

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 18th October 2005

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor: S B Normington (Chairman)

Councillors P D Bailey, D Baldwin, C M Ballard, J D Batchelor, I C Bates, B Bean, N Bell, B Boddington, M Bradney, J Broadway, P Brown, T Butcher, C Carter, L Crossley, M Curtis, P J Downes, J Dutton, J A P Eddy, S A Giles, B Hardy, G F Harper, N Harrison, D Harty, G J Heathcock, W G M Hensley, P E Hughes, W Hunt, J L Huppert, J D Jenkins, S F Johnstone, G Kenney, A C Kent, S G M Kindersley, S J E King, S Lee, V H Lucas, D McCraith, L W McGuire, A K Melton, R Moss-Eccardt, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, A G Orgee, D R Pegram, J A Powley, A A Reid, J E Reynolds, P Sales, M Shuter, L Sims, T Stone, J Toomey, J M Tuck, R Turner, J K Walters, J West, D White, K Wilkins, M Williamson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors E Kadić, K Reynolds and H Williams

28. MINUTES: 19th JULY 2005

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19th July 2005 were approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- Councillor P Brown being added to the list of apologies for the meeting
- The words 'Brampton electoral division' replacing 'Spaldwick area' in the first sentence of Minute 21 (Chairman's Announcements).

The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

29. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Awards and Achievements

The Chairman led members in congratulating:

- The Cambridgeshire Direct Contact Centre for being shortlisted under the Best Call Centre Culture category in the European Call Centre Awards, and the Head of Operations, Tracey Lowndes, for being nominated by the judges and subsequently highly commended under the category of Call Centre Manager of the Year.
- All staff involved in Project Nomad, an initiative to apply mobile technology to improve the delivery of services to the public. Cambridgeshire had been selected by the Government to lead this project nationally.

- All staff involved in the Shire Hall Travel Plan, which had received an award in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Travel Plan Awards.
- The Countryside Services Team, who had produced the Rights of Way Improvement Plan earlier than any other local authority in the country.

Beacon Asset Management Open Day

Members noted that Cambridgeshire would be hosting a Beacon Asset Management Open Day on 25th October 2005. Cambridgeshire was one of five Beacon Councils for asset management nationally. The event would showcase the Council's approach to the topic.

30. 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 Heathcock as a member of the Board of Age Concern Cambridgeshire and Councillor Moss-Eccardt as an IT manager for the East of England Development Agency, which had invested in a biotech incubator at Papworth Hospital (Minute 33, Report of the meeting of Cabinet held on 27th September 2005, Item 1, Papworth Hospital Consultation)
- Councillor Ballard as the Deputy Chairman of the Friends of Kettles Yard, Councillor Broadway as a Trustee and Councillor White as the Chairman of the Trustees of the Cambridge and County Folk Museum, Councillor King as a Trustee of the Wisbech and Fenland Museum and Councillor Williamson as the Treasurer of the Fenland Museum (Minute 33, Report of the meeting of Cabinet held on 27th September 2005, Item 4, Heritage Services Review)
- Councillors Kindersley and Walters as members of the Greater Cambridge Partnership (Minute 33, Report of the meeting of Cabinet held on 27th September 2005, Item 7, Incorporation of the Greater Cambridge Partnership as a Limited Company)
- Councillors Batchelor, Kindersley, McCraith and Turner as members of South Cambridgeshire District Council (Minute 33, Report of the meeting of Cabinet held on 27th September 2005, Item 9, Draft Consultation Response on Northstowe Planning Applications Submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council)
- Councillor Heathcock as a member of Railfuture East Anglia and Councillor King as a member of the Wisbech and March Railway Trust (Minute 37, Motion).

The following members declared prejudicial interests under Paragraph 10 of the Code of Conduct. The item to which the interest relates is shown in brackets. They left the Council Chamber whilst these items were discussed.

- Councillor Johnstone as a Non-Executive Director of the Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Councillor Oliver as the Council's representative on the Board of Governors of the Papworth Hospital

31. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Normington, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Orgee

That the Council approve the protocol circulated with the agenda on the conduct of Public Question Time.

Councillor Lucas recognised the need to formalise arrangements to enable members of the public to ask questions at Council meetings, but expressed the hope that residents would usually be able to pursue their concerns through their local members. He also commented on the need to avoid duplication between Public Question Time and members' oral questions at Council.

The recommendation was approved unanimously.

32. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

One question was asked by a member of the public. Speaking on behalf of the Fen Road Group of the Old Chesterton Residents' Association, Ann Stockford asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, Councillor J E Reynolds, about the increase in use of Fen Road by industrial traffic, and whether the Council had plans to build an exit road to ease the situation. She also noted that there were two unauthorised waste transfer stations working from the end of Fen Road.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services noted that the opportunities for providing an alternative access to the section of Fen Road north of the railway line were being explored, as well as possible access from the A14. However, both were thought to be difficult to achieve given financial and planning constraints. Full consultation on access options for the area would be carried out as part of the consultation on the development framework for the Northern Fringe. Given the low accident record for Fen Road, there were no plans to introduce further traffic management or safety measures. With regard to the waste transfer stations, steps were being taken to regularise or stop activities that were currently unauthorised.

Transcripts of the question and response are available from Democratic Services.

33. REPORTS OF THE CABINET

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Walters, moved receipt of the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 6th and 27th September 2005.

Meeting held on 6th September 2005

Key decisions for information

1) Good Housekeeping Loan – Procure to Pay

Councillor Sales questioned whether the Procure to Pay project was an appropriate use of money from the Good Housekeeping Fund, given that this Fund was usually used to invest in front-line services. Councillor Downes asked the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Powley, to explain what the project would achieve.

Responding, Councillor Powley emphasised the Council's responsibility to ensure optimum value for money in its procurement processes and to reach prompt payment targets. He explained that the workload of the Procure to Pay team was increasing and that its IT system was outdated. The Good Housekeeping loan would therefore be used to update the IT system, to help maximise the team's efficiency.

Other decisions for information

2) Hills Road Railway Bridge – Proposed Improvements

Councillor Kent emphasised the importance of improving the junctions at the foot of the bridge, as well as the bridge itself, as this was where most accidents currently occurred. She welcomed the proposal to make short-term improvements to the junctions prior to the main works. She and Councillor Ballard commended officers on the two recent consultation sessions on the proposals.

Councillor Ballard noted that most participants at the consultation session he had attended had not supported options A or B, but had favoured option C, for which funding would be available. He emphasised the need to minimise disruption to traffic over the bridge whilst the improvement works were in progress, and suggested that if particular priority were given to buses, cyclists and pedestrians, this would encourage people to continue to use these forms of transport once the works were complete.

Councillor Heathcock noted the importance of the route as an access for emergency vehicles from Addenbrooke's. He asked to be advised of the timetable for the short-term improvements. He also commented on the need to address the flooding problems on the south side of the bridge and the frequency of traffic light failures.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, Councillor J E Reynolds, recognised the need to make junction improvements at either end of the bridge, but commented that these might be constrained by lack of space. He noted that following the consultation, a report would be taken to the Cambridge City Area Joint Committee and Cabinet would consider the short- and long-term improvements early in 2006.

3) Cambridgeshire's Second Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA)

Councillor Huppert welcomed the finalising of Cambridgeshire's second LPSA and highlighted its potential value to the Council. £1.3 million of pump-priming money had already been received, and a further £12.6 million of reward grant was available if the Council achieved all of its targets. Councillor Huppert encouraged all members to monitor progress closely. However, he expressed concern at some of the targets set, suggesting that they might be unrealistic or might seek improvements on too small or too localised a scale.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Powley, recognised that the targets were demanding and also noted that some would require effective working with partner agencies. However, he drew attention to the progress made against a number of performance indicators in the Cabinet's 'Top 30' as evidence of services' capacity to improve.

Other matters for information

4) Budget Monitoring 2005/06

Councillor Downes expressed concern that significant overspends were being forecast at this stage in the financial year: £1.3 million across the three Offices, excluding self-managing institutions. This was of particular concern given the investment the Council had made over the past year in the Improving Financial Management programme, suggesting that initial budgets had been insufficient.

Councillor Ballard also expressed concern at the overspends currently projected. He commented particularly on the Environmental Education Service and suggested that this should be publicised more widely to encourage use by schools. With regard to the Catering account, he suggested that there might be a structural element to the deficit, due to the recent media coverage on school meals, pressure from Government to improve quality without full funding being provided, and a decline in take-up. He also drew attention to the deficit on the Cleaning account and commented on the scope for improvements to this service.

Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked why debt recovery was thought to be falling behind as a result of 'Reshaping for Excellence'.

Councillor Broadway asked to be advised which services were causing greatest concern, which were forecast to be overspent at year-end and how the overspends would be addressed. She and Councillor Stone expressed particular concern about Children and Young People's Services, for which an overspend of £777,000 was forecast, and asked whether action to address this overspend would impact on services.

Responding to Councillor Ballard, the Lead Member for Sustainable Infrastructure, Councillor Oliver, noted that schools had to pay for the Environmental Education Service and this was leading to a reduction in use. She and the Sustainable Infrastructure Service Development Group were keen to extend the Green Champions scheme into schools.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young Children's Services, Councillor Johnstone, advised that discussions were currently taking place about bringing the Environmental Education Service and three other small services relating to outdoor education under the management arrangements for the Grafham Water Centre. On the wider budget, she emphasised that the figures being discussed related to the first quarter of 2005/06, to the end of July. It was intended to bring all budgets back into line by the end of the year. On Children and Young People's Services, she reminded members of the investment from the Good Housekeeping Fund to address areas of high spending, such as the use of independent fostering agencies and out-of-County placements.

The Lead Member for Children and Young People's Resources and Planning, Councillor Pegram, noted with regard to the Catering account that there had been an 8% reduction this year in the take-up of school meals. He and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Powley, outlined the management actions being taken to bring wider expenditure back into line, but reminded members that the Council had a statutory obligation to provide services to children in need and to other client groups. The Council's financial position would continue to be monitored closely and would be reported to Cabinet and Council.

5) Performance against Key Indicators for First Quarter 2005/06

Councillor Huppert expressed concern that a number of targets had not been met and that performance against four key indicators had not been met. He particularly highlighted performance against the indicators for older people helped to live at home, delivery of care equipment, and children in local authority care being adopted, and emphasised that these indicators related to services for some of the County's most vulnerable residents.

6) Delegations from Cabinet to Cabinet Members and Officers

Meeting held on 27th September 2005

Key decisions for determination

1) Papworth Hospital Consultation

It was proposed by the Lead Member for Community Learning and Development and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yeulett, and seconded by Councillor Kenney,

That Council agree the content of the proposed corporate response from the Leader of the County Council as detailed in Appendix 1 to the Council report.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Huppert and seconded by Councillor Wilkins:

That Appendix 1, paragraph (ii) be amended to read

- (ii) The Council is persuaded of the clinical benefits of the proposed move. However, the following actions must be undertaken before a decision can be made:
- An Environmental Impact Assessment to be undertaken ... etc.

Introducing the amendment, Councillor Huppert explained the Liberal Democrat Group's view that it was essential that the four key issues set out in the proposed response, an Environmental Impact Assessment for the Addenbrooke's site, a social impact study for Papworth's community, the need for sustainable development, and timely completion of major infrastructure developments, were addressed before a decision on possible relocation was made.

During the debate, members discussed the following issues:

The Addenbrooke's site

- The impact of further development on the Addenbrooke's site and the adjoining area, especially given the existing congestion on the approach roads
- The importance of the guided bus scheme in improving access to the Addenbrooke's site, and what alternative steps would be taken to improve public transport should the guided bus scheme not be approved
- The need to ensure accessibility to services from all parts of the County, including East Cambridgeshire and Fenland, which would not benefit from the proposed improvements to the A14 and guided bus scheme.

The case for relocation

- The relative importance of the clinical case for relocation as compared with other factors
- The clinical benefits of co-location with Addenbrooke's. Members noted that:
 - Papworth was currently unable to provide optimal care for patients with multiple clinical conditions, the numbers of whom were increasing as patients became increasingly elderly.
 - Addenbrooke's lacked optimal services for cardio-thoracic patients, meaning that consultants had to make time-consuming and costly journeys between the two sites.
 - East Anglia lacked a major trauma unit for people suffering from multiple injuries.
 - Consultants and medical students would benefit from closer interaction with colleagues in other specialities.

However, some members questioned whether any independent assessment had been made of the clinical case for relocation, given that many consultees were not medical professionals

- The pleasant setting of the current hospital, whether this contributed to recovery rates and whether it could be recreated on the

Addenbrooke's site

- Whether the hospital would be able to retain its ethos and identity on the Addenbrooke's site.

The Papworth site

- Access to the existing site at Papworth. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, Councillor J E Reynolds, reported that Government had just announced that it would be contributing funding the long-awaited A1198 Papworth bypass. Work on the scheme would begin as soon as possible
- The impact of relocation on the village of Papworth Everard in social, economic and employment terms. 1,400 people were directly or indirectly employed by the hospital, 245 of whom lived in the village. Employees faced possible job losses or increased commuting if they relocated to the Addenbrooke's site
- The future use of the Papworth Everard site
- The impact of relocation on the wider area, both in terms of employment and travel for people currently working at Papworth, and in terms of infrastructure and services if the vacated site was used for substantial housing development.

Finance

- The need for full funding from Government for the development of the new hospital.

Councillor Wilson reported that a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, comprising two representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council, himself and Councillor Heathcock, and representatives from eight other local authorities, had supported the relocation on clinical grounds.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats in favour, Conservatives and Labour against. A recorded vote was requested, the details of which are appended to these minutes.]

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Walters, noted the various concerns expressed by members, but considered that it would not be possible for the Council as a consultee to insist on the pre-conditions proposed in the amendment. He agreed however that in replying to the consultation, the Council's letter would emphasise the importance of addressing the issues identified in the Council's response.

On being put to the vote, the main recommendation was carried.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives and Labour in favour, Liberal Democrats against.]

Key decisions for information

- 2) Huntingdonshire Parking Policies
- 3) Cambridgeshire Community Network (CCN) Business Case

Other decisions for information

- 4) Heritage Services Review – The Future of the Council's Heritage Services; and Reference from the Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee

Councillors Broadway, Jenkins and White drew attention to the Council's relatively small budget for Heritage Services, noting that the sum being discussed equated to 0.1% on the Council Tax, or £1.20 per annum for a Band D property, and was less than the overspend currently forecast for Children and Young People's Services. The consultants' report noted that Cambridgeshire was in the bottom quartile of Shire Counties for expenditure on Heritage Services.

Councillor Jenkins urged the Council to invest in the statutory Archaeology and Archives services, to prevent standards from deteriorating and catch-up funding being needed in future. He also highlighted the role of the non-statutory Museums and Arts services, which helped to stimulate other organisations and draw in external funding.

Councillor White noted that the post of Museums Officer had already been made redundant, to the serious concern of many heritage organisations in the County. This post-holder had fulfilled a valuable co-ordinating function and had helped to access over £15 million of grant aid for museums and other bodies. He commented that there was a risk that cuts to Heritage Services would have a detrimental impact on the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment rating, and urged Cabinet to address the comments raised by respondents positively and actively.

Councillor Hughes commented on the importance of the Arts as part of a healthy community, and on their therapeutic benefits, particularly for people with a mental health problem.

Speaking as the Chairman of the Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Harrison expressed disappointment at the way in which the Cabinet had responded to the Committee's report on the future of Heritage Services. The Committee would continue to press for a written response to its recommendations, to which it was entitled under the Council's Constitution. Councillor Harrison emphasised that Scrutiny Committees were not required to identify funding for proposals they made, but noted that in this case, the Committee had suggested that the services should be funded through the Medium Term Corporate Priority (MTCP) process from the Council's base budget. She suggested that the review of Heritage Services was contrary to the Corporate Plan, which stated that the Council would improve and extend access to cultural and heritage services, and also

included objectives on value for money, efficiency and equity.

Councillor Kindersley expressed concern that the Government's capping of South Cambridgeshire District Council would severely curtail the District Council's ability to invest in the Arts.

Councillor Harty commented on the importance of both the statutory Archaeology and Archives services and the non-statutory Museums and Arts services and urged Council to recognise their value and ensure that the County's heritage was safeguarded for future generations.

Councillor Ballard noted that a major new Historical Resource and Cultural Centre was proposed, and expressed concern that revenue budgets should be adequate to run the new Centre properly. He also expressed concern that if the Huntingdon Record Office were to close, a number of archives on loan to the County Council would be reclaimed by their owners.

[Councillor Downes asked to be advised how much the consultants' report had cost. He shared Councillor Ballard's concerns about the possible closure of the Huntingdon Record Office, emphasising the importance of this facility to the identity of the local community.](#)

Responding to the speakers, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Walters, and the former Lead Member for Lifelong Learning, Councillor Lucas, noted that the proposed £100,000 cut to Heritage Services had been restored for the current year, to allow a full debate of the future of the service. The Leader of the Council emphasised the need to prioritise spending on services, given the Council's difficult financial position. If Heritage Services were to be given higher priority, other services would have to be cut to help meet the cost. Cabinet had noted the comments and representations received and would be giving them due consideration through the MTCP process.

The Lead Member for Community Learning and Development and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yeulett, agreed to provide a written response on the cost of the consultants' report. He noted that their report highlighted the good work being done by officers under difficult circumstances. The Council would need to consider Heritage Services in the context of the changes to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment review of cultural services, which might mean that it would be better to consolidate resources into a smaller number of services, delivered well. There were also a number of strategic and operational issues relating to the different aspects of Heritage Services to be resolved. These would be taken forward through the MTCP process, in full consultation with partners.

5) Local Area Agreement for Cambridgeshire

[Councillor Kent commented that the Local Authority Agreement \(LAA\) was likely to bring additional funding into the County, but that there was also a risk that it would reduce the role of elected members. Clear and robust governance arrangements were therefore essential. She expressed concern that the requirement to submit the initial framework for the LAA to the Government Office for the East of England by 14th](#)

[October 2005 had been too early, given that Cabinet had previously been advised that work would continue on the governance arrangements until December. She noted that the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment had identified a need to rationalise partnerships and asked how this action point was being taken forward, particularly in the context of the creation of the new LAA Board.](#)

Councillor Downes emphasised the need to monitor the value of all partnership meetings, to ensure that they were contributing to service improvements.

Responding, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Walters, noted that the proposals submitted on 14th October 2005 had been supported by 11 of the 12 partners to the LAA, the exception being Cambridge City Council. It was thought that, unlike other partners, Cambridge City Council did not wish with the inception of the LAA to continue with its Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). Members would be kept informed of negotiations. Councillor Walters confirmed that Cabinet wished to examine the purpose of and continuing need for all of the partnerships in which the Council was involved. He agreed to provide further details of this work in writing.

Councillor Hughes noted that the Labour Group on Cambridge City Council regretted the delay to the LAA; there was a range of partnership issues such as crime and disorder and drug and alcohol abuse that needed to be addressed. She commented on the need to involve the community effectively in partnership working.

Councillor Huppert noted that Cambridge City Council was concerned that the proposed arrangements for the LAA did not allow for District Councillors to be involved, unless they were nominated by an LSP. He commented that he shared this concern.

- 6) Local Government Finance Formula Grant Consultation
- 7) Incorporation of the Greater Cambridge Partnership as a Limited Company

[Councillor Downes queried how the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership could be both an independent and an accountable body. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, Councillor J E Reynolds, agreed to provide a written response.](#)

- 8) Supplementary Planning Document – The Location and Design of Major Waste Management Facilities

Councillor Reid congratulated all those who had been involved in the preparation of this Supplementary Planning Document.

- 9) Draft Consultation Response on Northstowe Planning Applications Submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council

Speaking as the local member for Longstanton and the site of Northstowe, Councillor Johnstone emphasised the importance of

infrastructure being in place from the start of the development. This should include improvements to the A14, high quality public transport and health, leisure, educational and spiritual facilities within the settlement centre. She also commented that the Structure Plan stated that the new settlement would be located to the east of Longstanton and the north of Oakington, with green separation to maintain the identities of these villages. The application from the developers, Gallaghers, stated that the new settlement would be located at Longstanton/Oakington, not separate from them. Councillor Johnstone asked for the Council's response to be strengthened to press for at least 200 metres of green separation between the village envelopes and the new settlement.

Councillor Downes asked the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor Johnstone, about the nature of the post-16 education proposed for Northstowe. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services noted that this would be primarily the responsibility of the Learning and Skills Council. The County Council would be seeking post-16 provision within the development, but separate from the secondary school, which would cover the 11-16 age range.

Councillor Reid noted that there was some discussion as to whether land west of Station Road, Longstanton, should be designated as a country park or reserved for future housing expansion. He emphasised the importance of making it clear in all discussions of this issue that the County Council owned part of this land, and for full separation and transparency in the Council's property-holding and planning policy roles.

Councillors Ballard and Hughes urged developers of new houses in Northstowe to build to Lifetime Homes standards, making the settlement a beacon for other new developments. Lifetime Homes standards recognised that occupiers' needs changed over time, and ensured that new homes were designed to be easy to adapt to meet the needs of an older or disabled person. The standards could save both District Councils and County Councils money, on housing adaptations and on the costs of providing home care needed because of unsuitable accommodation.

Councillor Kindersley expressed concern that the planning application was premature, given that the Area Action Plan and Local Development Framework were not yet complete. He also expressed concern at the District Council's limited resources to deal with the planning application, which was thought to be the largest ever lodged in the UK. He urged the County Council and Cambridgeshire Horizons to support the District Council in lobbying to ensure that the planning process was properly resourced.

Councillor Eddy noted that the former Strategic Planning Service Development Group had raised the issue of increased traffic flow from the new settlement north into Fenland, and the inadequacy of existing roads. He asked whether this issue had been followed up.

Responding to the speakers, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, Councillor J E Reynolds, noted that the Council had made its land ownership interests clear in all discussions. He

agreed to check the work done of projected traffic flows north from the new settlement. He noted that Cambridgeshire Horizons was already pressing for adequate support for South Cambridgeshire District Council in pursuing the planning process. He noted that the County Council in submitting its response had alerted the District Council to the discussions taking place at this meeting, and agreed to reiterate to them the need for green separation between existing villages and the new settlement.

The Council welcomed an announcement by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport that the County Council had just received a Chartermark for its Park and Ride services.

10) Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) – Direction of Travel

Other matters for information

11) Improving Financial Management

Councillor Huppert asked why the Improving Financial Management (IFM) programme had cost £550,000.

Commenting on this and the following item, Councillor Ballard commended the Pegram report and subsequent IFM programme for strengthening budget holders' financial management. However, he expressed concern that the Council's budget-setting processes were still finance-led and not led by plans and priorities. This issue was likely to be identified in the CPA Use of Resources assessment. He commented on the need to make comparisons with other local authorities, to identify areas of high spending, and to implement effective measures to reduce spending in these areas. He commended the use of Good Housekeeping Funds to reduce the use of independent fostering agencies and out-of-County placements, but urged that more done to promote welfare benefits take-up, as this directly affected the Council's funding from Government.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Councillor Powley, noted that the £550,000 IFM budget had been used to fund over 1,200 training sessions for staff responsible for managing budgets. Effective financial management skills were essential, especially given the Council's difficult financial position and obligation to provide statutory services.

12) Update on Pegram Review Action Plan

13) Annual Adoption and Permanence Report 2004/05

Councillor Carter, a former member of the Adoption and Permanence Panel, welcomed the Annual Report. She encouraged members to serve on the Panel, whose work was vital and rewarding.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, Councillor Johnstone, thanked all members of the Panel for their service. She also paid tribute to the foster carers and adoptive families who provided stability for children experiencing difficult circumstances. She

highlighted the need in 2005/06 to keep within budgets, but also to provide high quality services to support vulnerable children.

Part 2 exempt reports

14) Select Tender List – Highway Services Contract

Councillor Downes commented on the need for the contracting process to include arrangements for proper supervision of the quality of work of contractors and sub-contractors.

34. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Two written questions had been submitted under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules:

- Councillor Moss-Eccardt had asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services, Councillor J E Reynolds, about steps being taken to reduce the production of carbon dioxide and pollutants resulting from Council activities.

The response set out data about carbon dioxide emissions where known and described the work in progress to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other pollutants, including work linked to the Climate Change Strategy and the proposal to introduce an energy management unit.

[Councillor Huppert had asked the Leader of Council, Councillor Walters, about the cost of the 'Reshaping for Excellence' programme.](#)

The response set out details of the business case as submitted to Cabinet in October 2004 and an update to the present. It also noted that changes to the definition of a Head of Service and to service structures made it difficult to compare the previous and new management structures without further analysis. This was currently in progress and would be circulated once complete.

Copies of the questions and responses are available from Democratic Services.

35. ORAL QUESTIONS

Two oral questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Wilkins noted the severe financial difficulties of the Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trusts and asked the Cabinet Member for Community Learning and Development and Adult Social Care, Councillor Yeulett, about the implications of their proposal to reduce the coverage of the young people's psychiatric service from 17-25 year olds to 17-19 year olds.

The Cabinet Member for Community Learning and Development and Adult Social Care noted that the proposal would mean that 20-25 year olds would have to access adult mental health services, resulting in a predicted budget pressure to the County Council's Adult Support Services of £240,000. The position was further compounded by the PCTs' other proposals, which

included the closure of some hospital beds and supported discharge of patients in the community, a move which was supported by the County Council, but not at the rate now proposed.

- [Following on from the written question about 'Reshaping for Excellence', Councillor Huppert asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Walters, why the business case was showing a cost of £572,000 in 2005/06, when it had been intended to lead to savings, and how as part of the business case Cabinet had been able to approve three additional Heads of Service, when the changes meant that it was not possible to compare the management structure before and afterwards.](#)

The Leader of the Council reiterated his response that further analysis was still being done and would be circulated to all members when available.

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

36. QUESTIONS ON POLICE AND FIRE AUTHORITY ISSUES

Members were invited to ask questions and comment on issues relating to the Cambridgeshire Police Authority and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority.

Report of the Cambridgeshire Police Authority

- [Councillor Huppert asked about the rate at which examples of good practice were disseminated amongst community beat teams, giving as examples the East Chesterton e-cops initiative and firework hotline.](#)
- [Councillor Huppert asked about the continuing problems within the Constabulary, referring to an article in the Cambridge Evening News which suggested that a forthcoming inspection report would be highly critical, despite a radical change programme already being in place.](#)
- [Councillor Kindersley sought confirmation of whether the Police Authority would be prepared to meet the costs of those Community Support Officers who had to date been funded by South Cambridgeshire District Council.](#)

Councillor Bates agreed to send written responses to all three questions. He emphasised that the performance of the Constabulary was monitored closely by the Police Authority Scrutiny Panel and was considered to be progressing in the right direction. He drew attention to the current discussion on the future shape of policing in Cambridgeshire and encouraged all members to make their views known to members of the Police Authority.

Report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

- Councillor Heathcock noted the recent media coverage about crewing difficulties at Manea and asked about how many other stations had similar staffing problems and what steps were being taken to address them. He also asked whether the County Council or any other large employers had initiatives to encourage their staff to serve as retained firemen.

Responding, the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor McGuire, noted that the retained duty system was vital to the Fire and Rescue Service, with 30% of the workforce nationally employed on a retained basis. However, there were increasing difficulties in recruiting retained firemen, since the system was based on the presumption that people lived and worked in the same location, which was decreasingly the case. There were current recruitment campaigns in Peterborough, Thorney, Manea, Ramsey, Huntingdon and Swaffham Bulbeck. Nationally, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) had carried out a review of the retained duty system. A working group was currently considering the ODPM's recommendations and would report in due course to the Human Resources Panel. It was not thought that the County Council had a policy in place to encourage its staff to serve as retained firemen, but Councillor McGuire agreed that this was a good suggestion.

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

37. MOTION

Councillor Reid proposed the following motion under Council Procedure Rule 10, and it was seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

'This Council recognises the importance of developing sustainable methods of transport, and therefore calls on the Cabinet to prepare a list of desirable rail improvement projects in Cambridgeshire, to assess the benefits and costs of each project, and to campaign to obtain funding for those projects which have the best ratio of benefits to costs.'

Speaking to the motion, Councillor Reid noted that Cambridgeshire's Local Transport Plan included strategies for bus services, cycling and pedestrians, but unlike some other local authorities' Plans, did not include a rail strategy, or any reference to rail improvements. He suggested that the inclusion of a rail strategy as an appendix to the Plan would assist the Council in influencing regional and national rail strategy to benefit the County.

Responding, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Walters, commented on the need to take a strategic approach to all forms of transport, and noted that the Rail Strategy Group had already recommended that reference be added in future versions of the Local Transport Plan to desirable rail improvements.

On being put to the vote, the motion was defeated.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats in favour, Conservatives against, Labour abstained]

38. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

The following changes to Committee memberships were proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Normington, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Orgee, and agreed unanimously:

- Councillor Griffiths to become a full member of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Bean to become a substitute

- Councillor Bean to become a full member of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Bailey to become a substitute
- Councillor Carter to be appointed as a member of the Standards Committee
- Councillors Kenney and West to be appointed as members of the Services Appeals Committee.

Chairman: