

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 9th July 2002

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 12.25 p.m.

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillors: P D Bailey, C M Ballard, I C Bates, Dr T J Bear, B S Bhalla, J Broadway, C M Carter, M Y Chapple, R L Clarke, J E Coston, P J Downes, R Driver, J A P Eddy, H J Fitch, J L Gluza, P D Gooden, A Hansard, B Hardy, G F Harper, V A Hearne-Casapieri, G J Heathcock, J L Huppert, S F Johnstone, J D Jones, I C Kidman, S J Kime, V H Lucas, A R Mair, R B Martlew, A K Melton, E Meyland-Smith, S B Normington, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, A G Orgee, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P A E Read, J E Reynolds, C E Shaw, P W Silby, R C Speechley, A B Stenner, P L Stroude, J M Tuck, J K Walters, R Wilkinson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors: A J Bowen, S V Brinton, M Farrar, S A Giles, W G M Hensley, A C Kent, S J E King, M L Leeke and L W McGuire

81. MINUTES: 14th MAY 2002

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14th May 2002 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Queen's Birthday Honours

The Chairman offered congratulations on the receipt of awards in this year's Queen's birthday honours to the recently retired Chief Constable, Ben Gunn, who received a CBE for his services to the Police, and to Peter Dawe, a local businessman who was awarded an OBE for his services to the Internet Watch Foundation.

Head of Human Resources

On behalf of members, the Chairman thanked Christina Youell, who was leaving the Council on 26th July, for her contribution to the work of the Council over the last 14 years, including five years as Head of Human Resources. Members noted that Jon Sparkes, currently Group Human Resources Director for the Generics Group in Harston, had been appointed as the new Head of Human Resources and would be taking up the post in September.

Interchange Award

The Chairman announced that the Environment and Transport Department had won the Interchange Award for medium sized schemes for its integrated transport measures from the Park and Ride sites at Babraham Road and

Trumpington to the centre of Cambridge. The Chairman congratulated all concerned in gaining this award, ~~which clearly established Cambridgeshire as one of the leading authorities in the country on transport.~~

Cambridge Jubilee Cycleway

The Chairman had welcomed His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh to open the new Cambridge Jubilee eCycleway on 1st July~~from the Newmarket Road Park and Ride site towards the City Centre.~~ The route cycleway had been developed by the County Council in conjunction with the City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, Marshall and Sustrans.

Route Creation Award

The Countryside Services Team in Environment and Transport was congratulated on this award from the British Horse Society for creating a new bridleway route through a former quarry in the parishes of Holywell-cum-Needingworth and Bluntisham.

Needingworth Wetland Project

The Chairman had attended national and local events recently on the Needingworth Wetland Project, which would~~in association with this project to create Britain's biggest reed bed for wildlife, a resource for future generations.~~ The project had been developed in partnership with Hanson and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Consumer Education Resource and Information Centre (CEDRIC)

Trading Standards had launched the Schools section of an online Consumer Education Resource and Information Centre (CEDRIC). This had been very well received and put Cambridgeshire at the forefront of Trading Standards education.

Early Excellence Centre

On behalf of Members, the Chairman congratulated the staff involved in securing the resources for the establishment of an Early Excellence Centre to be based at Histon Nursery School. These centres were designed to provide child care and education services for local children and families, and a range of support services for other providers from a wider area.

Beacon Schools

The Chairman congratulated Little Paxton and Meadowgate schools on achieving Beacon Status, bringing the Cambridgeshire total of Beacon schools to eleven.

Display of Work

The Chairman encouraged Members to look at the items produced by Spectrum and the St Michael's Resource Centre in Huntingdon on display outside the

Chamber. The Resource Centre provided real work opportunities and job training for adults with learning difficulties. ~~;- sales and marketing of the goods helped worker members of Spectrum to maintain and develop skills and promoted their confidence and independence.~~

Register of Interests

~~The Chairman asked those Members who had completed their Register of Interests electronically to sign a copy of their declaration that morning.~~

83. REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Council received a report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18th June 2002, covering the following:

Key decisions for information

1) Local Transport Plan – ~~a~~Annual ~~p~~Progress ~~r~~Report

Councillor S F Johnstone, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, responded to the following answered Members' questions from Members on the report.

Councillor I C Bates sought more information on progress in areas other than CHUMMS, particularly access and rat-running in villages in his electoral division. In reply, Councillor S F Johnstone said that expenditure of £4.1m on traffic calming schemes was being requested in the current year.

Councillor C E Shaw noted that there was little mention of railways in the report although transport by road in the County had increased by four times the national average last year. He sought assurance that the Council would engage with the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) in the next four years in the interests of the travelling public. Councillor Johnstone explained that the production of a rail strategy had been hampered by the SRA's lack of involvement, but a strategy was now in the early stages of development.

Councillor J E Coston requested details of what had been spent on the A10 since the County Council had become responsible for its maintenance and asked what was being done to improve safety on the A10 between Milton and Ely, particularly in view of the delay in installing traffic lights at the Butts Lane junction. Councillor Coston also queried the delay in establishing a cycle path between Landbeach and Waterbeach, for which money had been obtained from the research park at Landbeach, and drew attention to the inadequacy of the bus services into the villages of Milton and Waterbeach. On the A10, Councillor Johnstone advised that the County had received revenue from the Highways Authority for maintenance only and capital for the traffic lights only; she undertook to write to Councillor J E Coston with a detailed answer on the other issues.

Councillor P J Downes expressed concern about the indefinite nature of the proposals for the Rapid Transit system between St Ives and Huntingdon and asked what progress had been made in developing these.

Councillor Johnstone emphasized that CHUMMS was about the whole route from Huntingdon to Trumpington; the consultants were actively producing proposals for the route, with initial on-road running using the A1123 and A14 between St Ives and Huntingdon.

Councillor H J Fitch asked that more cycleways be provided to separate cyclists from motor vehicles and that money be spent on the maintenance and refurbishment of older cycle paths which were not being used because of their condition. He welcomed the Plan's aim to encourage cycling and queried whether the target of increasing cycling trips by a third by 2010 was sufficiently ambitious. Councillor S F Johnstone replied that the Plan's cycling targets were significant and were in line with ambitious national targets. She acknowledged the need for maintenance and refurbishment of cycleways, though there were resource implications.

Councillor Fitch also drew attention to the importance of buses keeping to time and to route in order to meet the needs of commuters. He commented that traffic-calming schemes were a palliative to deal with speeding motorists; it was also important to educate drivers not to drive too fast, particularly within their own villages. Councillor Johnstone responded that the new partnership with the Police, Health Authority, Highways Authority and Fire Service should assist in reducing speeding as revenue for speeding fines could be used to fund more safety cameras. She reminded Members that 85% of bus services in the County were commercial and that it was difficult to provide more subsidised routes.

Councillor G J Heathcock welcomed the Hills Road bus lane proposals and discussion of the Hills Road railway bridge, but stressed the need for careful local consultation on the bus lane, involving local members and avoiding the summer holiday period. He also raised the question of repairing damage already caused by buses and improving infrastructure so that buses could negotiate older housing estates without difficulty. Councillor Johnstone accepted Councillor Heathcock's remarks about the consultation process and apologised for if there had been for any shortcomings in these previous consultations.

Councillor S B Normington pointed out that Ramsey had not been mentioned in the Market Town Strategy, and that its position in relation to the Greater Cambridge Partnership was unclear. She asked that Ramsey should be should be fully recognised as a market town, and drew attention to its need for that it needed a proper bypass. She welcomed the recent improvements in the bus service to and from Ramsey. Councillor S F Johnstone assured Members that Ramsey had been identified as a market town. Strategies had been developed for St Neots, March and Ely, including the Ely southern bypass, and market town strategies were currently being devised for Wisbech and Huntingdon, with strategies for further towns to follow in co-operation with the district councils.

Councillor V A Hearne-Casapieri welcomed proposals for the Ely southern link bypass and urged that residents of Stuntney be fully involved in the consultation process. Councillor Johnstone undertook to look at how best

to involved Stuntney residents in development of the bypass route.

Councillor R B Martlew urged that wider research into alternatives to the Rapid Transit system be undertaken to consider arguments in relation to other options such as heavy rail, light rail or designated public transport route. ~~He sought reassurance that the scheme was intended to cover the whole distance from Huntingdon to Trumpington.~~ Councillor Johnstone said that CHUMMS had already examined other options for the Huntingdon – Trumpington route and found Rapid Transit preferable to heavy or light rail. Rapid Transit was expected to work well and prove popular with travellers.

Councillor J Broadway drew attention to the recent withdrawal of the commercial bus service from the Mildenhall Road end of Fordham, a mile beyond the village centre, on which many commuters and elderly residents had depended. She also asked Councillor S F Johnstone to state how much had been spent as a consequence of the delay in establishing the route of the Fordham bypass, including the cost of continued accidents and of officer time spent working on the new route. Councillor Broadway reminded Members that planning permission on the original route expired in September 2002. Councillor Johnstone responded that the revisions to the Fordham bus service were a commercial matter and an example of national problems with driver recruitment. On the Fordham bypass, Councillor Johnstone reminded Members that the outcome of the public enquiry was still awaited so the matter was currently out of the Council's hands.

Councillor A K Melton ~~drew attention to the lack of growth and industrial activity in the Fens as a consequence of inadequate transport links. He identified the potential benefits to Fenland arising from the upgrading of the Felixstowe to Nuneaton rail line as vital to the Fenland area, and urged that the Wisbech railway line be reopened. Councillor Johnstone advised that the electrification of the Ely/Whittlesey/Peterborough railway line depended on the Strategic Rail Authority. Councillor Melton welcomed the Ely southern bypass and said that an industrial link road for March was long overdue. He welcomed the Ely to Witchford cycle lane; East Cambridgeshire and Fenland District Councils had had preliminary discussions about extending the cycle route past the Mepal Outdoor Centre to Chatteris. He looked forward to seeing a Northern Area Transport Plan.~~

~~Councillor J A P Eddy expressed his support for bypasses to Ramsey and Whittlesey; on the current structure plan, there would be no further development in Ramsey until the road was improved. Councillor A B Stenner asked Councillor Johnstone to ensure that officers remained in close contact with the Highways Authority about the A1, which caused concern to residents of his electoral division. Councillor Johnstone assured Members that the County was engaged in consultation with the Highways Authority about the A1. Councillor P L Stroude noted that, according to the map in the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment self-assessment, there was no link between the M11 and the~~

~~A14. This illustrated his difficulty with the route from the M11 to Fenland via the B1050, where two villages needed to be freed from traffic.~~

~~Councillor M K Ogden expressed his support for upgrading rail links in the north of the County and pointed out that the relative cheapness of land there provided opportunities for development in the area. Welcoming the Ely southern bypass, Councillor A R Mair said that the project had wide local support and that a rail crossing on a road as busy as the A142 was an anachronism.~~

In responding to the debate, Councillor J K Walters reminded Members that one reason for changing the route of the Fordham bypass was to allow for the possibility of integration with the rail system. This would not have been feasible on the route as originally proposed.

Councillor J L Huppert declared a personal interest in this item under paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct by reason of his membership of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign.

Councillor S F Johnstone declared a personal interest in this item under paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct by reason of her membership of the Board of the National Cycling Strategy.

2) Public Transport 2000 Initiative

In answer to a question from Councillor R B Martlew, Councillor S F Johnstone confirmed~~stated~~ that the smaller bus operating companies would be represented in the new company formed by the conversion of the East Anglia Public Transport Information Service (EAPTIS) to a limited company.

Other decisions for information

3) Comprehensive Performance Assessment

4) Prevention Fund Grant Allocation

In answer to a question from Councillor P J Downes, Councillor J K Walters explained that these allocations were from one-off resources arising from an extra £400,000 Council Tax income; he undertook to find out whether further details of the funding allocations were on the Council's website.~~Internet~~

Councillor J A Powley, Cabinet Member for Social Services, welcomed the £400,000 additional funds -allocated to Social Services, but expressed concern that pressure could be put on future budgets if funding were to be required for some of the items beyond the current year.

84. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – SCHEME OF DELEGATION

The Council considered a report from the Director of Resources which recommended amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers. A further, fourth, recommendation was tabled revising the wording of two delegations to the Director of Education, Libraries and Heritage.

It was proposed by Councillor ~~J K Walters~~ P W Silby, seconded by Councillor R Driver and resolved that:

- (a) the delegations to the Director of Social Services relating to the registration of residential care homes and day care facilities (delegation No.1) and the inspection of Children’s homes (delegation No.2) be deleted and subsequent delegations be re-numbered
- (b) the list of delegations to the Director of Environment and Transport be revised as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes and pages 65–70 of the Constitution up-dated accordingly
- (c) the following statement be added as paragraph 7 to the Overall Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions by Officers (Page 57 of the Constitution):

“7. Reference to any Act, Regulation or Order within the Scheme of Delegation shall be deemed to include any amendment to, or up-dating of, that Act, Regulation or Order.”

- (d) the words “School and Pupil Attainment” be deleted from delegation No.14 and No.15 to the Director of Education, Libraries and Heritage (Page 71 of the Constitution).

Councillor Stroude declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Resolution (b) of this item under paragraphs 8 and 10 of the Code of Conduct because he was a signatory to a Section 106 ~~a~~Agreement which was under dispute, and was absent from the meeting during the discussion of the item.

85. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Two written questions had been submitted under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules, to which written responses were tabled:

- Councillor S V Brinton asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, to provide Councillors with an update on the implementation of the FAMIS computer system both in ~~internal~~Council departments and in schools. In particular, she asked Councillor Walters to provide the number of schools yet to have their year end balances for 31 March 2002 provided by FAMIS and fully reconciled with the school’s own records.
- Councillor I C Kidman asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, to say when the national Public Library Standards were issued to local Library Authorities, what timescale was envisaged by the

government for the implementation of these standards, where Cambridgeshire stood in relation to two key standards (opening hours and spending on books) and what resources had been identified to enable the County Council to fulfil its obligations in meeting government standards.

A full copy of the questions and responses is available from the Democratic Services Division.

86. ORAL QUESTIONS

Three oral questions were asked under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules:

- Councillor C M Ballard asked the Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning, Councillor V H Lucas, by what percentage the library book buying fund had been cut in the last year.
- Councillor J E Coston asked whether the smell emanating from the Milton sewage treatment works, particularly severe last summer and this, could be discussed by Council. She was advised by the Chairman that this was a matter for the District Council. The Leader of the Council agreed to discuss this matter further with Councillor Coston after the meeting.
- Councillor P J Downes asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, to comment on the Local Government Finance consultation, and in particular on the opportunities there would be for Members to be briefed and for them to contribute to the Council's response.

A full transcript of the questions and responses is available from the Democratic Services Division.

87. MOTIONS

Members noted that no motions had been submitted under Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules.

88. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

It was resolved unanimously to approve the following appointments:

- Scrutiny Management Committee – appointment of Councillors M Y Chapple, P D Gooden, G F Harper, J L Huppert and F H Yeulett as substitute members.
- Education, Libraries and Heritage Scrutiny Committee – appointment of Councillor J L Gluza to the Labour vacancy on the Committee.
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority – replacement of Councillor J A P Eddy by Councillor S B Normington as a member of the Authority.
- Cambridgeshire Care and Education Partnership – replacement of Councillor S B Normington by Councillor M Y Chapple as a member of the Partnership.

Chairman

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