

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the County Council will be held at Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge on Tuesday 14th October 2014 at 10.30a.m.

Lunch will be provided.

A G E N D A

Reflections led by Mr Amrik Sagoo, Cambridge Sikh Gurdwara

Apologies for Absence

1. Minutes – 22nd July 2014 (previously circulated)
2. Announcements (oral)
3. Declarations of Interests (oral)
[Guidance for Councillors on declaring interests is available at <http://tinyurl.com/cccdcoint>]
4. Public Question Time (oral)
To receive and respond to questions from members of the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.3.
5. Petitions (oral)
To receive petitions from the public in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.4.
6. Appointment of the Chairman/woman of the Adults Committee and Cambridge City Joint Area Committee Allocation of Seats and Substitutes (white)
7. Pension Fund Board Annual Report 2013/14 (pink)
8. Audit and Accounts Committee Annual Report 2013/14 (white)

9. Motions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10 (oral)

(a) Motion from Councillor Manning

Council notes:

- The Cambridge City Deal, which brings together elected representatives of the three Councils of Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and this Council
- The current review of the County Council electoral divisions
- The extra costs associated with this, and many other examples of duplication between district and County Councils

Council believes that creating one or more Unitary Authorities could:

- alleviate many of the problems mentioned above
- save the combined Councils, and therefore the tax payer, money in the long term
- improve the delivery of services, primarily by removing inefficiencies and better integrating services under one or more Councils
- provide Cambridgeshire residents with a form of local Government that is more understandable, simpler to interact with and better for them

However, Council acknowledges:

- that the County Council has recently moved to a new system of Governance
- that there has been a change in political control at one of the districts

Council believes that both the above points mean any move to Unitary status should be regarded as a medium – long term project.

Therefore Council resolves that the Chief Executive officer:

- write to the lead officers of all the other councils within Cambridgeshire, asking whether their Council is interested in starting discussions over moving to Unitary status *in principle*

- writes to the secretary of state for Local Government expressing this Council's desire to move to Unitary status
- reports back replies to all members of the Council

Further, a cross party working group be set up between Cambridgeshire County Council and interested district Councils to work on the details of a move to Unitary status.

[The Chairman advises that the motion relates to a matter for the Council to determine and that the motion is therefore in order as drafted].

(b) Motion from Councillor Bullen

The council believes that:

- there is significant potential to achieve large scale financial savings in the cost of providing local government services that could be realised from the creation of a single unitary authority for Cambridgeshire replacing the six existing Councils. A single Council which reflects the identity and interests of local communities whilst delivering effective and convenient services to residents.
- public service organisations in Cambridgeshire have responded to the enormous financial challenges faced over the past several years in an innovative and responsible manner. However significant funding shortfalls and continued pressure on public sector budgets persist, and at some point these financial pressures will inevitably have an impact on the ability of local government organisations to deliver good quality and safe services to the residents of Cambridgeshire.
- in addition to the financial position, the division of responsibilities between different tiers of councils results in waste, duplication and confusion amongst local residents. A unitary organisation would improve efficiency, deliver improved quality services and outcomes for residents and ultimately achieve better value for the public purse.
- the current national political climate does not lend itself to the creation of unitary authorities in the immediate short term, however in these austere times, a unitary Council is the only way we can achieve the required financial savings and maintain frontline services.
- it is therefore in the public interest to explore the potential to create a unitary form of local government for Cambridgeshire.

The council notes that:

- the evidence suggests there is significant potential for achieving financial savings by moving to a unitary authority, for example Cornwall Council confirmed that “in delivering £40m of savings in 2010/11 and the projected savings plans of £170m for 2011 onwards, a significant element of these savings can be delivered because we are a unitary authority”.

This Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to:

- initiate a public debate on the issue, and to investigate the service benefits, costs and savings of moving to one unitary authority for Cambridgeshire, involving residents, businesses, partners and all interested stakeholders;
- consider how best to ensure local democracy is enhanced rather than diminished by exploring how best to capitalise on our town and parish councils;
- work with a cross-party working group of Councillors whilst undertaking the required exploration; and
- provide an estimate of the costs and benefits for Cambridgeshire arising from a change to unitary working for consideration at the Council's Annual Meeting in 2015.

[The Chairman advises that the motion relates to a matter for the Council to determine and that the motion is therefore in order as drafted].

(c) Motion from Councillor Criswell

This Council acknowledges:

- the achievements of Council staff and partners in the considerable savings made to date;
- that the level of efficiency savings often associated with unitary authorities have already been made through collaborating with partners in projects such as Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) and Making Assets Count (MAC);
- that Cambridgeshire delivers its services at a lower net revenue cost per head of population than any other County in England being 27th out of 27;
- that when district and city council budgets are included, services across Cambridgeshire are delivered at less cost per head of population than the vast majority of either

Unitary or County Authorities being 146th out of 150.

Notwithstanding this, Council recognises further savings may be possible under different governance arrangements.

Further, this Council recognises:

- the increasingly difficult financial challenge being placed on all public sector organisations.
- that within and outside of the council, business planning in service silos may not be the most efficient or sustainable way for the public sector to allocate its reduced funding;
- that the Government is seeking greater devolution of powers throughout the UK to enable more effective and efficient public spending;
- that various public sector scenarios already exist or are being discussed as part of the rewiring of public services; not limited to but including place-based budgets, unitaries, combined authorities, authorities under the control of a mayor and status quo;
- that in order to place Cambridgeshire County Council in the best position to take advantage of any possible changes the Chief Executive would need to:
 - identify legal barriers to any plausible outcomes and suggest possible actions where appropriate.
 - investigate the merits and disadvantages of potential alternative structures.
 - investigate the possibilities for and appetite of partner organisations to collaborate more closely and potentially pool budgets.
 - identify barriers to innovation and pursue solution utilising members' political influence where appropriate.

This Council therefore calls on the Chief Executive to:

- investigate the merits and potential of outcome and place-based budgets which encourage and enable efficient cross-service delivery;
- investigate the possibilities for and appetite of partner organisations to collaborate more closely and potentially to pool budgets;
- identify and investigate possible alternative future

governance arrangements which could radically improve the way we fund and deliver services for the benefit of Cambridgeshire residents.

[The Chairman advises that the motion relates to a matter for the Council to determine and that the motion is therefore in order as drafted].

(d) Motion from Councillor Harty

This Council notes that:

- the A428 is a route of significant national importance as well as a key strategic route in Cambridgeshire.
- the A428 is experiencing some of the highest traffic growth in the country, and further significant growth is planned along the length of the corridor.
- at peak time there are often long delays which leads to 'rat running' onto local roads with associated negative impacts.
- there are concerns that without improvements, the A428 will not be able to cope with the growth planned; Up to 25,000 homes are planned to 2031 along the corridor from Bedford, through to St Neots, Cambourne and Bourn with 10,000 homes planned on the Cambridgeshire part of the corridor.
- the average number of vehicles using the single carriageway section per day is 18,000 rising to 25,000 on the dual carriageway between the A1198 at Caxton and the A1303 at Madingley.

This Council believes:

- early commitment is needed from Government for an improvement scheme on the A428 between A1 Black Cat roundabout and the Caxton Gibbet roundabout. This section of the A428 is the only remaining single carriageway part of this important east west route. It lacks the capacity to support current travel demands, and with planned growth it will not be able to function effectively as a strategic link without a comprehensive improvement scheme.
- a comprehensive approach is needed as piecemeal improvement schemes which only deal with congestion problems at key hotspots run the risk of relocating the congestion to the next pinch point on the route and would not offer a satisfactory solution.
- given the strategic nature and volume of traffic, modelling work carried out for the Draft Cambridgeshire Long Term

Transport Strategy is showing that additional new capacity is needed to facilitate growth.

- it is important that improvements on this section of the A428 are brought forward as soon as possible so that the route does not act as a barrier to the future growth and prosperity of the area.

Therefore, this Council calls on the Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs to work with their fellow committee members to:

- seek a commitment from Government and the Highways Agency that comprehensive improvements will be prioritised for the A428 to enable it to perform effectively as a strategic east west link
- develop an A428 alliance to work with our key partners including neighbouring authorities, the Highways Agency and local members of parliament to lobby government for early investment and improvements on the A428 to support the continued growth and prosperity of this area.

[The Chairman advises that the motion relates to a matter for the Council to determine and that the motion is therefore in order as drafted].

(e) Motion from Councillor Walsh

This council notes:

- The Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme (CLAS) was created in April 2013 following the abolition of the Social Fund's Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- CLAS provides practical and financial support for people moving into, or remaining in Cambridgeshire, and for families and vulnerable individuals under exceptional pressure. CLAS only provides grants and not loans.
- The funds originally allocated by the government to this council for the scheme were far smaller than were available under the DWP's previous Social Fund arrangements. The scheme and eligibility criteria were purposely designed to ensure that those who presented genuine needs, and were particularly vulnerable, would be given priority access to grants from the scheme.
- The Conservative Cabinet found in April 2014 that there was sizable under-spending during 2013-14 worth £450,000 on the CLAS budget for awards, which was not carried forward into 2014-15, resolving to loosen the eligibility

criteria.

- The budget for CLAS in 2014-15 was reduced by £294,000 and set at £117,000k for administration and £631,382 for awards.
- Since April, the budget has started to come under pressure due to a steady increase in the number of successful applications and the reduction in the total budget for 2014/15. In 2013-14 there was an average of 60 successful applications per month receiving an average £562 per award. In the first five months of 2014-15, there has been an average of 111 successful applications per month receiving £525 per award.
- Officers predict that by 31 March 2015 the fund for awards would total £701,307 which constitutes over-spending worth £69,925 on the budget for awards of £631,382.
- The government will not continue funding for CLAS from April 2015.

This council believes:

- CLAS provides a crucial lifeline for victims of the economic recession and the government's austerity programme.
- There is a clear and growing demand for CLAS support in Cambridgeshire.
- It is the duty of national and local government to provide basic welfare assistance to society and this includes CLAS.
- The government is mistaken to end funding for CLAS from April 2015.

This council resolves:

- To write to the DWP before the Local Government Finance Settlement is announced in December 2014 to insist that it maintain current funding for CLAS in 2015-16.
- To establish a working group comprising members of the General Purposes Committee to lead investigations into how this council will fund CLAS if the government fails to maintain funding from April 2015.

[The Chairman advises that the motion relates to a matter for the Council to determine and that the motion is therefore in order as drafted].

10. Questions:

(a) **Questions** on Fire Authority Issues (oral)

Report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority (pink)

(b) **Oral Questions** (Council Procedure Rule 9.1) (oral)

Members will be invited to ask questions of:


- the Leader of Council
- the Chairman/woman of any Committee
- representatives on the Fire Authority

Note: questions should relate to business discussed at a committee meeting, any matter relevant to the business of the Council and/or matter which affects the County of Cambridgeshire. The maximum time allowed for questions and answers will be 60 minutes.

(c) **Written Questions** (Council Procedure Rule 9.2) (oral)

To note responses to written questions from Councillors submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2.

Dated 3rd October 2014



Quentin Baker
Director of LGSS Law,
Property and Governance
& Monitoring Officer

The County Council is committed to open government and members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. It supports the principle of transparency and encourages filming, recording and taking photographs at meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as Twitter and Facebook) to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens. These arrangements operate in accordance with a protocol agreed by the Chairman of the Council and political Group Leaders which can be accessed via the following link or made available on request:
<http://tinyurl.com/ccf-film-record>

The Council cannot provide car parking on the Shire Hall site so you will need to use nearby public car parks. Details of other transport options are available on the Council's website at: <http://tinyurl.com/ccf-carpark>

For more information about this meeting, including access arrangements and facilities for people with disabilities, please contact Michelle Rowe at the County Council's Democratic Services on (01223) 699180 or by email at: michelle.rowe@cambridgeshire.gov.uk