

**460. CALL IN LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES AGREEMENT (LPSA) REWARD GRANT FROM 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER CABINET**

The chairman announced that following the above call-in the relevant Overview and

Scrutiny Committee had met but had not made any recommendation back to Cabinet following consideration of the call-in at their meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> October. No further action was required to be taken and officers were able to action the decision from the date of the overview and scrutiny committee.

#### **461. BABRAHAM ROAD PARK AND RIDE EXTENSION**

Cabinet received a report seeking approval to the expansion of Babraham Road Park and Ride Site which due to its continued success was now the most heavily used park and ride site with full capacity being reached for almost two hours during weekdays. Approval was subject to receiving details at the meeting of a consultation exercise (which had a closing date of 10<sup>th</sup> October) and necessary planning requirements being met in due course.

It was highlighted that the site was designed to accommodate 1,000 cars, with the initial planning approval (1997) being for 500 car parking spaces, but as demand for the service increased, the remaining 500 spaces were consented and constructed in 2002. Such was its continued success that it was now at full capacity for almost two hours a day. The report set out details of the potential for expansion, funding and the benefits expected from the proposed expansion. Consultation results were tabled which confirmed 94% of responses (63) were in favour of the proposed extension and only 6% (10 responses) against. If agreed the outline programme set out in appendix A of the report was looking to potentially open the new spaces in advance of Christmas 2012.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Well Being who was also one of the local members for Sawston in supporting the proposals and drawing on his local experience suggested that expansion should be at the upper end of the scale in order to meet the demands now placed on the site.

#### **It was resolved:**

- a) To approve the development and submission of the planning application for the Babraham Road Park and Ride site.
- b) To approve the construction of 500-600 additional spaces and associated infrastructure subject to planning requirements, funded from Section 106 contributions from the Southern Area Transport corridor.

#### **LATE REPORTS**

The chairman agreed to take all the late reports included under the second dispatch under the discretion given to him under Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 with the reasons for lateness / reasons for urgency as included on the covering letter of the second dispatch

#### **462. INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

Cabinet received the Integrated Resources and Performance Reports for the period ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011. It was noted that the forecast year-end overspend was

£3.9 million at the end of September with the expectation of a better than balanced budget at year end including deploying reserves in December.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance placed on record his thanks to all the staff in Environment Services, Corporate Services and Children and Young People's Services involved in the continued efforts to reduce overspends and find further savings during the current municipal year as Adult and Social Care required further help with their budget position. He also for a balance perspective made the point that the current projected overspend only represented 1% of the overall Council budget.

The Leader of the Labour Group Councillor Sadiq highlighted that the efforts to reduce the adult social care overspend should not be compromised as a result of recently announced senior management changes and also stressed the need to ensure standards of care were maintained and staff terms and conditions protected in relation to independent providers of residential / nursing homes. The points made were acknowledged by Cabinet and it was explained that the 18 month appointment from December of Adrian Loades to oversee Adult Social Care was a very positive move as he had a vast amount of experience in the area as the previous Finance Director of Social Services in Cambridgeshire. Making reference to the performance targets on page 8 in relation to job creation, he believed there needed to be targets and more detailed information in relation to the region. In response to this point it was indicated that the enterprise zone was linked to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and this would be their responsibility. Job creation was also expected to be boosted once broadband was further rolled out.

Councillor Sadiq also drew attention to the performance indicator showing that there had been a rise in the number of killed or injured on the roads compared to the target figure and speculating whether there was a correlation to the reduction in road safety team staff. In response it was indicated the general trend had been downwards and that the current figure appeared to be a blip and also explaining that the staffing reduction would not be a factor, as changes had taken place in relation to integrating the service with an increased emphasis on analysing accidents that had occurred in specific locations and seeking to learn lessons from them.

The Leader requested more explanation in future in relation to what the direction of travel of the arrows represented on the performance targets section of the report.

**It was resolved:**

To note the analysis of resources and performance information and the remedial action currently being taken.

**463. DECISION MAKING PROTOCOL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHARED SERVICES**

Cabinet received a report seeking approval to a protocol setting out a future process

for instigating decisions having significant impact upon the Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) arrangements and in particular, any changes in scope of the service or structures of the Joint Committee. The protocol was to ensure that no significant decision in future should be taken by either of the founding Council's Cabinet or their

full Council meeting without first having been considered by the Joint Committee itself and on the basis of a recommendation from the Joint Committee.

**It was resolved:**

To approve the protocol attached as appendix A to the officer's report.

**464. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARENTING STRATEGY AND EARLY INTERVENTION FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

Cabinet received a report updating it on the developments across parenting and Family Support Services as part of the Parent Support Strategy to deliver against the preventative element of the Placements Strategy for Looked after Children and seeking endorsement to the approach. Tribute was paid to the efforts of Sarah Ferguson the Area Manager Localities and Partnership CYPS and her team for their work in taking forward what one of the most significant initiatives currently being undertaken by the County Council.

This followed on from the Integrated Planning Process 3011/12 decision agreeing that £1m of the Placements Budget for Looked after Children would be diverted to preventative work with families, seeking to reduce the number of children taken into local authority care as a result of family dysfunction by supporting families to stay together where it was in the best interests of the child. The Locality provision was to become more targeted, reducing the likelihood of families needing to access higher cost services. Children's Centres, alongside universal providers such as schools and health, would remain a crucial element of the early intervention community based provision, supporting the early identification of need.

It was highlighted that the allocation of the £1m Placements Budget and a proportion of the Early Intervention Grant will be used to cover the costs of the following as detailed in the report:

- Parenting Workforce Transformation, placing the workforce in Children's Centres and Localities on a more sustainable footing
- Consolidation of existing and further development of the targeted evidence based intensive family support programme, the Family Intervention Project (FIP)
- Piloting 5 x Senior Social Workers in Locality Teams
- The development of evidence based parenting programmes to build parenting skills and capacity.

**It was resolved:**

- a) To approve the proposal to move towards a more targeted approach with high need families with a view to reducing demand on other high cost services.
- b) To note the response to the consultation that had been carried out with the staff affected and to endorse the plan to move ahead on this basis.
- c) To endorse the negotiations that are under way with the Police and District Councils and other partners about possible investment with a view to creating a jointly commissioned service in the future.



#### **465. PLACEMENTS STRATEGY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN: KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER**

Cabinet received report providing an update on the development and implementation of Cambridgeshire's Placements Strategy for Looked After Children; the first draft of which was approved by Cabinet in February 2011 and was linked to the previous report as the strategy had a specific focus on minimising the need for children to become looked after by supporting families to stay together as well as setting out plans to commission and provide placements for children in care.

The updated strategy described progress and impact to date as well as detailing the ongoing workstreams and priorities looking ahead. It was highlighted that the first version of Cambridgeshire's Placements Strategy for Looked After Children was developed from July 2010 in response to a rise in the number of children in care from around 385 in 2007 to over 500 by the middle of 2010. This rising population created a significant pressure on the budget for care placements, but more importantly indicated a rising need amongst families in Cambridgeshire for effective support to help them stay together. The focus had therefore been on developing a clear, long-term commissioning strategy for care placements but also on reducing the number of children coming into care, by helping families before they reached crisis point.

It was highlighted that the strategy provided the framework for a wide range of projects across Children's Services, with workstreams grouped under the following objectives

- Objective 1 - Supporting families to stay together
- Objective 2 - Keeping Children in School
- Objective 3 - Managing risk confidently and providing support at the edge of care
- Objective 4 - Providing an appropriate placement and a good education for all Looked After Children
- Objective 5 - Giving children clearly planned journeys through care

The report set out progress against each of the above headings.

Cabinet was pleased to note that the early impact of the strategy had been encouraging, with the number of children in care peaked at 508 in September 2010 but the upward trend has subsequently reversed. It was stressed that this reduction had taken place with no changes to the threshold for accommodation approval. The trend also appeared to be in contrast to the experience of other local authorities nationally and some of the County's statistical neighbours who had continued to see their care populations rise during 2010/11.

#### **It was resolved:**

To approve the updated strategy and the associated action plan for this work, a summary of which had been provided by the report with the full updated strategy included in the Cabinet Members information pack.

#### **466. SHARING BUILDINGS AND POOLING ASSETS - UPDATE**

This report updated Cabinet on progress from the last report in November 2010 and

sought agreement to a number of recommendations. It set out the main issues relating to the:

- Benefits of a partnership including the balance between financial benefits and other priorities.
- Possible forms of partnership including governance arrangements.
- Resourcing the partnership including the relationship between the partnership and LGSS.

It was expected that the delivery of the work of the partnership would be seen to:

1. Provide better value for money.
2. Produce easier to access services, more joined-up and delivered together.
3. Be consultative and reflect community requirements.

Updates to the recommendations orally reported included on recommendation correcting the reference to paragraph 3.11 rather than 3.12 and an additional recommendation g to ensure quick wins were pursued.

It was highlighted that the Making Assets Count (MAC) Project had developed an environment in which sharing information and decision making on property assets could take place and that the work was reaching a stage where some key decisions would be required from all partners on the future form of the partnership and how they wished to commit to delivering through a preferred option. The primary consideration would be whether the value of the joint activity brought sufficient benefits for any individual partner to play a part. The MAC Project had identified a number of potential opportunities/benefits that could be realised over and above those already planned through the Authority's own Better Utilisation of Property Asset Programme, through a pooled approach to public sector asset management and use as summarised in section 1.1 of the report.

The assets to be included in the partnership were:

1. Offices (other than the Shire Hall campus).
2. Libraries.
3. Children's Centres.
4. Youth Centres.
5. Highways Depots.
6. Registration Offices.
7. Training and Education facilities (non-school)
8. Other operational assets to be agreed.

The following already appeared to have considerable potential benefits:

1. South Cambridgeshire Operations Depot Project.
2. Ely Project.
3. Huntingdon Project.
4. Cambourne Project.

It was recommended that the partnership work towards Full Business Cases for each to identify the value. It was noted that in relation to the wider schools estate more

work was required with CYPS, as future growth would create further pressures on school places.

Questions were raised regarding the cost savings anticipated which were currently missing from the report and the LGSS Director of Finance undertook to provide more details outside of the meeting.

**It was resolved:**

- a) To reaffirm Cabinet's support for this work, and for the principle of sharing buildings and pooling estate to reduce the size and cost of the overall public sector estate, and to enhance services for the benefit of the people of Cambridgeshire.
- b) To work within the current Making Assets Count (MAC) arrangements, whilst looking to move to a more formal structure (i.e. a partnership arrangement similar to that deployed for the creation of Cambridgeshire Horizons) in around 18 months, or sooner if feasible, subject to a future Cabinet decision.
- c) To agree that the assets listed in paragraph 2.11 of the report be excluded from the MAC arrangements as follows:
  - The Farms Estate
  - The Shire Hall Campus
  - Properties already identified for disposal
- d) That Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) should be the primary provider of property services for the MAC partnership
- e) Agree progression of the following projects to Full Business Case including the use of resources required:
  - South Cambridgeshire Operations Centre Project
  - Ely Project
  - Huntingdon Project
  - Cambourne Project.
- f) To note that the Authority's particular interest in the projects shown at (e) and additional projects and asset disposals undertaken under the Better Utilisation of Property Assets banner will form part of the 2012/13 Integrated Plan.
- g) To adopt the Asset Management Strategy, which would provide the flexibility to consider benefits (financial and non-financial) on a project-by-project basis, while the strategic partnership (MAC Programme Board) oversaw the programme.

## **467. PUBLIC HEALTH REFORMS**

The purpose of the report was to brief Cabinet on the progress of the County Council in implementing the requirements of the Government's public health reforms and seeking Cabinet direction regarding how the Council would exercise its new responsibilities as a public health authority.

It was noted that the Government's reforms to the public health system were in response to the range of challenges faced; including rising obesity, health inequalities and the aging population and had the aim of putting Localism at the heart of the new system with devolved freedoms, responsibilities and funding. The Health and Social Care Bill provided that upper-tier local authorities (County Councils) would have a

duty to take steps to improve the health and wellbeing of their population with new functions formally beginning in April 2013. By taking on the role, the County Council would, through working with health, housing, leisure, planning, transport, children and young people and adult social care partners, have the opportunity to ensure greater integration and coordination between public health and other services. It was highlighted that the new public health responsibilities would be supported by a ring-fenced budget and the Director of Public Health would lead on this work, as the principal adviser on health to the Council.

The report set out details of the internal arrangements undertaken to develop the Council's Public Health Function and highlighted that effective delivery of the Health Reforms was crucially dependent on the input and expertise of public health professionals. It would be important to ensure arrangements should complement existing expertise within the County Council and should aim to build capacity of the local authority to become a truly public health organisation. The role of public health would also be to help commissioners to make the best value commissioning decisions.

The report set out the role of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and Network and the Children's Trust highlighting that in Cambridgeshire good progress had been made in establishing a Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and Network. An oral update indicated that the first meeting of the Shadow Board had been on 14<sup>th</sup> October who had agreed the following four areas for immediate action with the aim of achieving some quick wins and testing out ways of working:

- Domestic Abuse
- Preventing serious illness and hospital admissions in winter
- Addressing health inequalities
- Road safety

In deciding on the priorities, the HWB recognised that the issue could not be addressed by a single agency carrying out its core business and required partnership working by two or more organisations. The report also detailed the work being undertaken by colleagues in the Children's Trust to develop their networks / partnership.

Cabinet recognised that this was a significant new area of work and that there needed to be public recognition of the new responsibilities and the amount of work that was being taken on. Cabinet also saw the opportunities to be able to use the system to encourage changes in behaviour highlighting individual responsibility for helping improve their own health in terms of lifestyle choices in areas such as smoking, alcohol consumption, sexual practices, diet and driving styles. This could often be linked to peer pressure and the "Kick Ash" initiative in schools was indicated as a good example of what could be achieved.

**It was resolved:**

- (a) To note the Government's reforms of the public health system and the progress of officers in implementing the Council's new responsibilities for public health.

- (b) To endorse the design principles of the Council's public health function set out at paragraph 2.5 of the report.
- (c) To endorse the ongoing work of the Public Health Management Team to ensure public health and the wider determinants of health are considered in service delivery.
- (d) To note the ongoing work to develop the Networks around the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Trust to achieve outcomes on behalf of Cambridgeshire's residents.

#### **468. CAMBRIDGESHIRE GUIDED BUSWAY – SWAVESEY SHORT STAY CAR PARK**

Cabinet received a report to consider the construction a short stay car park to pick up and drop off users of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway stop in Swavesey. It was noted that the Busway scheme originally included a small short stay car park at Swavesey to allow the pick up and drop off of users of the nearby Busway stop. During the main construction phase for the Busway, a design was prepared, the relevant planning conditions discharged, and the land taken and used as a temporary works compound. However, in order to mitigate the risk of financial overruns, Cabinet had in September 2009 decided not to build the car park and to review the position after the Busway was complete.

Following the opening of the Busway, it was now considered appropriate to review the implementation of this parking area in accordance with the previous decision and as a number of issues had been raised by local members and the MG Owners club nearby, as detailed in the report. Given the concerns, 3 options had been prepared as set out below with the detail of the issues and costs included in the report:

Option 1 – Build the car park as originally planned at a cost of around £100,000 as a stand alone project.

Option 2 – Do the minimum to bring the car park into use - cost around £35,000;

Option 3 – Do nothing at this time.

Cabinet agreed with officers that deferring the scheme (option 3) would not give any benefit to users of the Busway until after the dispute with BAM Nuttall was resolved, while implementing option 2 was considered to represent best value and would bring more immediate benefits to users of the Busway within a smaller budget figure. It was noted that implementation of option 2 would need discussion with South Cambridgeshire District Council, which was anticipated to be relatively straightforward as it was a modification of the existing discharged planning condition. Following that, construction of the works could be completed within one month of the works commencing.

Councillor Mandy Smith local Member for Papworth and Swavesey spoke in support and the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning also drew attention to comments provided by Councillor Johnstone who was unable to attend, but who also strongly supported provision of limited parking at Swavesey. She also asked Cabinet to consider additional cycle storage at Swavesey, as the current cycle racks were generally full by 9.00 a.m. and cyclists were lock bikes to nearby railings. The Leader suggested this should be looked at further, including whether there were cheaper solutions.

A suggested amendment was made to delegate approving the detailed layout to the Lead Member for Growth and Planning in consultation with the local members.

**It was resolved:**

To approve a minimum standard short stay car park as outlined in Option 2 of the report with the detailed layout to be delegated for approval by the Lead Member for Growth and Planning and the Executive Director of Environment Services in consultation with the local members.

**469. CAMBRIDGESHIRE FUTURE TRANSPORT INITIATIVE**

This report provided a review of the significant progress with the Cambridgeshire Future Transport Project and proposed the establishment of three micro franchise pilot projects to help towards the goal of identifying practical, achievable and sustainable transport solutions through more effective, efficient and coordinated transport delivery mechanisms.

Key actions included:

- Determining levels of expenditure on Passenger Transport from the County Council's Adult Services and Children's Services and looking at where potential savings could be made.
- Identification of a potential governance structure
- Developing back office functions to support new public transport delivery models, particularly through the Council's contact centre
- Discussions with partner organisations on the scope for jointly commissioning cost effective transport options to meet the needs of the service / local people and whether this provides opportunities to pool budgets

Work on the initial franchise pilots had been developed to a stage where two would be ready for implementation in December 2011 and one from January 2012. It was highlighted that the long-term aim of the franchise approach would be to provide a new way of delivering locally tailored, potentially semi demand-responsive transport services across much of Cambridgeshire where commercial bus services were not likely to meet the needs of the travelling public and was also expected to be much more efficient than standard models of provision. The aim was to use the County Council's purchasing power and organisational and business capability to procure vehicles and support the franchisees during the set-up, bedding down and development stages of their businesses. Although the aim was for the franchises to be profitable, it was also recognised that there were some areas of the county where there might need to be some continued level of subsidy and this would need to be determined as the model was rolled out.

It was beneficial to trial the concept prior to full roll out and therefore three potential areas for trials of the franchise concept had been identified, each with slightly different characteristics with the report detailing the offer to be made. The estimated budget for the three pilots combined was approximately £159,500 with a breakdown as set out in the report to be funded upfront from the Invest to Transform Reserve.

The three projects as detailed in the report were:

- a) Station Link Franchise –project to be centred around Duxford / Linton and to meet demand from local residents to access Whittlesford Station to connect with commuter trains.
- b) Busway Link Franchise –based around Swavesey / Longstanton and provide for community needs and feed into the Guided Busway.
- c) Community led franchise – this would be based around Haddenham/ Wilburton.

It was reported that detailed work on the two proposed Local Transport Consortia (LTC) in the North and West of the county had been carried out. Based on advice from partners and from transport consultants TAS, the current view was that the Transport Consortia concept was not the most efficient way of delivering services. As well as the work on the LTC, specific project proposals had also been worked up in these areas looking at different ways of delivering greater access. This work was ongoing and Fenland District Council had identified a number of projects that they were currently progressing as detailed in the report.

Councillor Stone spoke as the local member for Duxford setting out details of his alternate proposal for a pilot to replace the Citi 7, south of Sawston which had been rejected on cost grounds. He raised concerns that the pilot for Duxford and Linton as currently proposed seemed to be focussed on providing a link to Whittlesford Station without knowing what the demand might be. The Cabinet Member for Health and Well Being who was also one of the local Members for Sawston, made the point that currently no public buses from Linton / Abington went to this station (*which was the nearest main line station on a major commuter route*). The local Member for Willingham had also provided comments in advance to Cabinet Members on pilot b – the Busway link franchise, suggesting that the proposal required further development for reasons she provided in her statement, highlighting ongoing discussions taking place with Stagecoach and other local organisations / local members / representatives. Her points would be taken into account when looking at the detail of the pilot proposal along with the commitment to engage with local members.

Cabinet noted that the pilots were expected to run for six months with a full evaluation of their benefits being undertaken within this period and would not preclude any new franchisees coming forward within this period (including the suggestion made by Councillor Johnstone) those. All the projects would be monitored and assessed against defined performance criteria. If the trial was successful in providing better transport solutions for the local community within the funding envelope (and taking into account statutory duties), officers would bring forward details of how the model can be rolled out progressively across Cambridgeshire. Given the proposed reduction in tendered bus services (on which a consultation was currently underway), it was expected that the first areas for introduction of the franchises would be those areas proposed for the first bus service withdrawals.

Councillor Sadiq, Leader of the Labour Group queried how critical it might be to the success of the overall concept if operators did not wish to be involved and this would depend if they were able to charge fees that allowed them to secure a profit. In terms of keeping costs down he suggested that Government should be lobbied for cash to help pay for the pilots. He highlighted that the public would judge the success of the scheme would be being able to see that lost subsidised services were replaced by a better and cheaper replacement.

In response to the points raised, it was indicated that in many cases the previous subsidised service was not considered to be a good use of scarce resources or often particularly effective in meeting the real needs of the community and that the aim of running the pilots would be to then analyse the lessons to be learnt, to find out what worked and what did not, with the final aim of having relevant data to help construct a credible / viable model, which was flexible in terms of meeting specific local requirements, helping to reduce rural isolation and transporting people to work across the County and beyond. It was agreed that all three pilot franchises should go forward as currently set out.

**It was resolved:**

- (a) To note progress on developing the Cambridgeshire Future Transport Project.
- (b) To approve the establishment of the three micro franchise pilot projects set out in section 3.11 of the report.

**470. CAMBRIDGESHIRE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY**

This report informed Members of the detail of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy in relation to open spaces, water courses and the routes and links between them, developed by Cambridgeshire Horizons in partnership with all the key delivery bodies, seeking Cabinet endorsement of the strategy.

It was highlighted that the vision of the strategy was for high quality green spaces that enhanced the quality of new and existing communities, provided health and leisure benefits for residents and improved the Cambridgeshire 'offer' to attract businesses and individuals considering locating here and help retain them within the area. The Strategy established a 'Strategic Network' where green infrastructure could provide the greatest benefit and was divided into different geographical areas as detailed in the report. The final sections of the Strategy showed how existing local planning authority priorities for Green Infrastructure could be supported and influenced by the Strategy, and how the projects within the Strategy might be delivered.

It was highlighted that the districts and city council and major environmental organisations would be the main delivery bodies and that there were no resource implications for the County Council beyond existing activity on county farms, rights of way and minerals and waste planning applications.

**It was resolved:**

To endorse the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy and the Council's continued representation on the Green Infrastructure Forum.

**471. RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCE REVIEW**

This report outlined the key elements of Northamptonshire County Council's (NCC's) response to the above consultation and proposed delegating responsibility for submitting a detailed consultation response on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council based on the contents within the report.



The Department for Communities and Local Government published the Local Government Resource Review (Phase One) Consultation document on 18 July 2011 with a response deadline was 24th October 2011. Under existing arrangements, non-domestic rates (or business rates) revenue collected by local authorities had been pooled centrally before being redistributed to local authorities in England. The Government considered that while local authorities had a vital role to play in supporting the economy, there was currently limited direct financial incentive to do so and therefore it was proposing to bring in Rates Retention from April 2013. The Secretary of State advised that areas who needed help continue to receive support and be allowed to keep the product of their work and that those areas who raised a large amount of business rates should make a contribution to the support. The Government summarised the changes for County Councils as follows:

- County Councils would receive a share of the rates collected in their districts as well as an additional top-up if required.
- The baseline would be set and counties would see increases in funding if they grow and decreases in funding if they decline. Counties can consider forming a pool with their districts and / or neighbouring authorities.

It was highlighted that historically, Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) had been a contributor to the national business rates pool and it was expected that the authority would be required to make a contribution (pay a tariff) to support those authorities who needed additional support.

The County Council along with Northamptonshire colleagues were taking the opportunity to outline some high level concerns and observations. Section 3 of the report setting out details of the proposed Rates Retention Scheme and section 4 provided a summary of the consultation response, including that the timescale for implementation was very short, given the large scale change proposed. While welcoming the opportunity to contribute to the design of the new scheme and supporting any mechanism that would reward growth, officers did not believe that the proposed system would provide a suitably large stimulus for business growth in that it was too restrictive, was not ambitious enough and did not provide enough upside risk for the reasons set out in the detail of the report.

In providing a response it was suggested that other factors for consideration should include a reminder to the Government that schools were not being funded properly and that the Dilnot Review of Adult Social Care funding had highlighted that the current funding model was not fit for purpose. There was a request to ensure the final response was given a further proof reading as there were a large number of typographical errors in the appendix.

**It was resolved:**

- (a) To note the report.
- (b) To delegate responsibility for submitting a detailed consultation on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council to the LGSS Director of Finance in discussion with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio holder for Resources and Performance.

- (c) That an additional response letter along the lines of that shown at Appendix 1, be sent by the Leader of the Council and to also include issues of concern raised at the Cabinet meeting.

#### **472. MINOR IMPROVEMENT BUDGET PROCESS 2012/13**

Cabinet received a report to consider how Local Transport Plan (LTP) funds should be allocated for highways minor improvements for 2012/13, subject to budget setting later this financial year.

The approach proposed was consistent with the Council's aims of delegating responsibility to the most appropriate level and envisaged that local communities would be able to put forward suggestions for projects, which would be prioritised by local groups of County Council members. In recent times, around £200,000 has been made available from the LTP each year and it was anticipated that a similar budget could be provided next year for minor improvements. It was expected that around £1.1 million would be allocated to the Market Town Strategies next year and about £200,000 to the Cambridge Access Strategy and it was therefore proposed to allocate £50,000 from the Market Town Strategy Budget for minor improvements in the market towns and £25,000 for similar work from the smaller Cambridge Access Strategy Budget. Bids would be invited from local communities (up to a maximum of £10,000 per bid) with an expectation that the bidder provides some level of contribution towards the project, e.g. at least 10% of the estimated cost.

It was highlighted that for rural communities outside the scope of the above strategies, there was currently very limited opportunity for local highway and transport initiatives to be delivered, even though their communities often wished to put forward proposals for funding and build a funding contribution into their budget plans and that this was especially important for parish councils in preparing their precepts for next year. To address this and given the funding set out above for Market Towns and the Cambridge Access Strategy, it was proposed to allocate all or some of the LTP funds that were earmarked for minor improvements next year for minor improvements in rural areas. It was agreed that the funds to be made available next year should be allocated between the four rural district areas, potentially providing up to £50,000 in each area.

It was also suggested and agreed that given the relatively low cost nature of the schemes and the focus on local member prioritisation, to speed up the process Cabinet should delegate this decision to the Executive Director: Environment Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure in order to avoid having to seek a decision from Cabinet.

Councillor Sadiq questioned the timing of the changes and the precedents being set in relation to the wider review of Area Joint Committees. It was explained that the AJC review was a completely separate review and that the current report was an interim measure and that while Governance arrangements for local highways decisions were still being reviewed, given the urgency of addressing the minor improvements programme, it was necessary to put in place an interim arrangement to enable the prioritisation of bids. In terms of the timetable, bids would be invited in November, with Member panels sitting in early January and Parish councils or other bidders could then set their precept/budget to reflect their contribution to the successful bid. It was envisaged that bids from within a district area would be assessed by Member Advisory Panels of 4-6 members, made up of County Council members appointed by Group Leaders on a proportionate, representative basis for

that district. It would be up to the member panel to determine how it wished to consider and prioritise proposals, although it would be expected that the relevant district and parish councillors would be consulted.

Corrections were made at the meeting to modify the recommendations to address the correct paragraph numbers.

**It was resolved to:**

- a) support the allocation of funds for locally led minor improvements from the Market Town and Cambridge Access Strategies budgets, as detailed in paragraph 2.2 the report;
- b) support the allocation of funds for locally led minor improvements in areas not covered by the Market Town and Cambridge Access strategies, as detailed in paragraph 2.5 of the report;
- c) approve the bidding and assessment process set out in section 2 of the report; and
- d) delegate responsibility for the approval of project budget allocations for the 2012/13 programme to the Executive Director: Environment Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure.

**473. HIGHWAY LICENCES FOR TABLES AND CHAIRS**

Cabinet received a report to consider a new process for the issuing of licences for tables and chairs on the public highway.

It was noted that in recent years Cambridge City Council had led on the determination of licences for tables and chairs on the highway within Cambridge, including pedestrian areas, with the involvement of County highway officers. However, a recent review had shown that the City Council did not have powers to substantiate its current lead role and therefore it was necessary to review the process for future applications and renewals in Cambridge City. As there had also been a general lack of clarity over how the licensing of tables and chairs on the highway should be managed across Cambridgeshire the opportunity had also been taken to review the process to:

Achieve a consistent approach across the County  
Ensure that local members are at the heart of decision making  
Ensure that it is robust in terms of legislation.

It was highlighted that tables and chairs on the highway (in practice, typically on pavements and pedestrian areas) had the potential for supporting economic growth by enhancing the ambiance of an area and promoting growth in business, especially leisure, tourism and retail. Subject to satisfying requirements as detailed in the report it was recommended that applications for tables and chairs should be viewed positively with the licensing process providing control over the placement of tables and chairs, allowing appropriate conditions to be attached where required to manage impact on highway use and facilitate enforcement in problematic cases.

The report detailed the delegations already in place to allow officers to execute decisions taken on licence applications and set out the process to be used and the licence conditions and charges to be operated. It was noted that a fee of £315 would cover the Council's typical costs for processing, monitoring and enforcement of licences. However to help businesses requiring only small areas for tables and chairs, this fee could be waived for areas of less than 5m<sup>2</sup>. One Cabinet Member expressed concerns regarding whether areas of less than 5m<sup>2</sup> made economic sense and queried how many tables and chairs could actually be fitted into such a space. It was indicated that there were a number of places with narrow streets that operated at less than this size and that it was possible to fit in three tables with two chairs at each table.

**It was resolved:**

To support the procedures and charges set out in section 3 and 5 and appendix A of the report.

**474. DELEGATIONS FROM CABINET TO CABINET MEMBERS**

Cabinet received the most recent update report.

**It was resolved:**

To note the progress on delegations to individual Cabinet Members and / or officers previously authorised by Cabinet to make decisions / take actions on its behalf.

**475. DRAFT CABINET AGENDA – 15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER**

**It was resolved:**

To note the draft agenda for 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 with the following oral updates at the meeting which had resulted in the following reports moving from the 15<sup>th</sup> November to the 13<sup>th</sup> December meeting:

- 5. Civil Parking Enforcement – South and East Cambridgeshire
- 6. Ely Link Road
- 8. Future Options Park and Ride

Chairman 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011