

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 20th March 2001

Time: 10.30 – 12.40

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor: J A P Eddy (Chairman)

Councillors: D M Adey, J L Barker, Dr T J Bear, B S Bhalla, S Bicker, P R Bishop, A J Bowen, S V Brinton, J Broadway, F J W Brown, J E Coston, R Driver, M Farrar, H J L Fitch, S E Friend-Smith, J L Gluza, B Hardy, R J Harris, W G M Hensley, S F Johnstone, J D Jones, D C Kelleway, A C Kent, I C Kidman, M L Leeke, R B Martlew, L W McGuire, J McKay, A K Melton, E Meyland-Smith, S B Normington, T O'Dell, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, A G Orgee, D R Pegram, J Percy, M R Pope, J A Powley, P A E Read, J E Reynolds, D C Sharp, C E Shaw, P W Silby, R C Speechley, A B Stenner, P L Stroude, J M Tuck, J K Walters, A M White, R Wilkinson and F Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors S M Campbell, R S Farrer, G J Heathcock & M Scott

173. CHAIRMAN' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Karel Tripp, Solicitor to the Council

The Chairman advised the Council of the departure of Karel Tripp, Solicitor to the Council who was retiring from her post on ill health at the end of March. The Chairman indicated that he would be writing to Ms Tripp thanking her for her contribution to the work of the County Council and expressing the Council's best wishes for the future.

John Edwards, Assistant Director (Highways)

The Chairman advised the Council of the departure of John Edwards, Assistant Director (Highways), in the Environment and Transport Directorate who was retiring at the end of March. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked Mr Edwards for his contribution to the work of the County Council and wished him well for the future. The Chairman also congratulated the Highways Division on receiving a Chartermark for the third time.

New Assistant Director (Highways)

The Chairman reported that Matthew Lugg, currently Head of Development with Lincolnshire County Council, had been appointed as Assistant Director (Highways) in the Environment and Transport Directorate.

Royal Town Planning Institute

The Chairman congratulated staff in the Development Control Section of Environment and Transport, who in conjunction with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Hanson plc, had received a Royal Town Planning Institute Award for the Needingworth Wetland Project.

Foot and Mouth Outbreak

The Chairman commended County Council staff for playing their part in seeking to control the spread of foot and mouth disease in the County.

Grafham Water Centre

The Chairman drew Members' attention to a display of photographs from Grafham Water Centre and an invitation to visit the Centre after the foot and mouth outbreak had been contained.

County Council Elections 2001

The Chairman thanked those Members who were standing down from the Council at the County Council elections scheduled in May, for their contribution to the work of the Council.

174. COUNCIL TAX PAYMENTS – PROTECTING THE ELDERLY

Councillor J K Walters moved the following motion which was duly seconded by Councillor J E Reynolds:

“Given the government’s review of local authority finance, it would be timely to consider special mechanisms to cushion the effect of council tax burdens on the elderly. This Council believes that some form of council tax concession for the elderly should be more widely available than the current council tax benefit scheme and, therefore, urges the LGA to ask the government to consider a suitable mechanism to achieve this”.

On being put to the Council, the motion was declared to be carried, and would be submitted to the Local Government Association for consideration at their Annual General Meeting.

[Voting pattern: unanimous].

Declarations of Interest:

The following members declared a pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of them being eligible or shortly eligible, for benefits for the elderly. They decided that the interest they had was so insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence them in discussing and reaching a decision on the matter. These Members remained in the Chamber and voted:

J L Barker, T J Bear, P R Bishop, J A P Eddy, M Farrar, H J L Fitch, B Hardy, R J Harris, J D Jones, R B Martlew, J McKay, E Meyland-Smith, S B Normington, M K Ogden, J Percy, J A Powley, P W Silby, R C Speechley, A B Stenner & A M White

175. POLICY COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor P A E Read that the report of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 6th March 2001 be received.

Political Management – New Council Constitution

It was moved by Councillor J K Walters and seconded by Councillor J E Reynolds that the recommendation contained in the report be adopted.

It was resolved unanimously:

- (a) That the Constitution be adopted with effect from 15th May 2001;
- (b) That for 2001/2002, key decisions could not be delegated from Cabinet to an individual portfolio holder; and
- (c) That the appointment of the Acting Solicitor to the Council (Acting Head of Legal Services) as Proper Officer under S.270 of the Local Government Act 1972 be confirmed.

Information report:

The Council noted an information report on Members' Allowances.

176. EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND HERITAGE AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEES

Care and Education Plan 2001/02

It was moved by Councillor R Wilkinson and seconded by Councillor J Powley that the recommendation in the joint report of the Education, Libraries and Heritage and Social Services Committees be adopted.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Care and Education Plan 2001/02 be endorsed.

177. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 27(F)

It was resolved unanimously:

To approve the suspension of Standing Order 27(F) to allow Members to speak more than once on the following item.

178. THE COUNCIL'S POLICY FRAMEWORK

It was moved by Councillor J K Walters and seconded by Councillor J E Reynolds that five policy statements together with the Corporate Plan (Prospects 2001 – 2005) set out in the report of the Chief Executive be adopted as part of the Council's policy framework.

It was resolved unanimously:

To adopt the following policy statements together with the Corporate Plan (Prospects 2001-2005) as part of the Council's policy framework:

Annual Library Plan;
Early Years Development Plan (Care and Education Plan);
Local Transport Plan;
Youth Justice Plan; and
Local Agenda 21 Strategy.

Chairman