

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 21st July 2009

Time: 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor L J Oliver (Chairman)

Councillors S Austen, J D Batchelor, I C Bates, N Bell, K Bourke, B Brooks-Gordon, D Brown, F Brown, P Brown, R Butcher, C Carter, K Churchill, J Clark, N Clarke, S Criswell, M Curtis, P J Downes, J Dutton, R Farrer, N Guyatt, S Gymer, G Harper, D Harty, G Heathcock, W Hunt, C Hutton, J D Jenkins, S Johnstone, E Kadić, S G M Kindersley, V H Lucas, L W McGuire, V McGuire, A K Melton, L Nethsingha, D R Pegram, A Pellew, J A Powley, P Read, J E Reynolds, K Reynolds, T Sadiq, S Sedgwick-Jell, C Shepherd, M Shuter, M Smith, T Stone, S Tierney, J M Tuck, S Van de Ven, J West, R West, F Whelan, S Wijsenbeek, K Wilkins, M Williamson, G Wilson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors N Harrison, G Kenney, S King, R Moss-Eccardt, A G Orgee and S Whitebread

16. MINUTES: 23rd JUNE 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23rd June 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Awards and achievements

The Chairman led members in congratulating the following:

- The Corporate Director: People, Policy and Law, Stephen Moir, on his shortlisting in the Human Resources (HR) Director of the Year award category of the Personnel Today Awards 2009
- The Council on winning the Best Public Sector HR Strategy or Initiative category in the recent HR Excellence Awards run by the HR Magazine, and for being highly commended in the Most Effective Use of Internal Communications category
- The Council on being awarded a Silver Certificate of Recognition by Investors in People UK
- The Innovation in External Grants team and the Community Development service on securing £1.5 million for Cambridgeshire Together and the Migrant Worker Network, which would be used for projects relating to health, housing, community safety and children and young people.

Cambridgeshire Transport Commission

The Chairman reminded members that the Cambridgeshire Transport Commission would present its final recommendations to County Councillors at a briefing to be held at the conclusion of the Council meeting.

Agenda for the meeting

The Chairman announced two changes to the agenda for the meeting:

- The motion on the Bramley line would be taken early, to enable Fenland members who wished to attend a District Councillor's funeral in the afternoon to take part in the debate
- She would be allowing an additional urgent motion on the Government's proposals to cut the Housing Growth Fund for Cambridgeshire.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following members declared personal interests under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct:

Councillor	Minute	Details
Bates	23 (2)	Director of Cambridgeshire Horizons
Brown F	23 (2)	Director of Cambridgeshire Horizons
Churchill	26 (15)	Huntingdonshire District Councillor and Cabinet member responsible for the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership
Heathcock	23 (3)	Member of Railfuture
Jenkins	26 (8), (14) & (15)	Lay member of Cambridgeshire Community Services
Johnstone	26 (5) & (15)	Non-Executive Director of Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Kindersley	26 (6)	South Cambridgeshire District Councillor and member of the Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee and the Joint Planning Committee for the Cambridge Fringes
Lucas	26 (8), (14) & (15)	Chairman of Cambridgeshire Community Services
Melton	23 (2)	Director of Cambridgeshire Horizons appointed by Fenland District Council
Read	26 (11)	Member of Haddenham Level Drainage Board
Smith	26 (11)	Member of the Regional Flood Defence Committee
Tuck	23 (2)	Director of Cambridgeshire Horizons
van de Ven	26 (11)	Member of Meldreth Parish Council Sub-Committee on Flood Avoidance
Whelan	24	Parent of a child at Comberton Village College
Wilson G	26 (11) General	Environment Agency employee Wife employed by Cambridgeshire Community Services
Wijsenbeek	23 (3)	Employed in the design of railways, guided buses and trams

Yeulett	26 (11)	Member of Euximoor Drainage Board
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19. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

20. REPORT OF CABINET MEETING: ITEM FOR DETERMINATION

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, moved receipt of the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 7th July 2009.

a) Revisions to Policy Framework (Item 1)

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, seconded by the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, and agreed unanimously to

Approve the revised Policy Framework as set out in Appendix 1 to the Council report.

21. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2008/09

The Vice-Chairman of the Standards Committee, Mary Sanders, moved receipt of the annual report of the Standards Committee for 2008/09. She highlighted a number of points, including the Committee's new responsibility for dealing with complaints about Councillors and the increase in the Committee's membership to three independent members. Mary Sanders emphasised the need for Councillors to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Code of Conduct. She urged members to keep their Register of Interests up to date and to ensure that they adhered to the guidance on gifts and hospitality. She also encouraged members to seek guidance on conduct-related matters if in any doubt.

Council noted the report.

22. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

- Councillor Harrison had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, about the County Council's receipt and expenditure of Section 106 funds over the past ten years, and the timetable for review of the Cambridge Corridor Area Transport Plans.
- Councillor Harrison had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, about the ambitions of the Council's Design Champion within the initiative led by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment.
- Councillor Harrison had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, how the County Council would be responding to recent ideas developed by architects in Cambridge to rejuvenate some of the city's urban design blackspots.

- Councillor Harrison had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, about savings associated with the termination of the current parking enforcement contract for Cambridge.
- Councillor Nethsingha had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, about a temporary street light on Kings Parade in Cambridge and whether any alternative designs for lighting on Kings Parade were under consideration.
- Councillor Nethsingha had asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about forecast primary school admissions in Cambridgeshire for September 2010, about the use of mixed year classes and about the number of surplus places expected to be available for new families moving into the area.

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

23. MOTIONS

Motion from Councillor Jenkins on public meetings of the Policy Development Group reviewing the Council's Constitution

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

That Cambridgeshire County Council:

- 1) Notes that a Policy Development Group (PDG) has been set up to address the workings of the Council's Constitution and that currently PDGs meet in private;
- 2) Acknowledges that the arguments for and against public and private PDGs have been rehearsed on several occasions;
- 3) Is aware that the public mood is very much in favour of more transparency for the workings of government;
- 4) Recommends that the PDG carrying out the review of the Council's Constitution should agree to meet in public.

Members speaking in support of the motion:

- Commented that it was contradictory during a time of particular public concern about openness and accountability to hold meetings reviewing the Council's political management arrangements in private. Holding PDG meetings would not reduce their effectiveness, but would increase public confidence in the Council's democratic processes.

Members speaking against the motion:

- Noted that the Political Management Arrangements PDG had met for the first time the previous week and that, following discussion, its members had

agreed that the meetings should be in private. Had representatives of the Liberal Democrat group attended the meeting, they would have been able to take part in the discussion.

- Commented that it could be valuable for members to have private forums for debate, at which they were not distracted by potential media coverage.
- Noted that the Council's 2007 Comprehensive Performance Assessment had commended the strength of joint working arrangements in Cambridgeshire, including Spokesmen's meetings and Service Development Groups [precursors of the PDGs].
- Emphasised that the Political Management Arrangements PDG was a working group and did not take decisions; all decisions would taken at public meetings.
- Noted that the Liberal Democrat group were content to take part in other private meetings both within the County Council and within other public bodies.
- Commended the contribution of the Liberal Democrat group and other Opposition members to PDG meetings in the past.
- Urged the Liberal Democrat group to review its responsibilities to Cambridgeshire residents and to reconsider its decision no longer to participate in meetings of this and other PDGs.

Councillor Sedgwick-Jell suggested that it might be possible to find ways of making the PDGs more open than at present, to enable the Liberal Democrat group to participate without ceding their position.

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

Motion from Councillor F Brown on the Housing Growth Fund

As noted under the Chairman's announcements, the Chairman had agreed to include this motion as an item of urgent business to enable the Council to discuss Government proposals to cut the funding available through the Housing Growth Fund. There was an urgent need to make representations to Government on the issue and the Chairman considered that it was conducive to the efficient conduct of business for an urgent item to be added to the agenda to avoid the need to call an extraordinary meeting of Council to discuss this matter.

The following was proposed by Councillor F Brown and seconded by Councillor Bates:

The Council is incredulous at the recent Government announcement that the level of the Housing Growth Fund for the county be reduced by £6 million, contrary to all previous promises and statements.

The reduction in funding in one of the country's flagship growth areas beggars belief. Hard won projects on the point of agreement are at risk and future schemes for housing, including affordable homes, and related infrastructure may no longer be delivered.

The most illogical aspect of the Government's decision is that it has cut Cambridgeshire's funding which will deliver homes quickly and cost effectively in order to support speculative proposals in other parts of the country.

The Council cannot understand how the announcement makes any sense when set against other recent Government announcements on the importance of immediate housing growth to meet social need and stimulate the economy at this time of recession.

One can only draw the conclusion that the Government's decision to cut Cambridgeshire's funding is not really motivated by a desire to provide homes, nor a desire to stimulate the economy. In Cambridgeshire, it will have the reverse effect.

The Council therefore resolves to mandate Cabinet to ask Government at the highest level to reverse its decision, to restore Cambridgeshire's Housing Growth Fund and to reaffirm its support for the Cambridgeshire Growth Area and for investment in associated infrastructure.

Conservative and Liberal Democrat members speaking in support of the motion made the following points:

- Emphasised that housing growth in Cambridgeshire had to be supported by appropriate infrastructure and economic development. The local authorities had agreed to accept ambitious levels of housing growth only on the understanding that Housing Growth Fund capital would provide such support. The Government had now gone back on its promise in this regard, leaving the local authorities to explain the situation to residents.
- Noted that there were areas of significant deprivation within Cambridgeshire, most notably in Fenland. Housing Growth Fund monies would have been used to drive economic regeneration in these areas. Cambridgeshire was also one of the fastest growth areas nationally. Members expressed concern that the Government appeared to be redirecting Housing Growth Fund monies not on the basis of assessed and genuine need, but to areas that were most politically advantageous to it.
- Expressed concern that Cambridgeshire had been given very little notice of the Government's proposal to cut its Housing Growth Fund monies, and that the consultation had been announced just before the Parliamentary summer recess, making lobbying very difficult.
- Suggested that if the Government did not change its mind about the cut to Cambridgeshire's funding, the local authorities should consider adopting a policy of non co-operation. However, other members suggested that it would be important not to cause further damage for the County, for example by jeopardising revenue funding streams.

Councillor Sadiq spoke on behalf of the Labour Group. He asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, to make the full text of the Government's letter available to all members. The Leader of the Council agreed to do this. Councillor Sadiq advised that the Labour Group would not be able to support the motion, because of the political terms in which it was couched. He urged members to use the consultation period to argue the case for the maximum level of Housing Growth Fund funding for Cambridgeshire. He also urged members to withdraw the current motion and to develop a more constructively framed case to Government, which could be taken forward with full cross-party support.

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

Motion from Councillor Jenkins on the Bramley Line

With the agreement of the Council, the following revised motion was proposed by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Heathcock. This was an update from the version circulated with the Council agenda, reflecting recent events:

That Cambridgeshire County Council:

- 1) Notes the availability of 'tax increment financing' as a vehicle for financing capital projects with interest expenses being paid from the increase in business rates resulting from the projects;
- 2) Recognises that improved transport links and especially rail connections have a material impact on the sustainability and economic prosperity of communities;
- 3) Is aware of the poor performance of Fenland communities in terms of educational attainment, life expectancy and economic achievement;
- 4) Notes in particular that Wisbech is poorly connected to other economic centres and that the currently not-used Bramley Line offers an opportunity to connect it to the regional rail network;
- 5) Is disappointed that the Council's recent application for tax increment financing did not include a project to reopen the Bramley Line to rail traffic; and
- 6) Resolves that Cabinet be requested to take further advantage of further opportunities which may result from its recent application for tax increment financing to pursue such a project.

[Note: the amended wording replaces the original 5) and adds a new 6).]

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Yeulett and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor M McGuire:

Delete paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 and replace with:

- 4) Notes that Wisbech in particular is poorly connected to other economic centres and that the currently unused Bramley line may offer a strong option among a number of opportunities to improve transport links in this area;
- 5) Welcomes the fact that in the short time available the County Council together with Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire Horizons has already registered an interest in the Tax Increment Financing pilot as a vehicle for financing capital projects as outlined in the Budget and Local Government Minister's recent letter;
- 6) Resolves that the Council pursues its submission and, as outlined in its original letter of submission and subject to Government approval, remains willing to consider the benefits of tax increment financing for other schemes including among others the potential for the re-opening of the Bramley line.

Members speaking in support of the amendment:

- Emphasised the substantial efforts already being made by the Council to attract investment to and address inequalities in Fenland.
- Agreed that additional investment in transport infrastructure in Fenland would be very welcome, and that the reopening of the Bramley line to connect Wisbech to the wider rail network was one option. Road improvements, for example to the A47, would also be very welcome.
- Noted that the County Council and Fenland District Council had already held discussions with Government Office about the scope to use tax increment financing to invest in Fenland.
- Noted however that it would be important to ensure that the proposals put forward for the tax increment financing pilot were those that best met the criteria and were therefore the most likely to be successful, to ensure maximum benefit for the County.

Members speaking against the amendment:

- Noted that it weakened the commitment of the original motion specifically to pursue the reopening of the Bramley line.
- Noted that it was estimated that it would cost only £12 million to reopen the Bramley line, since much of the infrastructure was already in place, making this a realistic option.
- Asked what decision-making process had been followed to identify the three schemes that had been put forward in the County Council's submission for the tax increment financing pilot, and whether the reopening of the Bramley line had been considered.

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

Members then debated the substantive motion as amended and expressed a range of views:

- Expressed disappointment at the Council submission's lack of commitment specifically to improving infrastructure in Fenland.
- Noted that there was evidence from elsewhere in the country that a link to the rail network could be a key element in either maintaining a thriving community, or newly regenerating a less prosperous one.
- Noted that rail travel was likely to become increasingly important in the future, as roads became more and more congested.
- Expressed disappointment at the Council's apparent lack of commitment to rail, as indicated by the recent deletion of the last officer post with specific responsibility for maintaining links with the rail industry.
- Noted that the motion as amended opposed neither rail in general nor the reopening of the Bramley line in particular, but recognised that the latter was one of a number of options, and that the submission for the tax increment financing pilot had had to consider each case on its merits.
- Noted that the capital costs of reopening the Bramley line might be relatively modest, but that in pursuing this option it would be essential also to consider revenue implications and long-term sustainability.

Members voted on the substantive motion as amended and it was agreed unanimously.

24. ORAL QUESTIONS

Eleven oral questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Sedgwick-Jell asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, whether arrangements were in place or could be put in place to grit major cycleways in Cambridge and elsewhere during bad weather, given the high number of accidents that had occurred the previous winter. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access reported that a review of gritting policies was being carried out and would include cycleways.
- [Councillor van de Ven asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, to look into the experience of Melbourn and Meldreth Parish Councils, who had been advised by County Council Highways officers that it would be possible to introduce double yellow lines to address a local parking problem, if they were to fund this. However, once the funds had been raised, officers had said that the yellow lines were not needed. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to investigate and to provide a written response.](#)

- Councillor Stone asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, how much the Transport Commission reviewing the Transport Innovation Fund proposals would cost. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning reported that a budget of £80,000 had been allocated. The budget was currently underspent; however, the work of the Commission was not yet complete.
- Councillor Nethsingha asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about the funding difficulties of the AICH young people's centre in Huntingdon. The Cabinet Member for Learning explained that the County Council provided £11,000 per annum to fund this centre. The County Council had recently retendered the contract and the current providers had not submitted a bid, due to a loss of Lottery funding which in their view made their position unsustainable. The contract had therefore been awarded to the YMCA and a handover was in progress.
- [Councillor Downes noted that since the closure of the Household Waste Recycling Centre \(HWRC\) in Buckden, there had been a significant reduction in the volume of waste being taken to HWRCs in Huntingdonshire. There had also been reductions elsewhere in the County, but not to the same scale. Councillor Downes asked why waste volumes had reduced to such an extent in Huntingdonshire and if, as it might seem, closing HWRCs led to an overall reduction in waste, what the implications were for the Council's long-term waste policies. In the absence of Councillor Orgee, the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, undertook to arrange a written response.](#)
- [Councillor Gymer sought assurance from the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, that when the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway opened, it would not present a safety hazard to children living in Orchard Park. She expressed concern that it was currently easy for children to slip through the safety fencing. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning noted that it had not been considered necessary to date to conduct a specific safety audit for this section of the Busway. He agreed to send a more detailed written response.](#)
- [Councillor Kindersley asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about educational provision for pupils living in Gamlingay and Hatley once they left Gamlingay Village College, a middle school. He noted that such pupils currently attended secondary schools in Bedfordshire but that Bedfordshire was seeking to discontinue its middle school structure. This could lead to significant pressures on Cambridgeshire secondary schools, if the approximately 200 pupils involved needed to attend schools in Cambridgeshire. The Cabinet Member for Learning agreed to send a written response.](#)
- Councillor Bourke asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, whether there were any intentions to increase the 2009/10 budget for road repairs. He expressed concern that the £2 million increase from the 2008/09 to the present 2009/10 budget would have limited

impact, since much of it was taken up by inflation and a backlog of work on Traffic Regulation Orders. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access explained that the budget for the current year was fixed. The process to prepare the budget for 2010/11 would begin shortly; he would be pressing for funding for highways, but this would need to be set against other competing pressures. He also noted that information about Highways discretionary budgets was in the public domain, in the Integrated Plan and in the monthly budgetary control reports.

- [Councillor Wijsenbeek asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about payments relating to the site of the Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School, and the future use of the old school site. The Cabinet Member for Learning agreed to send a written response.](#)
- Councillor Jenkins asked the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, about a recent media report that the County Council would be contributing £100,000 to support Milton Country Park. The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance confirmed that this capital had been pledged and would be funded from the Council's normal budget for supporting organisations working with schools and other bodies.
- [Councillor Whelan asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about plans for the future of Comberton Village College. The Village College would be opening a sixth form in September 2011 and was also accommodating a large number of pupils from Cambourne. Councillor Whelan asked when a secondary school would open at Cambourne, and whether Comberton's expanded school roll would be maintained at that time. The Cabinet Member for Learning agreed to send a written response.](#)

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

25. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

Council resolved unanimously to agree the following appointments to Committees and outside organisations:

- Councillor C Hutton to replace 'Councillor C Hunt' as a member of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor M Smith to replace Councillor Kadic as a substitute member of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
- Councillors V McGuire and M Smith to be added to the pool of members from which the Staff Appeals Committee is drawn
- Councillor N Clarke to replace Councillor R Farrer as a full member of the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Management Committee.

26. REPORT OF CABINET MEETING: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

2) Integrated Finance and Performance Report: Outturn 2008/09

Councillor Stone called for clearer wording in reports in relation to debt and debtor management, in line with commercial practice.

Councillor Jenkins expressed concern that the fortuitous £3.6 million saving in 2008/09 on the debt charges budget had been used to offset overspends in a number of other areas.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, agreed to pursue the concerns raised by Councillor Stone.

3) Integrated Performance and Resources Report: May 2009

Councillor Stone asked how the Pressures and Development Reserve would be reduced to £1.090 million by the end of 2009/10, given that it had stood at £3.898 million at the end of 2008/09 and would be receiving an additional virement in-year of £1.1 million. He also asked when the General Reserve would be reduced to 2% of the Council's budget, given that at the end of 2008/09 it had stood at £9.493 million, 3% of the Council's budget.

Councillor Jenkins expressed concern that the Administration's decision to allow in the 2009/10 budget for 3-4% salary inflation had resulted in unnecessarily high Council Tax and an in-year surplus, since it now appeared that the actual increase was likely to be less than 1%.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, agreed to send a written response to the issues raised by Councillor Stone. Responding to Councillor Jenkins, he emphasised that the actual level of salary inflation was still unknown, and that it had been financially responsible to make adequate provision.

4) Cambridgeshire Infrastructure Fund: Cambridge Gateway

5) Process for Considering Requests to Defer Section 106 Payments

Councillor Williamson emphasised that local community projects could be affected by the deferral of Section 106 payments, as well as County Council projects. He emphasised the importance of keeping relevant partners such as Parish Councils fully informed.

Councillor Shepherd welcomed a flexible approach to Section 106 payments for complex schemes, given the current economic climate. However, she emphasised that each case should be negotiated separately, not addressed through a uniform policy.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, commented that the Council's aim was to work with developers to bring forward genuine communities. He confirmed that Parish Councils would be involved and consulted.

6) Developments at Cambridge Southern Fringe: Section 106 Agreements

Councillor Batchelor expressed concern that a Parent Company Guarantee was a potentially weak mechanism and might mean that the Council never received Section 106 payments, if the parent company were to sell on its site to another developer.

Councillor Stone also expressed concern about the Parent Company Guarantee, noting that it was only as sound as the parent company itself; he asked who this company was and how it had been credit-checked.

Councillor Kindersley expressed concern that the proposals for the Cambridge Southern Fringe did not appear to have been discussed with South Cambridgeshire District Council through any of the formal processes before being taken to the County Council's Cabinet. He suggested that other relevant partners might also not have been informed.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, explained that a Section 111 agreement linked to a Parent Company Guarantee was considered to provide an acceptable level of financial assurance to the Council. He agreed that it was essential for the County Council to work with partners and agreed to check with officers about the discussions that had taken place.

7) Proposed Extension of Age Range and Expansion to Ditton Lodge First School, Newmarket

Councillor Shuter expressed support for the extension of age range and expansion of Ditton Lodge First School. However, he was concerned that as more children from Suffolk attended primary school in Cambridgeshire, this would also raise expectations that they could attend secondary school in Cambridgeshire, increasing pressure on Bottisham and Linton Village Colleges and on home to school transport budgets.

Responding to Councillor Shuter, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, confirmed that the County Council was under no obligation to provide secondary education for Suffolk children educated at Ditton Lodge Primary Schools. However, he was aware of the mounting pressures and would be considering them.

8) Safeguarding Children: an Update

9) Major Contract Schemes Framework: Contract Extension

Councillor Jenkins expressed concern that the decision-making process leading to the contract extension had been insufficiently rigorous, and requested further information about this. He noted that break clauses were included in contracts to allow flexibility.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, commented the Council's ongoing relationship with the contractor, which was saving on retendering

costs and enabling a positive working relationship to develop, leading to reduced costs and timely delivery.

10) Consultation on Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

Councillor Williamson reminded members that the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee under the previous Council had considered the use of RIPA. He emphasised the importance of clear phrasing: RIPA existed to control the use of surveillance powers, not to authorise it. Building on the points identified by the Scrutiny Committee, he sought assurance that authorisation to use surveillance powers was being given by sufficiently senior officers, and whether all officers involved received appropriate training.

Responding, the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor L W McGuire, noted that this Cabinet item had been to respond to a Government consultation on RIPA, which had been triggered by national concerns coinciding with the issues raised locally. He gave assurance that in Cambridgeshire, surveillance powers were used properly by appropriately trained officers.

11) Draft Flood and Water Management Bill: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, April 2009

Councillor van de Ven asked how partnership working would be developed to enable the County Council to work with other relevant organisations to meet its new duties.

Councillor G Wilson welcomed the measures proposed in the Bill, but asked how much they would cost to implement, and how the County Council would fund these costs.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, referred members to the papers for the meeting of the Growth and Environment Policy Development Group held on 15th July 2009.

12) Response to Cambridge City Council's Consultation on the Sustainable Communities Act

Following on from comments made by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor L W McGuire, at the Cabinet meeting, Councillor Downes reminded members that this Act had resulted from a Private Member's Bill, brought forward by a Conservative MP with cross-party support.

Councillor Jenkins asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, what plans there were to develop a County Council submission.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, noted that Cabinet had been able to support three of the City Council's proposals, but not their bid to share with the County Council powers for all aspects of transport policy and planning.

13) Civil Parking Enforcement Contract Procurement

Councillor Jenkins asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, to share with members the intended and actual efficiency savings resulting from the contract procurement process.

Councillor Bourke urged the Administration to publish an online database of all existing and pending Traffic Regulation Orders, to help members of the public understand what was in place and could be enforced. He expressed concern that residents' efforts to do this had been prevented, and related Freedom of Information requests rejected.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access explained that it was too early to report efficiency savings, since the new contract would not come into effect until 1st April 2010. He also commented that queries about pending Traffic Regulation Orders were not relevant to this item, which was about the current enforcement regime.

14) Annual Performance Assessment of Adult Social Care Services for Cambridgeshire and Action Plan

Councillor Whelan asked to be advised on the two areas for development identified in the action plan in which only 'some' progress had been made.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Yeulett, explained that these were: reviews of older people's services, which the NHS were addressing; and the Equality Standard, for which a new framework had been introduced in April 2009 and towards which the Council was now working. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing also thanked all those who had helped support the Care Quality Commission's inspection the previous week.

15) Quarterly Updates from Key Partnerships

Answering a question contained in the Council report, Councillor Downes suggested that it would be useful for members to continue to receive paper copies of the quarterly updates from key partnerships.

Cambridgeshire Together

[Councillor Downes asked why the redesignation of the Chief Executives' Liaison Group as the Cambridgeshire Public Services Board would result in stronger joint leadership and what had been wrong with the previous arrangements. He also asked how 'Making Cambridgeshire Count' would give communities a greater say over how public money was spent, and how this related to the role of elected members.](#)

Speaking as the Chairman of Cambridgeshire Together, Councillor Tuck agreed to send a written response to the first question. On the second question, she explained that 'Making Cambridgeshire Count' would result in greater localism; if communities knew how money was being spent, they would be able to ask whether outcomes were being achieved.

Community Safety Strategic Partnership Board

Councillor Churchill highlighted the achievement of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership in reducing violent crime and anti-social behaviour in St Ives during the previous quarter.

Councillor Downes noted that numbers of burglaries were causing concern in Cambridge, parts of South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon and asked whether rates had been exceptionally low previously, or whether there was a specific cause for concern.

[Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, congratulated all those who had contributed to the improved figures in St Ives. He undertook to raise the question from Councillor Downes at the next meeting of the Partnership Board on 28th July 2009 and to provide a written response.](#)

Greater Cambridge Partnership

Councillor Jenkins expressed concern that this update in particular did not provide very much information about what the Greater Cambridge Partnership had been doing, as distinct from what it was. He asked for this to be addressed in future reports. He also expressed concern at the time lag in reporting, which meant that May meetings of partnerships were only now being reported to Council, even when there had been subsequent meetings in June.

Responding, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, agreed that as partnerships became increasingly important, it was essential to convey meaningful information about them to members and to the public; better ways of achieving this were being discussed.

Chairman:

Minute 24 – Oral questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, from Councillor Downes

Councillor Downes noted that since the closure of the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Buckden, there had been a significant reduction in the volume of waste being taken to HWRCs in Huntingdonshire. There had also been reductions elsewhere in the County, but not to the same scale. Councillor Downes asked why waste volumes had reduced to such an extent in Huntingdonshire and if, as it might seem, closing HWRCs led to an overall reduction in waste, what the implications were for the Council's long-term waste policies. In the absence of Councillor Orgee, the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, undertook to arrange a written response.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown

Councillor Downes is correct in his account of the reduction in waste taken to Recycling Centres in Huntingdonshire (a decrease of around 11% compared to the previous year).

However, when viewed in the context of similar reduction elsewhere (around a 9% reduction in Cambridge City/South Cambridgeshire, for example), the extent of reduction in Huntingdonshire cannot be considered exceptional, particularly given the lack of site closures in Cambridge City/South Cambridgeshire. Such reduction reflects the on-going waste prevention efforts and campaigns by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership.

Such a small difference in relative reduction does not give statistically-significant grounds to conclude that reduction in Huntingdonshire was the result of the closure of Buckden Recycling Centre. The data does not indicate a relationship between the closure of Recycling Centres and waste reduction; the Council's long-term waste policies therefore stand. Our existing approach to Recycling Centre infrastructure remains valid; namely the provision of safe, easy to use sites, distributed in a county-wide network to ensure parity of service for residents, and expanding provision to adequately meet the demands of County growth.

Buckden was closed in the knowledge that Huntingdonshire would still be served by three high performing Recycling Centres (the best provision of any District in Cambridgeshire), including a new state of the art site in St. Neots (due to open in this autumn). Further closures, without replacement, would risk inadequate capacity to accept the waste of a growing population.

Furthermore, there is only five months of indicative data since the closure of Buckden; insufficient to deduce any full-year effect with any confidence. Despite this, the Waste Management Service continues to closely monitor performance data for any evidence of closure-related impacts. All current indications are that the closure of a very expensive and low-performing site has had consistently positive effects; annual savings of around £300k, significantly increased average recycling rates across the remaining Huntingdonshire sites, and a continued trend of reducing waste delivered to those sites.

The Waste Management Service can also be confident that no Buckden waste has become a fly-tipping problem in the District – tonnages of flytip waste continue to reduce.

Huntingdonshire remains one of the very best performing collection authorities in the country – the latest data for both their kerbside collections and County Council Recycling Centres indicates continued excellent achievement from our residents in Huntingdonshire.

Minute 24 – Oral questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, from Councillor Kindersley

Councillor Kindersley asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about educational provision for pupils living in Gamlingay and Hatley once they left Gamlingay Village College, a middle school. He noted that such pupils currently attended secondary schools in Bedfordshire but that Bedfordshire was seeking to discontinue its middle school structure. This could lead to significant pressures on Cambridgeshire secondary schools, if the approximately 200 pupils involved needed to attend schools in Cambridgeshire.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty

As far as Cambridgeshire is aware, Central Bedfordshire, which is a new unitary authority, has not yet made any formal proposals relating to a change in the organisation of its educational provision. However, officers from the County Council are committed to working with their colleagues in Central Bedfordshire, and will enter into discussion with them as soon as possible about their Authority's plans for future educational provision, particularly how those plans might affect Gamlingay First School and Gamlingay Village College. This is likely to be early in the autumn term, when the new local authority has had an opportunity to consider its future approach.

However, regardless of the outcome of Central Bedfordshire's consideration of this issue, Cambridgeshire has recognised the need for urgent reviews of educational provision in several areas of the County, including parts of South Cambridgeshire. The aim of these reviews will be to explore options for expanding educational provision to meet projected growth in pupil numbers in both the primary and secondary sectors. The South Cambridgeshire review will include a specific focus on determining future educational provision for both Gamlingay and Cambourne.

An initial report, outlining overall demographic pressures affecting Cambridgeshire's schools, and identifying the priority areas for review, was presented to the County Council's Children and Young People's Policy Development Group (PDG) on 6 July. Reports were also presented to the PDG earlier this year on proposals for secondary provision in Cambourne. Officers will be drawing these various strands together and undertaking further detailed work during August, with the aim of presenting broad options for further exploration, and the proposed process, to the 14 September meeting of the PDG. Local County Councillors are invited to attend meetings of the PDG where there are items pertaining to educational provision in their areas.

Minute 24 – Oral questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, from Councillor Wijsenbeek

Councillor Wijsenbeek asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about payments relating to the site of the Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School, and the future use of the old school site.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty

Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School in East Chesterton, Cambridge currently operates across two sites: the former Shirley Infant School site in Green End Road and the former St Andrew's Church of England Aided Junior School site in Nuffield Road. The ownership of the latter site, including the playing fields, was transferred from the County Council to the Old Schools of Cambridge Trust, in the 1980s.

When Cabinet agreed the expansion of the former Shirley Nursery and Infant School to provide for the full primary age range, and the associated closure of the former St Andrew's Junior School in May 2006, it recognised the vital importance of securing agreements with the Cambridge Old Schools Trust which would enable Shirley Nursery and Primary School to operate as a 420 place extended services primary school and children's centre on the former St Andrew's Junior School site.

Cabinet, therefore, endorsed a recommendation that the Council enter into negotiations with the Old Schools of Cambridge Trust on the following basis:

- That under charitable law the Trustees were obliged to obtain best consideration for the site and as a consequence, could not transfer the site to the County Council at either no cost or at a reduced cost;
- In exchange for the former St Andrew's School site the Council would, within a five-year period, replace the Trust's interest with an interest in a new primary school. However, should it not be possible to provide a new school site for the Trustees within this period then the Council would pay to the Trustees a sum equivalent to the current open market value for the "brown field" area of the school.

A legal agreement for the lease of the site was duly concluded between the Council and the Old Schools of Cambridge Trust. This agreement expires in 2011.

At the outset there was optimism that a replacement school could be provided by 2011. However, the rapidity and depth of the decline in the housing market has meant that major development sites will come forward much more slowly as either the viability of developments or the agreed planning obligations are revisited. There is now no prospect of providing a new school to replace the Trust's interest in the former St Andrew's Junior School site by 2011. A more realistic date is 2014.

Council officers have met with the Old Schools of Cambridge Trust Executive and asked that they seek the views of the Board of Trustees on the option of extending the current lease agreement. This would have the dual benefit of reducing pressure on the Council's capital programme (the only source of funding for the purchase price for the site) and allow additional time for the Trust to achieve its aim of establishing a new school in place of the former St Andrew's Junior School. If

purchase could be delayed until 2014/15, this might represent the best outcome for the County Council. However, as indicated, this could only be achieved with the full agreement of the Old Schools of Cambridge Trust.

Cabinet will receive a report setting out the outcome of the current negotiations in the autumn.

In respect of the future of the current Shirley Lower School site, on 23 May 2006, Cabinet had endorsed a recommendation that it be sold and that the resulting capital receipt would be used to offset the costs of extending and remodelling the former St Andrew's Junior School as a 420 place extended services primary school, with nursery and children's centre.

However, since that decision was taken, there has been a significant increase in the number of children born in the City and land values have fallen. Sale of the site is currently on hold pending the outcome of a review of primary provision in the City.

Minute 24 – Oral questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, from Councillor Whelan

Councillor Whelan asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, about plans for the future of Comberton Village College. The Village College would be opening a sixth form in September 2011 and was also accommodating a large number of pupils from Cambourne. Councillor Whelan asked when a secondary school would open in Cambourne, and whether Comberton's expanded school roll would be maintained at that time.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty

It is not possible to provide a precise answer to the question about the timescale for secondary provision in Cambourne at this stage.

Analysis of forecast pupil data indicates a need to provide for up to 750 11-16 year old pupils (5 forms of entry) from Cambourne. In the light of this, a bid for targeted capital funding was submitted to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in March 2009 to create a second campus for Comberton Village College in Cambourne to open in September 2013. The success or otherwise of this bid is crucial to our future plans for Comberton Village College and Cambourne as, without this additional funding, the Council is not in a position to meet the capital cost of building a secondary school facility in Cambourne.

A response to this bid has yet to be received, and is not expected until the autumn, at the earliest.

As there is uncertainty about whether DCSF capital funding will be available for additional secondary provision in Cambourne, I believe it to be prudent to plan for the worst-case scenario and so ensure that, if the bid is not successful, we are able to meet our statutory duty to provide education for the growing number of secondary-aged children in Cambourne.

The work necessary to produce this plan will form part of programme of reviews of educational provision that is currently taking place across the County, one of which will have a specific focus on South Cambridgeshire. The overall aim of the reviews is to explore options for expanding educational provision to meet projected growth in pupil numbers in both the primary and secondary sectors. The South Cambridgeshire review will explore options for future secondary educational provision for both Cambourne and Gamlingay. Gamlingay is being included because it is also facing some uncertainty at present, as the children attending Gamlingay Village College (a middle school) currently attend Central Bedfordshire upper schools, and that local authority is likely to be reviewing its school organisation pattern in the future.

Officers will be drawing these various strands together and undertaking further detailed work during August, with the aim of presenting broad options for further exploration, and the proposed process, to the 14 September meeting of the Children and Young People's Policy Development Group (PDG). Local County Councillors are invited to attend meetings of the PDG where there are items pertaining to educational provision in their areas.

As far as Comberton Village College's pupil numbers are concerned, its Published Admission Number (PAN) increases to 300 with effect from September 2009. As a result, its operational size will increase to 10 forms of entry (FE), or 1500 pupils. This is for children aged 11-16.

The establishment of a 350 place sixth form at the Village College with effect from September 2011 will take the overall number of places available at the Village College to 1850.

Comberton Village College's Governing Body has confirmed that it does not wish the current 11-16 school to exceed 1,500 places, but it must be emphasised that the 350 sixth-form places have always been additional to this figure.

I can confirm that Comberton Village College's Governing Body will be actively involved in the South Cambridgeshire review and their views sought on options for the future.

I will not be able to provide an answer to the question of whether Comberton's expanded school roll would be maintained until the review has been completed and the agreed plan is in place.

Minute 24 – Oral questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor van de Ven

Councillor van de Ven asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, to look into the experience of Melbourn and Meldreth Parish Councils, who had been advised by County Council Highways officers that it would be possible to introduce double yellow lines to address a local parking problem, if they were to fund this. However, once the funds had been raised, officers had said that the yellow lines were not needed. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to investigate and to provide a written response.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire

I have taken up this matter with the Executive Director for Environment Services, who I know has now responded to you to apologise for the conflicting messages given in earlier officer responses. I understand that you have now met on site with Richard Preston, the Head of Network Management, along with Parish Council representatives, to discuss this issue in detail.

There are officer concerns over the length of yellow line restrictions initially being sought, which could have a detrimental impact on road safety by increasing vehicle speeds and transferring parking to other equally undesirable locations.

However, I understand that the on-site discussions were helpful in fully understanding the current parking issues and that it should be possible to reach a suitable compromise to allow a proposal to be taken forward through the required statutory process, which Richard Preston explained at the site meeting.

I am also aware that Richard Preston has written to you with a compromise proposal for further consideration by Melbourn and Meldreth Parish Councils.

Minute 24 – Oral questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, from Councillor Gymer

Councillor Gymer sought assurance from the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, that when the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway opened, it would not present a safety hazard to children living in Orchard Park. She expressed concern that it was currently easy for children to slip through the safety fencing. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning noted that it had not been considered necessary to date to conduct a specific safety audit for this section of the Busway. He agreed to send a more detailed written response.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram

The Guided Busway, once completed, will essentially be unfenced in exactly the same way that a road is unfenced. Indeed, given that there is a bridleway/cycleway along the entire length of the busway, public access is positively encouraged.

The Busway forms an integral part of the Orchard Park development. Land and funding have been provided by the developers and it is part of the overall masterplan for the development. There are two bus stops, four road junctions and three pedestrian crossing points across the Busway where it passes alongside the development, as well as a number of other points at which access has been created onto the cycleway, which is between the busway and the new housing. Fencing of the individual development plots and in particular the formal and informal play areas is part of the detailed design of these developments and should be secured through the planning process and receive planning approval of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC).

It is our view that the fencing of the Orchard Park development is the responsibility of the developer. However, the County Council takes safety of all residents very seriously and therefore, officers from the Busway Team have met with their counterparts at SCDC to discuss how these issues can be addressed. They have been assured that SCDC planning officers are fully aware of the need for the detailed design of the developments to take full account of the Busway and will continue to work with SCDC to move this forward.

Minute 26 – Report of Cabinet meeting: items for information

Question to the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, from Councillor Downes

Councillor Downes noted that numbers of burglaries were causing concern in Cambridge, parts of South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon and asked whether rates had been exceptionally low previously, or whether there was a specific cause for concern. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, undertook to raise the question from Councillor Downes at the next meeting of the Community Safety Partnership Board on 28th July 2009 and to provide a written response.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown

Information has been collated from the County Community Safety Strategic Board (CCSSB) and the multi-agency Serious Acquisitive Crime Task Group, led by Cambridgeshire Constabulary.

1. Whilst crime levels overall remain low in Cambridgeshire, there is currently concern that there has been a significant increase in serious acquisitive crime (dwelling burglary, robbery and vehicle crime) in the County. The main areas of concern in Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire are dwelling burglary whilst the Fenland area has experienced an increase in theft from vehicles.

The initial target for serious acquisitive crime (National Indicator 16) in the County was a reduction of 3%. However a reduction of 7.3% is now required to reach the required rate.

The Police reported that although the first quarter of this year has seen a large number of burglaries, there have been fewer incidents of burglary during June and July, compared with the past 18 months. However there has been a deterioration in the number of detections in Cambridge City and the explanation for this is being investigated. In contrast, detection of serious acquisitive crime in Fenland and Huntingdonshire is increasing.

At its most recent meeting on 28th July, the CCSSB agreed to award the Serious Acquisitive Crime Task Group with £50,000 from the Safer and Stronger Community Fund (Home Office grant) to reduce acquisitive crime. The plan is to employ planned intervention techniques, including targeting hotspot areas and known offenders, using trap house equipment and “sting” operations.

2. Actions being carried out by local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to combat the increase in burglaries, include the following:

Cambridge City

- Only a small number of offenders. The partnership is working on cultivating intelligence to capture individuals
- Moving staff to focus on burglary dwelling
- Worst months were Dec/Jan/Feb – recent figures improving
- In an average month, the area experiences 75-90 offences with a detection rate of 9.5%
- Taking the following steps to tackle problem – identify hotspots and visit every house, SmartWater, ‘Secure Your Home’ leaflets.

South Cambridgeshire

- 2 hotspots Cambourne/Bourn & Meadows Estate, Impington
- Small number of Prolific Priority Offenders under 16 years old causing problems
- To address burglary there is work going on around green spaces, focussing on lighting and other issues in these areas i.e. Parkers Piece
- Student packs are being put together ready for September – aimed at all new students especially foreign students.

Huntingdonshire

- Day of action – targeting hot spot streets
- SmartWater signs displayed
- Day of Action in St Ives in liaison with Luminus Housing group
- Working with Neighbourhood Policing Teams on a daily basis
- Central Division have a robust tasking and coordinating group
- Targeting key individuals.

Fenland

- Highlight hotspot areas of burglary dwelling to concentrate effort/intervention
- Visit hotspot streets with Neighbourhood Policing Team
- “Operation Embankment” – identifies vulnerable properties and people
- PCSOs visit victims of burglary
- Work with media to address crime reduction
- Distributing SmartWater to burglary victims
- Producing information packs to houses with multiple occupancy

East Cambridgeshire

The performance in East Cambs is relatively good; however the observed decrease in crime is slowing. Action to target burglary and vehicle crime, including following up the distribution of SmartWater and targeting hotspots of vehicle crime with “Don’t Bother” information.

East Cambridgeshire is working with the organisations listed below to raise awareness and ensure the distribution of a burglary pack aimed at vulnerable groups of the community:

- Charitable organisations
- Neighbourhood Panels
- Trading Standards
- Response Group to be convened for hotspots.

The County Community Safety Manager, Helen Turner, will be presenting a report on the County overview of serious acquisitive crime at the next CCSB on October 27th. This report can be circulated if required. The report will address the increase in crime and which actions to be taken to address this.

Minute 26 – Report of Cabinet Meeting: Items for Information

Item 15, Quarterly Updates from Key Partnerships

Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, from Councillor Downes

Councillor Downes asked why the redesignation of the Chief Executives' Liaison Group as the Cambridgeshire Public Service Board would result in stronger joint leadership and what had been wrong with the previous arrangements. Speaking as the Chairman of Cambridgeshire Together, Councillor Tuck agreed to send a written response.

Response from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck

Councillor Downes is right to point out that the Chief Executives' Liaison Group has recently been redesignated as the Cambridgeshire Public Service Board. This redesignation was proposed and approved by the Cambridgeshire Together Board.

The Chief Executives' Liaison Group had been an occasional and informal meeting of the Chief Executives of some of the public bodies across Cambridgeshire. The Group had played an informal support role for the Cambridgeshire Together Board and discussed issues that impacted on public services across the county.

It was agreed in the Cambridgeshire Together Partnership Review, carried out in 2008, that the Chief Executives' Liaison Group would be reshaped to provide more focused and effective executive support for the Cambridgeshire Together Board.

The agreed Partnership Review recommendations set out that the new Cambridgeshire Public Service Board would have the following functions:

- Overseeing the performance of services in the county and exploring the opportunities for increased value for money by provision of shared or joint services
- Identifying key emerging issues for the county and making recommendations to Cambridgeshire Together and its constituent partners regarding strategic responses
- Intervening to tackle blockages to service improvement or progress objectives
- Negotiating changes to services which might better deliver outcomes for Cambridgeshire communities.

The Public Service Board therefore brings together Chief Executive and Chief Officer representation from the key public service organisations operating in the local area, namely the County Council, the five District Councils, NHS Cambridgeshire, Cambridgeshire Constabulary, the Fire and Rescue Service and Cambridgeshire Horizons. There is also occasional and invited attendance from the appropriate representative from the Government Office for the East of England or regional support organisations, such as Improvement East, the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership.

The new Cambridgeshire Public Service Board, chaired by the Chief Executive of Fenland District Council, is designed to provide more strategic and executive support to the Cambridgeshire Together Board and has for example, supported the Cambridgeshire Together Board to successfully develop the Making Cambridgeshire Count initiative.

Minute 26 – Report of Cabinet Meeting: Items for Information

Item 3, Integrated Resources and Performance Report – May 2009

Question to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, from Councillor Stone

Councillor Stone asked how the Pressures and Development Reserve would be reduced to £1.090 million by the end of 2009/10, given that it had stood at £3.898 million at the end of 2008/09 and would be receiving an additional virement in-year of £1.1 million. He also asked when the General Reserve would be reduced to 2% of the Council's budget, given that at the end of 2008/09 it had stood at £9.493 million, 3% of the Council's budget.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, agreed to send a written response to the issues raised by Councillor Stone.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds

The likely position at the end of the 2008-09 financial year was forecast during the last financial year, and the Council was able to take this into account when agreeing the budget for the 2009-10 financial year in February 2009.

The planned movement in reserves in 2009-10 can be found in the Integrated Plan agreed at this time.

[The relevant information can be found on page 23 of the Chief Finance Officer's Report.](#)

The key information in this table is as follows (please note that the year-end figures differ as these were in-year forecasts and there were some subsequent changes. The issue to note is the expected use in 2009-10):

	31/03/2009 £m	31/03/2010 £m
General Reserve – County Fund	9.8	7.5
Developments and Future Pressures	2.7	2.3

As can be seen, expected use of reserves in 2009-10 was £2.7m. This is consistent with the reserve use shown in the May Integrated Performance and Resources Report with the reduction in the Pressures and Developments Reserve from £3.8m to £1.1m.

The Integrated Plan also approved setting the General Reserve at 2% of budget (outlined on page 24 of the above report). This will be achieved through a transfer from the General Reserve to restore the level of the Pressures and Developments Reserve to an acceptable level.

This transaction had not been undertaken in time for the May report, but will be reflected in all future Integrated Performance and Resources reports, ensuring that the General Reserve is shown at its intended level of 2% of budget.

The £1.1m transfer was actually undertaken in the 2008-09 financial year, so is incorporated into the £3.8m year-end figure.