

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 22nd July 2008

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 4.25 p.m.

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor A G Orgee (Chairman)

Councillors C M Ballard, J Batchelor, I C Bates, N Bell, B Boddington, K Bourke, M Bradney, J Broadway, P Brown, T Butcher, C Carter, K Churchill, S Criswell, M Curtis, P J Downes, J Dutton, S A Giles, G Griffiths, G F Harper, D Harty, G J Heathcock, W Hensley, S Higginson, P E Hughes, W Hunt, C Hyams, J D Jenkins, E Kadić, G Kenney, A C Kent, S G M Kindersley, S J E King, V H Lucas, D McCraith, L W McGuire, A K Melton, R Moss-Eccardt, S B Normington, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P Read, A A Reid, J E Reynolds, K Reynolds, P Sales, M Shuter, M Smith, T Stone, J M Tuck, R Turner, J K Walters, J West, D White, K Wilkins, H Williams, M Williamson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors B Bean, R Farrer, N Harrison, J Huppert and S Johnstone

243. MINUTES: 13th MAY 2008

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13th May 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

244. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Death of former Councillor

The Chairman reported with sadness the death of a former Chairman of the County Council, Margaret Shaw, and that he had attended her funeral. Margaret Shaw had been one of the Councillors elected to serve on the County Council when it was established in 1974 and had served as Chairman from 1977 to 1979. Members stood to observe a minute's silence in her memory.

Accident on the A1307

The Chairman led members in offering condolences to the family and friends of the father and two sons killed in the accident on 19th July 2008 on the A1307 near Linton. Members also wished those who had been injured in the accident a full and speedy recovery.

Chairman of the Standards Committee

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Professor Christopher Forsyth, the Chairman of the Standards Committee. He reported that Professor Forsyth had served for eight years as an independent member of the Committee, but would

now be standing down. Members thanked Professor Forsyth for his valuable contribution to the work of the Committee.

Young people attending the Beijing Olympics

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Louie Ferre, Lewis Mancer, Lauren Sammout, Katie Simms and Rebecca West, five Cambridgeshire pupils who would be travelling to Beijing to attend the Olympic Games. On behalf of the Council he presented them with a camcorder and digital camera to record their experiences and wished them well for their trip.

Head of Legal Services

The Chairman reported that this would be the last Council meeting to be advised by Tim Farr, Head of Legal Services, who would be leaving the Council at the end of August. The Chairman led members in thanking him for his contribution to the work of the Council and wishing him well for the future.

Awards and achievements

The Chairman led members in offering congratulations to all those involved in the following achievements:

- Mel Khan, a Library Learning Service tutor, had won a UK Online Centres 'Best Centre Staff' regional award for her work to help older learners to use the internet and e-mail
- Brian Smith, Deputy Chief Executive – Environment and Community Services, had been appointed President of CSS, the former County Surveyors' Society
- The Council's financial scrutiny process had been recognised as an example of best practice by the Centre for Public Scrutiny
- Three regional awards had been won in a national teaching competition, by Caroline Nofer of Gorefield Primary School for the Primary School Teacher of the Year, by Thomas Minnock from Linton Village College for the Teaching Award for Enterprise and by Crosshall Junior School for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Award for Sustainable Schools
- The Council's Environmental Education Centre at Stibbington had been reassessed as a national Eco-Centre for the third year running
- Cambridgeshire's Community Access Points had been runners-up in the Best Development Project category of the Nominet Best Practice Challenge 2008
- The Council had recently received a Route Creation Award from the British Horse Society.

The Chairman reported that at the request of the Leader of Council, and in consultation with Opposition Group Leaders, it was proposed to vary the order

of items at the meeting to discuss the information items within the Cabinet reports at the end of the meeting, after the item on Appointments to Committees and Outside Organisations. The Council consented to the change.

245. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following members declared personal interests under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct. The items to which the interests relate are shown in brackets.

- Councillor Ballard as a member of Friends of the Earth (Minute 249, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Determination, a) The County Council’s Climate Change and Environment Strategy and Minute 255, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Information, Item 17, BAA Submission of Planning Applications for a Second Runway at Stansted Airport) and Councillor J Reynolds as Chairman of Renewables East (Minute 249, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Determination, a) The County Council’s Climate Change and Environment Strategy)
- Councillor Griffiths as a member of the Board of Trustees of Jimmy’s Nightshelter (Minute 255, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Information, Item 7, Supporting People: Exemption from Contract Regulations for the Provision of an Assessment Centre in Cambridge City)
- Councillor Hughes as a Governor of the Manor Community College, Councillor Normington as a Governor of Ashbeach School in Ramsey St Mary’s, Councillor West as a Governor of Maple Grove Infant School and Councillor Yeulett as a Governor of Neale-Wade Community College (Minute 255, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Information, Item 4, Building Schools for the Future: Procurement Phase)
- Councillor Jenkins as a lay member of Cambridgeshire Community Services and Councillor Lucas as the Chairman of Cambridgeshire Community Services (Minute 255, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Information, Item 10, Quarterly Update Reports)
- Councillor Jenkins as his son was a Special Constable and Councillor J Reynolds as Chairman of a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and a member of the Police Authority (Minute 249, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Determination, b) Cambridgeshire Community Safety Agreement 2008-11)
- Councillor Melton as his wife was a Trustee of the King Edward Centre in Chatteris (Minute 255, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Information, Item 7, Property Issues: Renewal of the Lease of the King Edward Centre, Chatteris)
- Councillor Melton as a Director of Cambridgeshire Horizons representing Fenland District Council, Councillor Moss-Eccardt as a member of the Automobile Association and the World Wide Fund for Nature and Councillors Orgee and Powley as members of the Automobile Association (Minute 255, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Information, Item 3, Long-Term Transport Strategy/Transport Innovation Fund: Consultation Results and Next Steps)

- Councillor Ogden as his house was affected by the developments he described when speaking on Minute 255, Report of the Cabinet – Items for Information, Item 16, Eco-Towns: Living a Greener Future.

246. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Council noted that no questions had been received from members of the public by the deadline.

247. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

It was proposed by the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Orgee, seconded by the Vice-Chairman of the Council, Councillor Oliver, and agreed unanimously to

Approve the revisions to the Council Constitution as set out in the appendix to the Council report.

The Chairman reminded members of the practice of discussing all proposed changes to the Constitution with Group Leaders before bringing them to Council.

Councillor Batchelor expressed concern that as Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee, he had not been involved in discussion about the appointment of substitutes for Church representatives on the Committee. He noted that the Committee wished to review the role of all co-optees to ensure that they were involved as effectively as possible.

248. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

Professor Forsyth, the independent Chairman of the Standards Committee for 2007/08, moved receipt of the annual report of the Standards Committee. He highlighted a number of issues, including new arrangements for the initial assessment of complaints about individual members' conduct to be carried out locally, rather than by the Standards Board for England, and the need for members to sign declarations of interest and of gifts and hospitality that were e-mailed for inclusion in the Register of Interests. He also thanked the other independent member of the Committee, who had served since 2003 and whose term of office was now ending.

It was proposed by Councillor Oliver, a member of the Standards Committee, and seconded by Councillor Broadway, also a member of the Standards Committee, and agreed unanimously

To appoint Mr David Boreham, Dr Kazia Gaseltine and Mrs Mary Sanders as independent members of the Council's Standards Committee for a period of five years until July 2013.

Councillor Downes asked the Chairman of the Standards Committee whether, in his view, there was a continuing need for the Standards Board for England, given the recent changes to arrangements for initial assessment of complaints against individual members. Professor Forsyth commented that this would be a matter for Parliament to determine, but noted that one of the reasons for the devolution of initial assessments had been the Board's substantial workload

relating to other matters. He also noted that the Board would retain the power to intervene if it considered that due process was not being followed locally.

Council noted the report.

249. REPORT OF THE CABINET – ITEMS FOR DETERMINATION

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, moved receipt of the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 20th May 2008, 10th June 2008 and 8th July 2008.

- a) The County Council's Climate Change and Environment Strategy (20th May 2008, Item 1)

It was proposed by the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Brown, and seconded by the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, that

The Council adopts the Climate Change and Environment Strategy as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

Councillor Kenney welcomed the Strategy but suggested that more radical actions should be taken to address climate change, including greater investment in more environmentally efficient buildings, alternative sources of energy and public transport. She also suggested that five years was too long to wait to review the Strategy and that it should be reviewed again sooner.

Councillor Ballard welcomed the Strategy but suggested that the Council should do more to show leadership on climate change issues, a suggestion that had also been made in a recent Internal Audit report. He particularly highlighted the Council's Travel for Work Strategy, which to date had managed to do little to change employees' travel patterns to a more sustainable footing. He also expressed concern that the Strategy did not contain adequate proposals to mitigate the effects of climate change that would inevitably occur, for example rising sea levels, which should be of particular concern to Cambridgeshire as the lowest-lying county in the UK.

Councillor Read endorsed the Strategy but commented on the need for responsible use of Council Tax payers' money and proportionate investment in climate change measures.

Councillor Reid reported that his Group would be supporting the Strategy, but still felt much more could be done to translate words into action. He highlighted five of the Council's major projects, the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, the Waste and Street Lighting Private Finance Initiatives, Building Schools for the Future and the Transport Innovation Fund bid, and suggested that for each of these projects, there should be much more detailed consideration and reporting back to members of climate change implications. He also expressed serious concern that no data was available for carbon emissions from Council buildings for 2001-2006, making it very difficult to set targets and monitor progress.

The Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, noted that the Office of Children and Young People's Services was building all new schools to the BREEAM 'very good' standard and was also working with the Building Research Establishment on a model primary school project. In addition, the Directorate of Planning and Development had created a new post to help promote energy efficiency in schools. Further actions would be discussed with members through Policy Development Group meetings.

Councillor Jenkins reminded members of a previous motion from Councillor Reid that schools be built to the BREEAM 'excellent' standard. He welcomed the Strategy but emphasised that action on climate change should be overarching, not an afterthought. He urged the Council to show leadership and to tap into local technological expertise.

Councillor Downes endorsed the Strategy but commented that at the recent Local Government Association conference, a number of other local authorities had demonstrated far more ambitious actions and targets relating to climate change. He suggested that Cambridgeshire could learn from their examples.

Councillor Melton emphasised the need for joined-up thinking between local authorities and Government departments, to ensure that new buildings were constructed to higher standards and that older buildings were maintained appropriately but also so that they were energy efficient, for example by fitting double glazing. He urged the County Council to make an impact on climate change and suggested that it might learn from Fenland District Council's promotion of wind turbines.

The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, reminded members that the Council was working through its Integrated Plan and with its partners through the Local Area Agreement to achieve a wide range of environmental objectives, such as increasing recycling, increasing bus patronage and reducing carbon emissions.

Summing up, the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Brown, thanked members for their comments and looked forward to their support in taking the Strategy and its actions forward in the years to come.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was agreed unanimously.

- b) Cambridgeshire Community Safety Agreement 2008-11 (8th July 2008, Item 1)

It was proposed by the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Yeulett, and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor McGuire, that

The Council approves the Cambridgeshire Community Safety Agreement 2008-11 as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

Councillor Sales welcomed the Community Safety Agreement and particularly the identification as a priority of addressing alcohol misuse. He expressed concern that the extent of problems associated with alcohol misuse was often understated, especially in relation to young people.

Councillor Heathcock agreed that alcohol education for young people should be a priority. He expressed concern that one of the key problems was the wide availability of cheap alcohol. He called on Trading Standards, the Constabulary and the District Councils as licensing authorities to take enforcement action whenever this was appropriate. Councillor West echoed these concerns and agreed that it was important for partners to use legislation to take appropriate actions.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, commended the positive work being done by the Council's Personal, Social and Health Education Service with young people on the issue of alcohol misuse.

Councillor Broadway welcomed the Agreement, which she had helped to prepare as a Police Authority representative. She commented that it would be difficult initially to measure performance against some of the community safety targets put forward as part of the Local Area Agreement, because baseline data was not available; however, as these targets became established, they would be very useful. She particularly welcomed the focus on domestic violence and the recent agreement to fund a domestic violence advocacy service across the County.

Councillor Stone highlighted the need to enthuse and involve the public in implementing the actions proposed in the Agreement.

Councillor Jenkins welcomed the Agreement as an overarching strategy, but emphasised the need for it to be translated into actions at community level. He commented that police should be visible in communities and should work together effectively across borders. He also expressed concern that partnership arrangements were currently not transparent, as the Community Safety Strategic Board did not meet in public.

Councillor J Reynolds noted that the Community Safety Agreement was relevant to all parts of the community and would be taken forward via a number of routes including Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Neighbourhood Panels and schools. All of these routes would help to engage real people and ensure that problems were resolved.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities agreed that alcohol misuse and domestic violence were both priorities. On these and other issues, it would be important to work with communities to find solutions, involving people through Neighbourhood Panels and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. He commented that the review of Local Area Agreement governance and partnerships would help to ensure that processes were transparent.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was agreed unanimously.

250. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Five written questions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Heathcock had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, to conduct a review of contracted bus services
- Councillor Jenkins had asked the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Councillor J Reynolds, for information relating to the earlier sale of the Council's residential care homes
- Councillor Jenkins had asked the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Pegram, about the Council's expenditure on front-line adult social care services
- Councillor Ballard had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure to provide double yellow lines in Coleridge Road, Cambridge
- Councillor Jenkins had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure about expenditure on the Council's Transport Innovation Fund proposals.

The responses were circulated at the Council meeting and copies are available from Democratic Services.

251. ORAL QUESTIONS

Twelve oral questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, whether the Cambridgeshire guided busway was currently being delivered to budget and to time. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure confirmed that it was. Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked whether the problems with the Historical Records and Cultural Centre would affect the development of the transport interchange at Cambridge railway station. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure agreed to send a written response.
- Councillor Wilson sought assurance from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, that for the next round of school admissions, all parents of reception-age children would be alerted to the need to apply for school places in good time. He also asked whether primary schools themselves had a role in ensuring that parents were aware of the need to apply. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning described the steps the Council took to alert parents to the need to apply. It was the local authority's duty to do this, but schools also had an important role in advising families and passing information to Admissions.
- Councillor Jenkins drew attention to the recent news coverage of a shunt on the Edinburgh guided busway. He asked whether Cambridgeshire had investigated the safety features of the Essen and Adelaide guided busways and specifically asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure to

consider whether any of the features of the Adelaide scheme should be implemented in Cambridgeshire. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure agreed to do this and send a written response.

- Councillor Read asked the Cabinet Member for Learning about the arrangements available to parents who wished to appeal for places at oversubscribed primary schools, particularly the one in Little Downham. He also asked what steps would be taken in the longer term to deal with the problem of oversubscription. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning explained that the position in East Cambridgeshire was being reviewed; it was possible that catchment areas would need to be changed. An appeals process was in place, the details of which were on the Council's website. However, he reminded members that the legal maximum size for a reception class was 30 pupils.
- [Councillor Wilkins invited the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure to look with him at some blighted trees on Milton Road in Cambridge. He also asked whether it was appropriate for Cabinet to make decisions about tree planting on this road, or whether this was best left to the local Area Joint Committee. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure agreed to visit the site and to send a written response on the decision-making process.](#)
- Councillor Melton asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure whether there was any evidence that the new traffic lights on the A605 March/Whittlesey junction had improved road safety. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure commented that it was relatively early to reassess the site's safety record, but that local residents had welcomed the scheme. Councillor Melton asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure to convey this message to the local newspaper, which had campaigned against the scheme after a previous proposal for a roundabout had been dropped. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure agreed to do so.
- Councillor Kadić asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, whether he had any comments on the recent lifting of special measures for Spring Common School or on the Government's 'naming and shaming' of schools through the National Challenge. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children congratulated all those who had contributed to the improvements at Spring Common and noted that there were now no Cambridgeshire schools with an Ofsted categorization. He expressed concern that the Government's National Challenge had been poorly researched and inappropriately announced. The three Cambridgeshire schools named were all making good progress and this announcement would damage morale and reputation. Nonetheless, the Council would be working through the initiative to ensure that maximum benefit was obtained for the schools involved.
- In view of the recent serious accident on the A1307 near Linton, Councillor Batchelor asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure what steps would now be taken to implement the road safety improvements already agreed for this road. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure explained that it would be for the Safety Camera Partnership to decide the location of and install a fixed safety camera. Signs warning of the high casualty rate on the road would be installed in the autumn.

Interactive signs and a review of speed limits would be prioritised, and a road safety education campaign was being brought forward. Councillor Batchelor also asked when the pedestrian refuge at Park Hill/Horseheath would be installed. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure explained that works by BT to lay optical cabling were delaying progress.

- Councillor Bourke asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure about three issues relating to the works for the guided busway on Hills Road. Despite the Council saying that no other roadworks would take place in the vicinity, there had been roadworks on Cherry Hinton Road and outside the Royal Bank of Scotland. Similarly, despite saying that one lane would be open in each direction at all times, there had been only a single lane open at some times of day. Lastly, despite the Council's aim of keeping the impact on congestion in the city centre to a minimum, there had also been diversions affecting Brooklands Avenue and adjacent roads. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure emphasized that there had been no other local authority roadworks; the additional works were being carried out by the utilities, and the Council was seeking to improve co-ordination with them. On the other points, he explained that a change of approach had been necessary to ensure safety, which was paramount at all times.
- Councillor Downes invited the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, to join him in deploring the Government's requirement for new schools to be procured through a competition process, which in his view did not enhance diversity and choice but led to wasted time and energy. He asked the Cabinet Member to lobby the national Conservative Party to rescind the relevant legislation if they came to power. He also asked for this issue to be raised with the Local Government Association. The Cabinet Member for Learning explained that Cambridgeshire was seeking to simplify its processes as much as possible, but had to work within the legal requirements. He agreed to raise local concerns with his central Party and with the Local Government Association.
- [Councillor Heathcock noted that an accident in June in Blinco Grove, Cambridge, had resulted in the removal of a damaged street light, which had not since been replaced. He emphasised the importance of maintaining this historic street scene and listening to the views of the local community by making a like-for-like replacement. He asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure whether the Council had insurance or could claim against the motorist's insurance to enable a replacement to be made, and if so, whether a claim had been made. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure agreed to send a written response.](#)
- Councillor Stone asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure whether he agreed it was unacceptable that two interactive signs in Little Abington had not been working for over three years. The Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure agreed that this was unacceptable and noted that there was an action plan in place to repair interactive signs across the County.

252. AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

The Chairman of the Audit and Accounts Committee, Councillor Stone, moved receipt of the Committee's annual report for 2007/08. He highlighted a number of issues, including:

- The Council's overall Use of Resources score for 2007 of 4, the highest possible score
- Areas for improvement considered by the Committee during the year, especially the continuing challenge of achieving safe recruitment
- Concerns about the resourcing of the Internal Audit team, which meant that it had limited capacity to carry out preventative work and had to prioritise rigorously those areas it audited.

Councillor Williamson reported that the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee was also very interested in the issue of safe recruitment. The Director of People and Policy had advised the Committee that he was questioning some of the findings of the Internal Audit report; nonetheless, the Committee would continue to keep this issue under review to ensure that the necessary progress was being made.

Council noted the report.

253. MOTIONS

Two motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10:

Motion from Councillor Harrison

As Councillor Harrison was unwell and absent from the meeting, the following motion was proposed by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Downes:

The Council requests the Cabinet to allocate the resources identified in Table 1 for the purposes identified in Table 2.

Table 1: Resources

Source	Amount £	Description
Insurance reserve	600,000	Reduce reserve to meet actuary's 'most probable' claims expectation
Proportion of Corporate Services 2007/8 underspend (total £1.1m)	500,000	Unallocated resources
Local Authority Business Growth Incentive scheme	700,000	Additional receipt from scheme
Total	1,800,000	

Table 2: Expenditure

Service	Amount £	Description
Highway maintenance and traffic management	1,000,000	Includes road, pavement and footpath repair; minor traffic management measures e.g. speed limits, road signs and lines, street lights, cycling improvements, pedestrian crossings, dropped kerbs, disabled parking bays
Post Offices fund	250,000	Transition/kick-start funding to help secure sustainable Post Office network across Cambridgeshire
Supporting young people	250,000	Increase level of youth work
Climate change projects in schools	300,000	Projects of educational value which also help schools cut costs and carbon emissions
Total	1,800,000	

Notes:

1. The first two items in Table 1 are available as a result of underspends in the Council's 2007/08 budget.
2. All resources identified are additional to those available when the 2008/09 budget was set in February 2008.
3. The resources identified are non-recurring and therefore the base budget of the Council is not altered.
4. The expectation is that all expenditure will be completed in 2008/09. Any underspends will be re-allocated by Cabinet before the end of July 2009.

Members speaking in support of the motion identified the following points:

- It was the Council's responsibility to use its resources to best effect to strengthen services, rather than to increase reserves.
- These proposals related to windfalls, which were unexpected, not part of the existing budget, and should be put to good use.
- In particular, the Council should listen to its communities and respond to their messages about priorities for expenditure.
- Highways schemes championed by residents were being delayed due to lack of funds. Many of the schemes had direct implications for road users' safety. These proposals would provide an opportunity to take some of the schemes forward and could result in greater savings on the longer term, given the financial as well as human costs of responding to accidents.

- Cambridgeshire's services for young people were currently the 139th lowest funded out of 140 nationally and these proposals would help to address the situation.
- No expenditure was being proposed that would affect the base budget in future years. It was for this reason that no proposals relating to adult social care were being put forward.

Members speaking against the motion identified the following points:

- It was important to be financially prudent and not to raise residents' expectations unrealistically. This was particularly the case given both the current concerns about the national economy and the knowledge that Cambridgeshire's settlement for 2009/10 would be only 2%, well below most measures of inflation.
- The auditors regularly commented that Cambridgeshire's reserves were relatively low given the scale of its budget and it was therefore useful to take this opportunity to strengthen them.
- The Council's Integrated Planning Process was used to determine expenditure against priorities and any discussion about the possible use of surpluses should be considered through this process in the autumn.
- Funding revenue activities from windfall funding would lead to increased spending pressures in subsequent years.
- In terms of insurance, as the Council self-insured against certain risks, it was important to ensure that the Insurance reserve was maintained at an appropriate level.
- Similarly, it was responsible to set aside funds in Corporate Services to meet future pressures that might arise in relation to major projects such as shared services and Workwise.

Councillor Sales reported that the Labour Group supported the motion in principle only. They did not agree that the full £1.8 million was surplus, since they supported the top-up of the Insurance reserve, and would have somewhat different proposals for the use of the funds available.

On being put to the vote, the motion was defeated. [Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats in favour, Conservatives against, Labour Group abstained.]

Motion from Councillor Heathcock

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Heathcock and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

The Council is extremely concerned at the recent announcement by the Post Office to consult on proposals to close 23 sub post offices within the County. These proposals if implemented would represent a further reduction in the post office network, especially in rural areas and would result in hardship to many sections of the community. The impact will be

felt hardest on communities which may already have seen the loss of local facilities such as the shop and pub. It would also impact hardest on vulnerable people, like the elderly, who find access to alternative provision difficult without independent transport.

The Council deplores the fact that the proposed six week consultation period ending on 26th August will take place at the height of the holiday season when many people will be away from home and find it difficult to take part in what is supposed to be an open and transparent process.

This Council also notes that Essex County Council has demonstrated imagination and has implemented several alternative mechanisms for delivering post office services in places where the traditional service has been withdrawn.

This Council therefore requests Cabinet to explore options to provide a £250,000 transitional support fund. This would enable post offices under threat to restructure their businesses so that they can continue to operate in some way to provide post office services and enable alternative providers to provide such services in their stead.

The following amendment was proposed by the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Yeulett, and seconded by Economy, Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Brown:

That the motion be amended to delete the second, third and fourth paragraphs and replace with the following:

“The Council is asked to note that Cabinet in conjunction with the District Councils, Peterborough City Council, and other partners such as Cambridgeshire ACRE and Postwatch through the Post Office Network Change Group, have already started to respond to these concerns.

The Council is asked to note and endorse the following actions which Cabinet have already put into place to support communities:

- In the light of the original proposed six-week consultation period, which would have ended on the 18^h August, this was challenged and the consultation has been extended by one week and one day now ending on 26th August
- Providing a dossier of evidence to Post Office Limited on deprivation, growth and transport issues in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which they would need to take into account in any proposals for closure
- Briefings are in progress to ensure that all Councillors, including Parish Councillors, are equipped to enable their communities to challenge the closures on the basis of evidence from their local community

- Officers from all of the partners are supporting local communities in helping them to respond to changes, particularly in examining the evidence, and in evaluating outreach options where Post Office Limited have proposed these.

The County Council with its partners have immediately made available Business Development Grants to enable business to look at business diversification, alternative options for the delivery of post office and other financial transaction services, and to explore partnership outreach opportunities. These are in the process of being offered to all of the 23 closures proposed in Cambridgeshire.

The County Council remains concerned at the impact of these closures and requests that Cabinet continues to support local communities, and to review and investigate the case made by Post Office Limited with regard to these closures, and where either the criteria are not met or additional evidence is available, a robust challenge should be made on behalf of all the authorities.”

Members speaking in favour of the amendment made the following points:

- The Post Office Change Network Group had successfully brought together a range of organisations including the County and District Councils and Cambridgeshire ACRE to lobby Post Office Ltd. As a result of the Group’s work, 23 Post Offices in Cambridgeshire had been highlighted for closure, when this might previously have been 30 to 40. In addition, the consultation period in Cambridgeshire had, exceptionally, been extended from six to seven weeks. The Post Office Change Network Group would be meeting again in early August to prepare a robust challenge on behalf of all of the threatened Post Offices.

Members speaking against the amendment made the following points:

- It was not sufficient to reduce the list of Post Offices proposed for closure to 23; each one of those would affect a local community. The closure of smaller Post Offices would particularly affect people in rural areas, who might not be able to travel to larger towns, and the frail and elderly, who were not easily able to queue for long periods in larger Post Offices. The closure of smaller Post Offices would also affect the life of Cambridgeshire communities, many of which had already lost other local facilities.
- The County Council should show leadership on this important issue and an inclusive approach taken involving all members, not only those on the Post Office Change Network Group. The £250,000 proposed would be used to develop a number of different business solutions, as was already being done in Essex and Milton Keynes.
- The amendment removed reference to concerns about the consultation period. Concern was expressed that the consultation opened and closed within the same university holiday and that three of the Cambridge Post Offices at threat were used primarily by students and academics, who would be absent from the city throughout this period.

- If sufficiently robust action was not taken to meet this round of closures, further closures could be proposed in future.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried. [Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour, Liberal Democrats against, Labour Group abstained.]

It was proposed by Councillor Moss-Eccardt and seconded by Councillor Wilkins

That the second paragraph of Councillor Heathcock's original motion, beginning 'The Council deplores the fact ...', with the word 'six' amended to 'seven' in the first line, be inserted into the amendment upon which members had just voted.

On being put to the vote, this further amendment was defeated. [Voting pattern: Liberal Democrat and Labour Groups in favour, Conservatives against.]

Council then briefly debated the substantive motion, as amended.

Members speaking against the amended substantive motion expressed concern that it now merely listed the actions taken to date and did not contain any positive actions for the future. They called for the County Council to show leadership and make resources available to take the issues forward.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried. [Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour, Liberal Democrats against, Labour Group abstained.]

254. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

The following appointments to Committees and outside bodies were proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Orgee, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Oliver, and agreed unanimously:

- Councillor Ogden to replace Councillor Humphrey as a substitute on the Fenland Traffic Management Area Joint Committee
- Councillor McGuire to replace Councillor Pegram as a member on the Huntingdonshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee
- Councillors Churchill and Pegram to replace Councillors Farrer and Hyams as substitute members on the Huntingdonshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee
- Councillors J Reynolds, Downes and Tuck to be confirmed as members of Pensions Committee
- Councillor Johnstone to replace Councillor Bradney as a member of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee
- Councillor Churchill to be appointed to the vacancy on the Standards Committee
- Councillor Criswell to replace Councillor Harper as a member on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority
- Councillor Bourke to replace Councillor Broadway as a substitute on the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Wilson to replace Councillor Humphrey as a member of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Normington to replace Councillor Powley as a substitute on the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee.

255. REPORT OF THE CABINET – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Report of the meetings held on 20th May 2008 and 10th June 2008

- 2) Delivering Cambridgeshire's Priorities for 2008-11
- 3) Primary Capital Strategy
- 4) Building Schools for the Future: Procurement Phase

Councillor Yeulett welcomed the progress being made with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme in Fenland and particularly commended the work being done with the pupils, staff and governors of Neale-Wade Community College.

Councillor Jenkins noted that BSF was a major undertaking and asked what steps were being taken to ensure that the programme did not interfere with the day-to-day management of the schools involved.

Councillor Hughes drew attention to the poor condition of buildings at Manor Community College and called for essential maintenance to be carried out prior to the College's inclusion in the BSF programme.

Councillor Ballard noted that the Council for the Built Environment had commented that most of the BSF designs for schools submitted to date had been unsatisfactory. He was suggested that the CBE be asked to comment on Cambridgeshire's designs prior to submission.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, noted that schools were keen to be involved in the BSF programme, but care was being taken to ensure that their contributions and time were carefully managed. He commented that he would also welcome the CBE's comments on Cambridgeshire's designs.

- 5) Extension of School Age Range at Comberton Village College

Councillor Batchelor noted that three Cambridgeshire schools had been granted sixth form presumptions on the basis of their designation as high-performing specialist schools. He asked what would happen if they ceased to be high-performing schools.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, explained that the schools would be monitored and any such issues would be dealt with if they arose.

6) Primary Education in Ely: Planning for the Future

Councillor Higginson welcomed the provision of additional school places in Ely, but expressed concern that the County Council had not taken into account the District Council's comments about location when opening the Lantern School. He asked what action the Council would take to address local residents' concerns about traffic movements associated with the school, in particular the inappropriate use of parking associated with a nearby social housing scheme.

[The Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, agreed to send a written response.](#)

7) Property Issues:

- Sales to District and Parish Councils of Residential Development Land
- Renewal of the Lease of the King Edward Centre, Chatteris

8) Responding to Parental Representations: A Decision-Making Framework

Councillor Ballard reported that he shared other members' concern that the Government's proposals to promote diversity and increase parental choice could be used inappropriately by pressure groups.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, confirmed that the framework had been developed in accordance with guidance received from the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

9) Scorecard – Quarter 4 Performance Outturn Report

Councillor Bradney drew attention to the positive news contained in this report, especially in relation to the number of older people helped to live at home. He congratulated the members and officers involved.

Responding, the Deputy Leader, Councillor McGuire, agreed that it was important to celebrate successes. He advised members that his remit now included performance management. He would be meeting regularly with Cabinet members, service Directors and the Director of Finance, Property and Performance, to identify where support could be given corporately to drive performance improvements.

10) Financial Outturn Report 2007/08

11) Consultation by NATS on Proposed Changes to Airspace in the Terminal Control North

Councillor Wilson expressed serious concern at the inadequacy of the consultation carried out by NATS, who had not attended meetings, answered phone calls or provided answers to questions. He noted that the proposals to increase stacking, lower the bases of stacks and bring more stacks into Cambridgeshire would all cause substantial annoyance to residents. Councillor Boddington endorsed Councillor Wilson's comments.

Councillor Bates asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, to ensure that all members were informed in due course of the outcome of the consultation.

Councillor Kenney expressed concern about the limited consultation and commented that the proposals would increase noise and pollution in South Cambridgeshire. She suggested that the aim should be to reduce reliance on air travel, rather than to increase provision.

Councillor Hughes noted that constant exposure to noise had a serious impact on the human mind and body. Any increase to noise levels should be abhorred.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure agreed to keep all colleagues informed of any news relating to the consultation.

12) Historical Records and Cultural Centre (HRCC): Closure of the Private Finance Initiative Scheme

Councillor Sales expressed disappointment that the HRCC project would not be proceeding and hoped that it would be possible to find alternative accommodation for the Council's archives.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor Yeulett, confirmed that fresh work on this issue was underway. He also confirmed that the archives project for Huntingdon would proceed as planned.

13) The Wicken Fen Vision

Councillor Williams expressed concern that the Wicken Fen Vision included car parking for visitors to the Fen, but the provision was not as close as it could be. She expressed concern that instead of using the car park, visitors would park in Reach and Swaffham Prior, clogging local roads.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Climate Change, Councillor Brown, agreed to discuss Councillor Williams's concerns with her and ensure that they were taken into account in the Council's response to the National Trust.

14) Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative

Councillor Reid asked the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, to revisit this project to establish whether there were greater opportunities to be taken to combat climate change and save money. He suggested that options could include reducing the number of lights in 40 and 50mph zones, where it was no longer the policy to provide them, or dimming them or switching them off at certain times.

Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked for the project also to take aesthetic considerations into account, given that street lighting columns could form an important part of the environmental heritage.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure commented that it would be important to balance efficiency, safety and aesthetics. Climate change considerations were being taken into account, which he would be happy to discuss further with members.

15) Report from Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee:
Called-In Decision: Network Service Plan and Revised Highways Policies
– 20mph Speed Limits

Councillor Reid noted that the Government guidance on 20mph speed limits was that these should be introduced where the mean speed was 24mph or less. He expressed disappointment that the Cabinet had agreed that 20mph speed limits should be introduced only where the mean speed was 20mph or less. He and Councillor Moss-Eccardt expressed disappointment that in determining the 20mph speed limit policy, Cabinet had decided to go against Government guidance, to the detriment of local residents and with the risk that more people would be killed or seriously injured. Councillor Reid reported that his Group would be developing an alternative speed limit policy that would make it easier for local communities to pursue changes.

Councillor Sales also expressed concern that the Council's policy was difficult to explain to local residents.

Councillor Read emphasised that traffic calming schemes should be researched carefully before they were introduced, as they could be very controversial once in place.

Councillor McGuire responded to the speakers as the Lead Member for Highways and Transport at the time of the Scrutiny Committee meeting. He explained that the Cabinet's intention had been to regularise the approach. The Council's policy was consistent with the Government's guidance for other speed limits, e.g. a mean speed of 30mph to introduce a speed limit of 30 mph, a mean speed of 40mph to introduce a speed limit of 40 mph etc. He accepted that consultation on the proposal had not been done properly, but he and the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, emphasised that the proposal had been given due consideration by Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee.

16) Eco-Towns: Living a Greener Future

Councillor Stone commended the joint working within the County Council and with partners to oppose the Government's proposals for an eco-town at Hanley Grange and thanked all those who had been involved.

Councillor Bates also commended the robust response prepared jointly by the local authorities. He expressed serious concern that the Government's proposals for eco-towns had bypassed local democratic processes and asked for representations to be made on this point.

Councillor J Reynolds agreed that the Government should follow proper planning processes. He proposed that existing planned developments should be built to zero-carbon emission standards, or as close to these

as possible, and called for Government investment to help Northstowe be constructed as an exemplar. He also expressed concern that a recent Government report on future housing requirements in the East of England had suggested that an increase of 30-40% would be needed over the next 20 years, not 10-15% as envisaged in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Councillor Hughes expressed concern that the national credit crunch already appeared to be affecting new developments, with the developers at Arbury Park having difficulty in completing their scheme. She expressed concern that if this was the case, developers could be even more reluctant in future to build to eco-standards.

Councillor Ogden emphasised the need for eco-housing to be designed to be sympathetic with its surroundings. He described a scheme close to where he lived, in a Conservation Area, where in his view this had not been achieved.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, also thanked all those who had contributed to the joint response to Government. He noted that representations had already been made to Government and to the Local Government Association on the bypassing of local decision-making processes. He agreed with Councillor J Reynolds that instead of imposing another new town on Cambridgeshire, Government should work with the local authorities to ensure that Northstowe was built to the highest eco-standards possible.

17) BAA Submission of Planning Applications for a Second Runway at Stansted Airport

Councillor Wilson welcomed the Cabinet's decision to oppose the construction of a second runway at Stansted Airport. He accepted that air travel was important for business and globalisation, but expressed concern that the growth in leisure travel was overwhelming. If growth was unavoidable then a range of other options should be considered, for example using larger planes, permitting fewer international connections to be made in the UK, or considering radical options such as a totally new airport on an artificial island in the Thames estuary.

Councillor Ballard also welcomed the Cabinet's decision. He expressed concern that the Government's aviation policy was not consistent with its sustainable development policy and noted that he was making representations within the Labour party on this point. In particular, the Government's target was to reduce carbon emissions by 60% by 2050, but was expecting a 5% per annum increase in air travel, which projected forward cumulatively would take up almost all of the permissible emissions for the UK by that time. Such projections were possible only because air and sea travel had been excluded from the international Kyoto protocol on reducing emissions. It was essential to face the challenge seriously and stabilise growth in air travel, an aim that would not be achieved by building new runways or airports.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth and Infrastructure, Councillor Bradney, agreed that a second runway at Stansted would be disastrous for Cambridgeshire. He also agreed that it did not make sense to exclude aviation-related carbon emissions from the Kyoto protocol.

- 18) Civil Parking Enforcement Appeals Committee
- 19) 'Prosperous Places: Taking Forward the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration'
- 20) Consumer Credit Act: Delegation of Enforcement
- 21) Northstowe Trust Update
- 22) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Cambridgeshire Phase 1

Councillors Hughes and Yeulett expressed disappointment that the member seminar the previous week on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) had not been well attended. They emphasised that this was a key document that should inform all of the Council's work with partners to support Cambridgeshire's communities. Councillor Stone urged all members to read it.

Responding, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, endorsed the speakers' comments and noted that the JSNA would be used to identify key priorities to be resourced through the Integrated Plan.

- 23) Children and Young People's Services Improvement Plan: Progress Update
- 24) Report from Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee: Member-Led Review into the Ability of the Learning Disability Service to Deliver Outcomes for Individuals within Budget Constraints

Councillor Higginson welcomed the Cabinet's response to the member-led review report. However, clarifying the Council report, he explained that the sub-group's view had been that, given the nature of the service, the aim of a low cost, high quality service was not attainable.

The Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Pegram, confirmed that the Cabinet would be considering the sub-group's recommendations.

Report of the meeting held on 8th July 2008

- 2) Office of Children and Young People's Services: Traded Services

Councillor Batchelor noted that the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee had previously sought assurance that the traded services' historic deficits would not transfer to the budget of the Office of Children and Young People's Services. This policy now appeared to have changed, since the Office's budget would be at risk if the traded services could not raise the projected £929,000 from profits.

He and Councillor Ballard expressed concern that given the traded services' previous performance, profits at this level seemed unlikely.

Councillor Hughes emphasised the need to maintain a high-quality music service, given the importance of music in young people's lives.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, explained that the decision to bring the trading units back in-house had inevitably meant that financial risks now rested with the Office of Children and Young People's Services. However, he expressed confidence that the proposed solution was achievable and noted in particular that Cambridgeshire Catering Service's income was already ahead of projection, due in large part to the success of the '10 out of 10' campaign.

3) Long-Term Transport Strategy/Transport Innovation Fund: Consultation Results and Next Steps

The Chairman advised members that as the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee would be considering a call-in relating to this decision the following day, he would not be allowing substantial debate on it at this meeting.

Using Council Procedure Rules 9.2 and 9.6, Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, whether she regretted the text of the letter sent to partners prior to the Cabinet meeting on 8th July 2008. The Leader of the Council confirmed that she did not and stood by the letters. As a supplementary question, Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked whether the subsequent decision not to pursue a first meeting of the Transport Commission by the end of July undermined her position as a strong Leader. The Leader of the Council noted that this proposal had not been rejected.

- 4) Finance and Performance Monitoring
- 5) Anglian/Eastern Region Regional Permit Scheme
- 6) Cambridge Central Area Bus Stop Capacity Strategy
- 7) Supporting People: Exemption from Contract Regulations for the Provision of an Assessment Centre in Cambridge City
- 8) Post Office Closures
- 9) Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee: Member-Led Review of the Council's Community Engagement Arrangements
- 10) Quarterly Update Reports

Speaking in relation to the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, Councillor Hughes emphasised the importance of effective partnership working and suggested that this should have been referred to more fully in the Council's Annual Performance Assessment self-assessment.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children commented that there were some very good examples of partnership working within the County. He also commented that there was a review of Local Area Agreement partnerships, for which suggestions would be welcome.

Chairman: