

## COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

**Date:** Wednesday, 11th December 2013

**Time:** 10.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

**Place:** Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillor K Reynolds (Chairman)  
Councillors P Ashcroft, B Ashwood, A Bailey, I Bates, K Bourke, D Brown, P Brown, P Bullen, R Butcher, S Bywater, E Cearns, B Chapman, P Clapp, J Clark, D Connor, S Count, S Crawford, S Criswell, M Curtis, A Dent, D Divine, P Downes, S Frost, D Giles, G Gillick, D Harty, R Henson, R Hickford, J Hipkin, B Hunt, D Jenkins, N Kavanagh, G Kenney, S Kindersley, P Lagoda, A Lay, M Leeke, M Loynes, I Manning, R Manning, M Mason, M McGuire, L Nethsingha, F Onasanya, T Orgee, J Palmer, P Read, P Reeve, J Reynolds, M Rouse, S Rylance, P Sales, J Schumann, M Shellens, M Shuter, M Smith, A Taylor, M Tew, P Topping, S van de Kerkhove, S van de Ven, A Walsh, J Whitehead, J Williams, G Wilson, J Wisson and F Yeulett

Apologies: Councillor J Scutt.

### 37. MINUTES – 15th OCTOBER 2013

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 38. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made a number of announcements as set out in **Appendix A**.

### 39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Taylor declared a non-statutory disclosable interest under the Code of Conduct in relation to Minute No.45(d) as a beneficiary of her employer's Cycle to Work Scheme.

### 40. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions were received from members of the public.

### 41. PETITIONS

One petition was presented by a member of the public, as set out in **Appendix B**.

As the petition contained over 3,000 signatures, the organiser had asked, as set out in the County Council's Petitions Scheme, for the petition to be debated at the meeting.

Council debated the petition. The following motion was proposed by Councillor Bates and seconded by Councillor Connor:

This Council notes the petition and leaves any action to the Local Member.

Following discussion, the motion on being put to the vote was agreed by a majority.

UKIP asked that their votes be recorded as having voted against the resolution.

## **42. TREASURY MANAGEMENT QUARTER TWO REPORT**

It was moved by the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor Count, and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor McGuire, that the recommendation set out in the report be approved.

- In response to a question from Councillor Mason, the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance agreed to investigate the effect of a 1% increase in interest rates on the Council's borrowing commitment and how any increase would be funded and provide him with a written response.

It was resolved unanimously to note the Treasury Management Report, Quarter Two 2013-14.

## **43. CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL**

### **a) Change of Governance Arrangements to a Committee System**

In introducing the report, the Chairman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Kindersley, recorded his particular thanks to the senior officer team who had assisted the Committee namely: Quentin Baker, Michelle Rowe, Oluremi Aremu and Adrian Dobbyne. On behalf of himself and the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Hipkin, he also thanked the Constitution and Ethics Committee for the significant amount of work it had undertaken. He further extended his thanks to all Members of the Council for participating in the process.

It was moved by the Chairman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Kindersley, and seconded by the Chairman of Council, Councillor K Reynolds, that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Sales:

### **1. Part 1 –Summary and Explanation**

That the two paragraphs on page 4 of the summary be deleted reading:

#### **“Use of Language**

Throughout this document the words ‘he’ ‘him’ and ‘his’ are used to refer to individual members and officers. This is done because of the lack of straightforward, unambiguous alternative words in the English Language, and in all cases should be read as she or he, ‘him or her’, ‘her or his’.

By convention the Council uses the words ‘Chairman’ and ‘Vice- Chairman’ as titles for the person presiding over a meeting and his deputy. These words are not intended to imply that only men may hold these posts. Similarly, Lead Members (Spokesmen) may be male or female.”

And that throughout the document (most noticeably in the section on the Leader of the Council) where the words he, him or his appear that the words Chairman

should either be replaced by Chairman/woman or the single word 'Chair' now the most common way of referring to those who chair committees etc.

Following discussion, the amendment, on being put the vote was carried.

[Voting pattern: most Liberal Democrats, most UKIP, Labour, 4 Conservatives and most Independents in favour; most Conservatives, 2 UKIP, against; 3 UKIP, 1 Liberal Democrat, 1 Conservative and 1 Independent abstained.]

Following further discussion, the substantive motion as amended and detailed below was carried.

It was resolved to approve:

- i) The new Constitution for Cambridgeshire County Council, as amended, in order to cease operating the existing form of governance and start operating the new committee form of governance from its Annual Meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014; and
- ii) Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to make any other minor consequential amendments to the Constitution necessary for, or incidental to, the implementation of these proposals.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, UKIP, Labour and Independent members in favour; most Conservatives against; 1 Conservative abstained.]

#### **b) Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)**

It was moved by the Chairman of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Kindersley, and seconded by the Chairman of Council, Councillor K Reynolds, that the recommendations as set out in the report be approved.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the revised section relating to Members to be included in the Council's existing policy on DBS checks for Members and officers.

#### **44. MOTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10**

Four motions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10, as follows.

##### **a) Motion from Councillor Manning**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Manning and seconded by Councillor Leeke:

This Council recognises the excellent working relationship which resulted in Cambridge City Council and this Council securing the third stage of the 2014 Tour de France in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

This Council believes:

- The Tour is an overwhelmingly positive event for the City and the region and a

unique opportunity for the people of Cambridgeshire

- That the Council has a role in encouraging a strong show of support from local residents, businesses and voluntary groups

However, this Council notes:

- The date of the Tour, 7th July, is a Monday and therefore it will be difficult for those who work full time to witness it first hand

Therefore, this Council calls on the Cabinet to:

- Allow staff & managers flexibility in operational arrangements to enable attendance by staff at the event
- Publically encourage Cambridgeshire businesses to do the same.

Following discussion, the motion, on being put to the vote, was defeated.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrat, Labour and 1 Conservative in favour; most Conservatives, most UKIP and 3 Independent members against; 2 UKIP and 1 Independent member abstained]

## **b) Motion from Councillor Taylor**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Cearns:

This Council notes:

- The current procedure for Council press releases states that local members and/or opposition spokespeople may be quoted in Council press releases, but only at the discretion of the relevant portfolio holder
- The Council's commitment to localised decision making
- The change in political make up of Council since the May 2013 elections means members represent a wider range of views than previously

This Council believes:

- The Council's communications team is meant to work for the whole Council, not just the administration
- The current procedure gives undue weight to the Cabinet members, and therefore the minority administration's, views

Therefore this Council calls on the Cabinet to:

- Remove the Cabinet member's discretion in the current procedure and replace with:
  - For any press release relating only to a specific division, the Communications team will contact the local member(s) for a quote to include

- For all other press releases, the Communications team will contact the opposition spokes for a quote to include

In each case the communications team will:

- give a minimum of 24 hours for the relevant member to supply a quote
- supply a draft of the press release to the member

Council acknowledges there will be occasional emergency cases where urgency means the above procedure may be impractical, and in these cases the Council communications team should include no political quotes.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Ian Manning and seconded by Councillor van de Ven :

Delete the following bullet “- For all other press releases, the Communications team will contact the opposition spokes for quote to include”

This amendment was accepted as an alteration by the mover of the original motion.

Following discussion, the altered motion, on being put to the vote, was defeated.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour and most UKIP members and 1 Independent in favour; Conservatives and 3 Independent members against; 3 UKIP members abstained]

### **c) Motion from Councillor Downes**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Downes and seconded by Councillor Curtis:

This Council, notes

- that England is now widely recognised to be the country with the most centralised system of government in Europe;
- that devolution has brought decisions about tax and spending, and the quality of public services, closer to voters in Scotland and Wales, while English voters have not gained comparably greater influence over decision-making that affects their taxes and services; and

considers

- that the likely scale of change in how public services are funded and provided makes it democratically unsustainable for those changes to be decided within the existing over-centralised model;
- that services need to be reformed and integrated across local agencies to enable them to prevent problems rather than picking up the pieces;

- that voters should be given back a meaningful say on a wider range of tax and spending decisions, through place-based budgetary arrangements, the abolition of the discredited Barnett formula and the reinstatement of fair financial distribution agreed among English councils, the re-creation of a municipal bond market, and the certainty of multi-year funding settlements for the life of a Parliament;
- that central government should enable such local decision-making by joining up and reducing in size Whitehall departments in order to facilitate local place-based budgets, by reducing Ministers' powers to intervene in local decisions, and replacing bureaucratic tick-box inspection regimes with local service users champions; and
- that such a new more mature settlement between central and local government should be put beyond future revision by giving formal constitutional protection to local democracy; and

resolves

- to formally record its support for the Local Government Association's *Rewiring Public Services* campaign, which embodies these objectives;
- to call on Cambridgeshire Members of Parliament to support the *Rewiring Public Services* campaign to improve local voters' influence over services, tax and spending; and
- to ask the Chief Executive to write and inform the Secretary of State for Local Government of the Council's position.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Curtis and seconded by Councillor Bates and accepted as an alteration by the mover of the original motion (additions in bold and deletions struck through):

This Council, notes

- that England is now widely recognised to be the country with the most centralised system of government in Europe;
- that devolution has brought decisions about tax and spending, and the quality of public services, closer to voters in Scotland and Wales, while English voters have not gained comparably greater influence over decision-making that affects their taxes and services; and

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- that such a new more mature settlement between central and local government should be put beyond future revision by giving formal constitutional protection to local democracy; and

resolves

- to formally record its support for the Local Government Association's *Rewiring Public Services* campaign, which embodies these objectives;
- to call on Cambridgeshire Members of Parliament to support the *Re-wiring Public Services* campaign to improve local voters' influence over services, tax and spending; ~~and~~
- to ask the Chief Executive to write and inform the Secretary of State for Local Government of the Council's position. **and**
- **to request the Department for Communities and Local Government to have Cambridgeshire selected as a pilot area for the re-wiring of public services.**

Following discussion, the altered motion, on being put to the vote, was carried.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives, Liberal Democrat UKIP and 3 Independent members in favour; 1 UKIP member against; Labour and 1 Independent member abstained.]

#### **d) Motion from Councillor Kavanagh**

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Kavanagh and seconded by Councillor Whitehead.

This Council notes

- the government has set ambitious targets for improving public health, cutting carbon emissions and creating a more sustainable transport system, all of which have to be achieved at a time when public spending is being cut back.
- the Cycle to Work scheme is an initiative, backed by central government, which allows employees to obtain a cycle from income before tax as a tax free benefit by means of "salary sacrifice".
- a salary sacrifice scheme is when an employee agrees to sacrifice a proportion of their salary, for an agreed period, in exchange for a non-cash benefit. As salary sacrifice is a reduction in an employee's gross salary it means the employee pays less income tax and National Insurance

## Contributions.

- employers make a National Insurance saving (typically 13.8% of the salary sacrifice amount). This amount is often used by employers as a financial incentive to run the scheme.
- to date over 550,000 employees across the UK have taken advantage of the Cycle to Work scheme, which involves over 2,220 bike retailers and 32,000 employers.
- Cambridge is hailed as the cycling capital of the UK and it is appropriate that the Council joins other employers in Cambridgeshire that have implemented the Cycle to Work scheme for their employees.

## This Council considers

- the Cycle to Work scheme is a vital way in which the following benefits of cycling can be promoted.
- cycling to work reduces congestion, carbon emissions and the demand for parking.
- the savings that individuals make through the cycle to work scheme improves the affordability of cycling. Employees who participate can save up to 40% of the total cost of a new bike and safety equipment.
- fitter, healthier staff are less likely to be absent through stress or illness.
- employers can benefit from the schemes with savings on employers National Insurance contributions of up to 13.8%.
- a number of firms operate Cycle to Work schemes for companies and local authorities and most undertake to carry out all the administration, free of charge to the participating organisations.

many firms offer Cycle to Work schemes, but there is a real advantage in using one that is not tied to a single supplier or manufacturer but embraces quality independent cycle shops in Cambridgeshire.

## This Council calls upon

- the Cabinet to investigate and implement the Cycle to Work scheme for all Cambridgeshire County Council employees, subject to it being cost neutral.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor van de Ven (additions in bold and deletions struck through)

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- the Cycle to Work scheme is an initiative, backed by central government,



which allows employees to obtain a cycle from income before tax as a tax free benefit by means of “salary sacrifice”.

- a salary sacrifice scheme is when an employee agrees to sacrifice a proportion of their salary, for an agreed period, in exchange for a non-cash benefit. As salary sacrifice is a reduction in an employee's gross salary it means the employee pays less income tax and National Insurance Contributions.
- employers make a National Insurance saving (typically 13.8% of the salary sacrifice amount). This amount is often used by employers as a financial incentive to run the scheme.
- to date over 550,000 employees across the UK have taken advantage of the Cycle to Work scheme, which involves over 2,220 bike retailers and 32,000 employers.
- Cambridge is hailed as the cycling capital of the UK and it is appropriate that the Council joins other employers in Cambridgeshire that have implemented the Cycle to Work scheme for their employees.

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- a number of firms operate Cycle to Work schemes for companies and local authorities and most undertake to carry out all the administration, free of charge to the participating organisations.
- many firms offer Cycle to Work schemes, but there is a real advantage in using one that is not tied to a single supplier or manufacturer but embraces quality independent cycle shops in Cambridgeshire.

This Council calls upon

- the Cabinet to investigate and implement the Cycle to Work scheme for all Cambridgeshire County Council employees, subject to it being cost neutral;  
**and**
- **Cabinet to show leadership by sharing its experience with its contractors and other partners and encouraging them to do likewise.**

Following discussion, the amendment on being put to the vote, was defeated.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats and 1 Conservative in favour; most Conservatives, most UKIP, Labour and Independents against; and 1 Conservative and 1 UKIP member abstained]

The substantive motion, on being put to the vote, was carried.

[Voting pattern: most Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, most UKIP, Labour and Independent members in favour; 4 Conservatives and 1 UKIP against; 3 Conservatives abstained.]

## **45. QUESTIONS**

### **a) Oral Questions**

Ten questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9.1, as set out in **Appendix C**. In response to these questions, the following items were agreed for further action:

- In response to a question from Councillor Nethsingha, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor Brown, agreed to send a written response to all Members detailing what information had been provided to schools in relation to changes to the statementing process for children with Special Education Needs.
- The Deputy Leader, Councillor McGuire, agreed to speak to Councillor van de Ven outside of the meeting regarding involving other Members in planning commemoration events to mark the centenary of the Great War.
- In response to a question from Councillor J Reynolds, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, undertook to provide him with the very detailed response he had received on issues regarding street lighting on Huntingdon Road. He also undertook to speak to officers regarding the completion of works being undertaken by Balfour Beatty in Dry Drayton before the two week holiday period.
- The Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, undertook to provide a written answer to Councillor Jenkins regarding progress in relation to the sale of the Station Building in Histon and the measures which had been taken to improve the building ready for sale.
- In response to a question from Councillor Sales, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, undertook to investigate and provide a written response regarding whether Stagecoach had undertaken the statutory consultation requirements before making changes to the C1 and C2 bus routes.
- The Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor McGuire, requested more information from Councillor Taylor outside of the meeting regarding the enforcement zig zag lines outside of schools.
- In response to a question from Councillor Downes, Councillor Harty, the Cabinet Member for Education and Learning, confirmed that as he shared Councillor Downes concerns regarding the bureaucracy surrounding the

commissioning of new schools, he would raise it with the Secretary of State for Education.

**b) Written Questions**

One written question had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2, as set out in **Appendix D**.

**46. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

It was proposed by the Chairman of the Council, Councillor K Reynolds, seconded by the Vice-Chairman of the Council, Councillor Kindersley and resolved unanimously:

- a) To appoint Councillor Kavanagh as a substitute member on the Appointments and Remuneration Committee.
- b) To replace Councillor Reeve with Councillor Bullen on the County Council's Network
- c) To replace Councillor Reeve with Councillor Bullen on the Local Government Association.
- d) To replace Councillor Bates with Councillor Connor as a substitute member on the Audit and Accounts Committee.

Chairman

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2013  
CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Former County Councillor John Seaman MBE**

It is with regret that the Chairman reports the recent death of former County Councillor John Seaman. Councillor Seaman served on the County Council from 1989 to 1993, representing the Ely North and South Division, on behalf of the Conservative Party.

**Former County Councillor Ronald (Mick) Speechley**

It is with regret that the Chairman reports the recent death of former County Councillor Ronald (Mick) Speechley. Councillor Speechley served on the County Council from 1985 to 2005, representing the Whittlesey Division, on behalf of the Conservative Party.

**Anne Maynard**

The Chairman reports with enormous sadness the death of Anne Maynard who worked in the Statutory Assessment and Resources Team in Children, Families and Adults. The Council's thoughts are with her family, friends and colleagues at this very sad time.

Those present were asked to stand for a few moments in memory.

**Leader and Deputy Leader of UKIP Group**

The Council notes the appointment of Councillor Paul Bullen as Leader of the UKIP Group to replace Councillor Peter Reeve and Councillor Simon Bywater as Deputy Leader to replace Councillor Paul Bullen.

**Appointment of Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment**

Following a meeting of the Appointments and Remuneration Committee on 29 November, Graham Hughes, formerly the County Council's Service Director: Strategy and Commissioning, has been appointed as the County Council's new Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment.

**The Five Star Focus Award**

Cambridgeshire's Library and Archive Service is the first in the county to be presented with a new volunteer management award. The Five Star Focus Award has been presented to the service for their volunteering programme by Volunteering, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the partnership of Volunteer Centres across the county. This is a brand new scheme and Cambridgeshire Libraries and Archives are the very first to receive it. The award evaluates the work that takes place with volunteers from recruitment to recognition. Cambridgeshire Libraries, and Archives have a wide range of valuable volunteers of all ages – from Computer Buddie and Rhymetime Assistants to the Library at Home service.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2013**  
**PETITIONS**

Text of a petition containing over 3000 signatures presented by Mr Huw Davies

“We, the undersigned, totally oppose the franchising of WISBECH Crown Post Office. We believe this proposal will severely damage the provision of services and we call upon the POST OFFICE to withdraw their plans and retain the CROWN POST OFFICE”.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 11 DECEMBER 2013**

**ORAL QUESTION TIME**

**1. Question to the Cabinet Member Education and Learning, Councillor D Harty, from Councillor A Walsh**

I apologise to Councillor Harty for only giving him forewarning this lunch time, that was entirely down to disorganisation from myself. Hopefully there will be time to respond, if not, I'm sure a written response will be appreciated. Has the County Council judged yet how many schools will have to build new kitchens or extend existing ones in order to follow up a policy initiated by excellent Labour led authorities across the Country to introduce free school meals at the instruction of national government? Second point - has he decided which budgets will be contributing to implementing the new policy, if so, which ones and how much will they be contributing and three - what implications does he judge that this will have for the rolling out of the pupil premium since that's based on how many people receive free school meals.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member Education and Learning, Councillor D Harty,**

Chairman I had warning at 1 o'clock today. Thank you for the question. I can't answer it in detail but what I can say that there is a survey being carried out at this time which will identify the total information that you require, but to date we have 120 kitchen areas within 120 schools. We have 80 satellite schools which will require further upgrading, but it is unlikely to involve any capital expenditure. As regard to funding, we assume that that will come from the Government. We have had no notification of it, but it's unlikely that there is a need for capital investment, we wait to see. Finally, on the pupil premium, again there is no guidance from Government at this point in time.

**2. Question to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown, from Councillor L Nethsingha**

My question is that in September this year all children who have statements in Cambridgeshire will be moving from the system of having statements to a system of having one single plan. However, I am informed by a parent of a child with special educational needs that schools are not aware of what the process is going to be from moving from the system of statementing to the system of one plan and they are not aware of how that is going to affect funding that goes with pupils and how the single plan is going to work for individual pupils. Could he let me know what is being done to make sure that schools are aware of these changes and how parents are being kept informed of the impact that this is going to have on their children.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor D Brown**

The answer is I will find out what information schools have received to date and make sure that if they haven't had adequate information, they will have. The single plan is

being rolled out by Judith Davies. I have to pay enormous tribute to the amount of work she and her team do in this area, with some of our most disadvantaged children and young people. I will make sure that the appropriate information is available, not only communicated to parents, but also to all members, so that when they are questioned by people in their communities, they have the answers as well. It might be that we need to look at a frequently asked questions type document, but we will see how that works.

**3. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor S van de Ven**

I would like to thank Councillor McGuire for the work he is doing on the Great War project and I wondered if he would find it helpful to have a group of Councillors to be involved in co-ordinating this work in order to maximise local participation? I think there are a number of projects going on around the County. I know there is one in my division, but we haven't talked about that and it might be useful if we co-ordinated on that. Would that be something you would be willing to consider?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire**

I wasn't expecting the question because I hadn't been given notice of it, but that isn't a problem, because in principal I'm happy to involve any group of members. I think the important thing to remember is that we're not actually as a County Council leading on this. It's happening all around, not only just over the next year leading up to the anniversary of the Great War in August, but for the whole of period of the four years to the end of the Great War centenary. What we are trying to do and Pat Harding is helping with another Officer, Steve, I cannot remember his surname, is to provide information. In a way I am getting involved, as I also wear the other hat as I chair the Covenant Board. I'm quite happy if any members who want to get involved with me in helping to spread the word, because I think we all have a role to play in this with our parishes to let them know that they can, for instance, go on the County Council website. However the CCNN website is a better one, that's the one that really explains the County's project which we've got funding from the European Union (EU) on. I would ask all Councillors to get involved through their Parish Councils. There is an awful lot of information on line but I'm quite happy to consider setting up a meeting on occasions when I do meet the officers to find out how we can help. It's not so much a lead but a co-ordinating role, but I understand the point that's been made. It's almost like an information sharing role, and if the people want us to be medium by which they get information, then we are quite happy to do it. The military around Cambridge are doing something as early as March related to war memorials, that's something they are doing and we're quite happy to help disseminate that information. So quite happy to discuss it outside this Council how we might take that forward.

**4. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor J Reynolds**

My question concerns the process that Balfour Beatty have been following in one of my divisions Girton, in replacing the streetlights. It has come to everyone's attention in Girton that the performance of Balfour Beatty has left something to be desired. In the middle of the summer, work was done in Huntingdon Road to replace the lights. We still have five lights not working after some five or six months and three lights or standards still have to be removed. Nothing has been done despite a number of letters etc. Elsewhere in the village, there are three or four areas where there are lights out and have been for some weeks and still no activity and finally, and probably

the most disappointing element, that there are two or three areas where there is no light whatsoever, because the lights have been removed and we are waiting for the County Council's officers working with Balfour Beatty to come up with a solution to that. We are looking for something that will bring light to our darkness in some of the worst three areas of the village. Perhaps Councillor McGuire will be able to answer that question?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire**

I thank Councillor Reynolds for the question, he did give me prior notice of it and I contacted the relevant officers for a reply, it runs to a page and a half so I'm reluctantly not going to read it out because it will take too long but I will forward the full answer obviously to Councillor Reynolds. I think it is important that I pick up one of the things he said which was relating to the Huntingdon Road and I will read out the response I got from the officers regarding why there are lights out. It says that the majority of the streetlights out of light in this road is due to a dead supply, where it is necessary that UKPN carry out reconnection work to the main supply. This means that UKPN need to contact affected residents to advise that the electricity to their homes will be temporarily switched off, while work is carried out. The Operations Manager from Balfour Beatty will be raising this as a safety concern to UKPN today, officers from the County Council will monitor the situation and if a resolution is not forthcoming from UKPN they will request that a temporary solution is found. As I say the rest of it is very detailed because the question initially forwarded to us by Councillor Reynolds was quite detailed, so Chairman, if I may, I will send a written reply to the rest of it.

**Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor J Reynolds**

Thank you Councillor McGuire for that response, it's good news to know something is happening, even it is after six month's work. The point that I really wanted to raise is about the future, we have in another one of my areas in Dry Drayton all of the roads are up at the moment having new lights but we are coming up to a period of a fortnight's holiday for Balfour Beatty. Can I have an assurance through Councillor McGuire that the officers will make representations to Balfour Beatty so that they finish any ongoing work before the winter break? Otherwise we shall have a whole range of areas where the lights are not working again and that will not be satisfactory.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire**

Chairman Dry Drayton was not specifically mentioned beforehand but I will ask the officers to look at this again and Balfour Beatty to see if anything can be expedited with regard to the fact that there is that relatively quiet period coming up. I will follow that up with Councillor Reynolds later.

**5. Question to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor S Count from Councillor D Jenkins – Councillor Bates to answer it**

Before I start my question I would like a copy of the above reply as well.

Councillor Bates having been around long enough will remember the successful campaign run by local people in Histon and Impington to save the station building from the wrecker's ball that accompanied the building of the guided busway. The building



still stands and there was a period in time when the County Council tried to let it, there were many people who were interested, but because of its condition, they weren't willing to spend the money for a limited lease. So we have reached the stage where the County Council is able to sell it and it's trying to reach a deal with the current owner. It started off trying to reach a negotiated deal but that's come to an end and now it's going through the courts. The process has gone on and on and I've had a monthly email with the officer involved, which has usually had the same answer "it'll be sorted by the end of the month". Is it you Councillor Bates, and if so, what are you doing to bring this to a speedy conclusion?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor I Bates**

I am fully aware of all of the issues that you've highlighted and I fully appreciate the concern that local residents have and the time it has taken to actually get from A to B. I will endeavour with my best endeavours to try to make sure that this is expedited as soon as possible and I think that it will be appropriate bearing in mind that there is a private individual involved in these discussions and debates which you are aware of. I think I will give you a fuller written answer which hopefully will clarify all the issues because of some legal issues, financial issues and estate issues so I think a proper full response in writing would be appropriate to your question but I will endeavour to move it on quickly.

**Supplementary to the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor I Bates**

Thank you and I look forward to seeing the answer. The Council actually to be honest has done little to maintain the building and to some extent it's a depreciating asset. The Community though is keen to see it sold and used as a building by one of several interested parties. So what are you doing to ensure that it will remain a building which would itself be an attractive purchase opportunity? The Community doesn't want us at the last minute to turn around and say I'm sorry we are going to knock it down. What are you doing to prevent that?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor I Bates**

The building as you currently know is still standing, so I think that issue I will address in my written response back to you.

**6. Question to Sir Peter Brown from Councillor M Mason**

My question is to Sir Peter Brown who I'm sure will be aware of the deep concern and anger that many, many people in this County have shared over the recent appointment carried out by the Fire Authority. Indeed, I suspect all other members of the Fire Authority will also be aware, certainly from my division I have been approached and whilst this was raised before, what has happened since that time is that government have apparently become interested in this appointment and there was an article in the Cambridge Evening News, I believe, quoting a junior Minister who I think admitted that there was a loophole in the regulations whereby a senior member of staff could retire on full pension and then be reemployed in another position. So my question really is Sir Peter, have the Authority the power to review or will they be reviewing this appointment, have they had any communication from Government since the statement appeared in the Cambridge Evening News and basically would he care to update us all on the present situation.

## Reply from Sir Peter Brown

Thank you Councillor Mason for your question and notification of it. I'd also before I say anything would like to thank all the members of the Fire Authority who have been looking at this since it first arose at the end of August. We have had our concerns and we've had our differences as to how it should be dealt with. I think before I go on to that, I would just like to say a word about my dialogue with the Fire Minister which you very gently referred to. Brandon Lewis is quite honestly a very excited man and loves his job and he came down on top of us about the end of September with a letter criticizing our policy saying it wasn't right and putting it on his website before it even got to us and which I actually thought was crass for any minister to do and since then he has done it twice and he's gone down as deep in our estimation as we could ever think and that is still my view. I wrote to him, my last letter to him was at the end of October and I'll just read it to you, it's a bit long but I think I ought to. The paragraph was:

As you are no doubt aware we are not the only authority to have reengaged staff including Chief Fire Officers. We have a good quality management team here which with the support of the Fire Authority is performing to a high standard and is providing a better service than ever for the people of Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. We run a lean and efficient Fire and Rescue Service and since the senior management team have been in place, £4.8m a year has been saved, which has resulted in improvements to our front line. That is why we want to keep them together to see us through the difficult times ahead over the next few years. At this point I think it's worth saying in relation to the CFO's appointment, that the appointment that we have now, was agreed by the Appointments Committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> February before the new Fire Authority took over. It was ratified and it came into being and what he did was, he retired as he was entitled to on the 31<sup>st</sup> August. He then did what is usual in these circumstances, he took a month completely out unpaid and was re-engaged by the Authority on the same salary on the 1<sup>st</sup> October. That agreement is now in place and it was signed back in February and he has that appointment for another three years. Unless we go back and break that agreement Graham Stagg is there for another three years. What I am concerned about now is that the Authority sits down and looks at what we do over the next three years to continue to see how we continue to work when that time comes and when we've got to make that change. It may well be that we have a smaller service or smaller SMT, I don't know, but I do understand that there was concern, but that concern unless somebody can tell me different, has been abated I think. I have visited in the last six weeks ten fire stations, I've met one hundred and fifty firefighters and only one actually mentioned it and some of them actually want to do the deal themselves. So it's not a position in which we are out of touch, in fact our employment policy is very much in line with DCLG. What I've agreed with the Fire Authority that on the 13<sup>th</sup> January our Overview and Scrutiny Committee will meet and to go through the whole process to see what can be done to make changes and that will be done under the Chairmanship of Councillor Butcher. They will report then to a full additional meeting of the Fire Authority on the 30<sup>th</sup> January. So we will look at those papers then that come from Overview and Scrutiny on the 30<sup>th</sup> January and make recommendation there from. With regard to the DCLG I just think he ought to get his facts right because there are a lot of other authorities all doing the same thing and I just cannot understand why he's chosen to intervene in this quite frankly. He did have a letter from former Councillor Geoffrey Heathcock, which I think started the whole thing rolling, but it is in hand and we will have a conclusion to the matter by the 30<sup>th</sup> January.

## **Supplementary Question to Sir Peter Brown from Councillor M Mason**

Will the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be a public meeting and will it be advertised as such?

### **Reply from Sir Peter Brown**

The Overview and Scrutiny meeting is a public meeting and if it hasn't been advertised already, it will be, for your information if you want to go it will be on the 13<sup>th</sup> January at Fire Headquarters in Huntingdon at 2pm.

## **7. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor P Sales**

Earlier this year the C1 and C2 buses ceased to run along the Chesterton Road between Bridge Street and Victoria Road bridge in the City. This caused considerable distress and inconvenience to many local residents particularly the disadvantaged people, the elderly, disabled and so on, who've been cut off. Would the Cabinet member for buses Councillor McGuire have a look at Stagecoach's consultation process regarding the rerouting of the C1 and C2 bus to ensure that they comply with the statutory requirements? I did give a written copy, not very much in advance, but it is in writing.

### **Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire**

Thank you to Councillor Sales for his question and as he says he did give me a written notice of it today but not in time for me to actually investigate and as the Cabinet member for buses, a new tag which I'm not sure I'm going to enjoy. The simple answer to his question is yes, I will look at it and will come back to see what we can do.

## **8. Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor A Taylor**

It transpired with a local meeting with the Community Neighbourhood Police that zig zag lines outside schools which we had thought to be something which would prevent vehicles parking outside the schools, don't actually involve a specific offence and although they can be enforced by police, if vehicles are causing an obstruction as well as actually being on the lines, that the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers can't do very much about it, they can't issue tickets if someone is parked on a zig zag. So it's really a question to you Councillor McGuire as to whether you would consider introducing Traffic Regulation Orders for waiting restrictions near those zig zags where there is local demand to protect children going to school.

### **Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire**

Chairman, in terms of the last part of the question to consider introducing legislation regarding parking near to the zig zag lines, this is slightly different from the enforcement on the zig zag lines. So any further restriction would have to be looked at in the round and I guess, we would need to be a bit specific, which I'm sure you will be, after the meeting and we can talk to officers. If we are not enforcing zig zag lines I'm at a loss, because my understanding is that yes, it is enforceable, and you should not park on zig zag lines it is an offence. But I'll have to double check on that and find

out and make sure that the local constabulary or wherever it is, but I presume it's in the City with our own parking enforcement. But even within the City, where we have civil parking enforcement, some issues are still obviously the responsibility of the police. Notwithstanding that, I will make sure that gets clarified but I always understood that you should not and it's an offence to park on zig zag lines.

**Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor A Taylor**

It's my understanding that the Highway Code says that people should not, but not that they must not, and the message I've had from the parking people here is that they are not allowed to issue tickets. I wondered really whether it would be possible to do some sort of survey amongst schools, to see whether it is a problem and if so, whether we could introduce TRO's.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Community Infrastructure, Councillor M McGuire**

I think what we need is clarification because a number of people will be puzzled by this, as I didn't know it was just an advisory thing. Zig zag lines are a national thing, not something we introduced, and clearly we need to clarify what it is. You mentioned TRO's. I think you might be getting confused as to the principal of what a TRO is, it's whether or not the constabulary, or under the Civil Parking Enforcement, parking on zig zag lines can be enforced, that is something we have to clarify. I may have been in ignorance myself, I always assumed it was an offence and will be disappointed to find that it isn't. I will clarify it, Chairman.

**9. Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty from Councillor P Downes**

My question is to Councillor Harty and Brown. I haven't given you advance notice because it doesn't require any technical or factual knowledge which you need to research, it's an opinion. It's about the commissioning of new schools to meet basic need now. Many of you may not be aware, that the process now for commissioning new schools is extremely laborious. The County Council are not allowed itself to set up a new school. It has to commission them from outside providers and this involves a lot of work in preparing tender documents and then receiving submissions from would be providers, which might come from all over the Country. Having reviewed all those, a long list providers is produced and these providers then do an evening presentation to members of the community. It's a bit like the X Factor, where they keep coming on in turn and saying that they're passionate about education and things like that. Then after that, they are interviewed at length and in detail by a panel of members and officers and at the end of the day we make a recommendation and the Secretary of State decides who's going to get the job. This whole process we recently experienced in Ely, where we spent a long time doing this and at the end of the day our recommendation was turned down by the DfE on technical and legal grounds because the successful bidder was no longer eligible to be considered. We are about to go through the same process with Littleport and we have about another fifteen schools to do in the next few years. My point is this, do you share my concern that this is a totally unnecessary process? It is highly costly, it costs between sixty and seventy thousand pounds without a brick being laid, it is time consuming, tedious and there is no evidence whatever that the school commissioned at the end is any better than the school that would have been commissioned had we been doing it as we used to do it. I am asking whether or not you share my concern and if you do share my concern will you join me in lobbying your Member of Parliament but also your minister in the DfE to

see if this can't be changed because the Country cannot afford this process in a time of national austerity?

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty**

The answer quite simply is yes, I do share your concern.

**Supplementary question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty from Councillor P Downes**

Well in that case I will be very pleased if you through your political channels will pass on that message to a certain Michael Gove, as I will to a certain David Laws, because I think that has got to be cross party action on this. I know it's legislation introduced by the Labour Party some years ago, but it is totally irrelevant and a very good example of what we are talking about in the earlier motion about expensive centralised process, when we want to have local decision making.

**Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty**

We will certainly follow that through.

**10. Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor M Curtis from Councillor R Hickford**

Can I ask Councillor Curtis, we've received some very welcome news recently on the City Deal can we have clarity as to what he considers the next stages and timescales to be?

**Reply from the Leader of the Council, Councillor M Curtis**

The next big timescale is for the Budget Speech next year where we need to have the detail. What we've got is an in-principle support for a City Deal with a lot of the right words in there and the most important one being support for Gainshare which is the thing that we thought would be the blocker, if anything. So we have between now and next March to work out the details of the agreement. We have already got a draft memorandum of understanding which we're working on to move it forward, but it is about getting the detail about what Gainshare means, how it works, but also looking at some of the issues around housing and around skills as well, drilling down a bit deeper and getting a bit more detail. I suspect there is going to be a lot of work between now and next March if the last few months are anything to go by. But fingers crossed, it will be worth it.

**Supplementary question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor M Curtis from Councillor R Hickford**

On the basis that next March is very important, what is the timescale after that when we will see something from the City Deal which is not talk, as there has been a lot of talk. When will we see projects start?

**Reply from the Leader of the Council, Councillor M Curtis**

The answer is I don't know. If things go well after March, we can start planning the detail of projects. It's opportune and the right time for me to recognise the fantastic work that elected Members and officers from all three Councils have undertaken, especially Alex Plant before he left, and Graham Hughes within our own Council,

which has been a great bit of joint planning. If we get it right, it is not just about Greater Cambridgeshire it will benefit Cambridgeshire and beyond. As soon as we get the Budget doing and saying the right things, we need to start planning and working on getting some of the projects delivered within it.

## **Appendix D**

### **COUNTY COUNCIL – 11 DECEMBER 2013 WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Question from Councillor S van de Ven to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor T Orgee

In what practical ways is the council's new Public Health role looking to contribute to essential transport for the elderly, isolated and vulnerable - a fundamental component of the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor T Orgee

The Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing strategy includes 'Create a sustainable environment in which communities can flourish' as one of its six priorities. Included within that priority is 'Develop and maintain effective accessible and affordable transport links and networks, within and between communities, which ensure access to services and amenities and reduce road traffic accidents'. It is clear that the actions required to take forward this strategic priority involve a number of County Council Directorates and organisations.

A practical way in which the County Council Public Health Team can contribute to this priority is to provide specialist advice to the Economy, Transport and Environment Directorate (ETE) on the impact of transport on health and wellbeing, in order to influence transport strategies and plans.

Surveys have shown that availability of transport is important to older people in local communities. It is less easy to quantify the impact of transport on health issues, and the cost effectiveness of transport interventions to reduce isolation, compared with other possible interventions to improve health. The Health and Wellbeing Board have agreed that 'Transport and Health' should be the subject of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in 2014/15 – which will be an in depth review of available data and evidence from research literature, and from consultation with local stakeholders. This will be led by the public health team and will inform further planning to improve health and wellbeing.

#### **Additional information**

The implementation of the Health and Well-being Strategy is the business of the County Council as a whole - and several of its partner organisations. ETE has a particularly key role in terms of supporting the implementation of the Strategy through the services it provides to address priorities and contribute to essential transport for the elderly, isolated and vulnerable.

Some of the practical ways that ETE supports this is through putting in place effective policies and strategies which help to improve transport and accessibility across the County. Officers also work to secure investment from developments through negotiations with developers to improve accessibility and mitigate the impacts of growth. Officers work closely with the districts through District Transport and Access Groups to develop Action Plans to provide more targeted support for improving accessibility, e.g. the Fenland Transport and Access Group have undertaken surveys and worked to identify options for improving public transport accessibility to hospitals and clinics.

Practical support is also provided through community transport schemes where a range of options are offered to enable essential journeys for those who have difficulty accessing conventional transport. Options include Dial a ride, community car schemes and taxi card

schemes. The Cambridgeshire Future Transport (CFT) Programme is investing £1.5m to develop local transport solutions that better meets local needs. This is a joint initiative with partners working together to find solutions to Cambridgeshire's transport and accessibility challenges. It aims to improve local transport provision to better meet local needs while reducing the amount of subsidised bus services. An example of improvements delivered so far by CFT include (for Adult Social Care Services) a new council fleet was introduced in July 2013 with more flexible vehicles (literally seats can be taken out to accommodate wheelchairs). This means that more passengers are being taken to day centres. In turn needs for journeys that crop up on the day are now more likely to be met and hence the service is more responsive to customer needs - this reduces the risk of isolation for older people.

County Council Adult Social Care (ASC) spends approx £1.5M on transport provided by fleet/leased vehicles and through commercial contracts and voluntary drivers. The transport arrangements are managed for ASC through colleagues in ETE.