

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 8th December 2009

Time: 10.30 a.m. to 4.05 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, K Churchill, J Clark, N Clarke, S Criswell, M Curtis, P J Downes, J Dutton, R Farrer, G Harper, N Harrison, D Harty, G Heathcock, W Hunt, C Hutton, J D Jenkins, S Johnstone, E Kadić, G Kenney, S G M Kindersley, L W McGuire, V McGuire, A K Melton, R Moss-Eccardt, L Nethsingha, A G Orgee, J Palmer, D R Pegram, A Pellew, J A Powley, P Read, J E Reynolds, K Reynolds, T Sadiq, S Sedgwick-Jell, C Shepherd, M Shuter, L Sims, M Smith, T Stone, S Tierney, J M Tuck, S van de Ven, J West, R West, F Whelan, S Whitebread, S Wijsenbeek, K Wilkins, M Williamson, G Wilson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors C Carter, S Gymer, N Guyatt and S King

42. MINUTES: 13th OCTOBER 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13th October 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

43. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deaths of former Councillors

The Chairman reported with sadness the deaths of two former Councillors, Adrian Cumber and Baroness David. Members observed a minute's silence in their memory.

Head of Legal Services

The Chairman welcomed to his first meeting the new Head of Legal Services, Quentin Baker.

Awards and achievements

The Chairman led members in congratulating the following:

- Jeremy Adams, a Lead Officer in Trading Standards, on being awarded a Fellowship of the Trading Standards Institute
- Stephen Moir, the Corporate Director: People, Policy and Law, on being one of six Human Resources (HR) professionals shortlisted for the HR Director of the Year in the Personnel Today Awards for 2009

- The County Council on being named Transport Authority of the Year at the UK Bus Awards
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Youth Offending Services on winning the award for Best Communication in Youth Justice at the Youth Justice Board's Annual Convention
- Adult Social Care on the Care Quality Commission's recent assessment that adult social care services were performing well in almost all areas of delivery
- Pupils in Cambridgeshire schools on achieving GCSE and A-level results above the national averages
- The Cambridgeshire Domestic Abuse Partnership and the Innovation in External Grants Team on securing £25,000 for an innovative Community Domestic Violence Perpetrators scheme.

The Chairman also announced that:

- The Chief Executive had signed a Pledge on behalf of the Council signalling the Council's intent to play a role in bringing the vision for informal learning to life
- Latest Government figures showed that Cambridgeshire was one of the top waste disposal authorities nationally, reusing, recycling or composting 51.99% of its waste
- She had recently hosted the official launch of the new Huntingdon Library and Archives.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor	Minute	Details
Bates	54 (a) 9 54 (b) 3	Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council Member of the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) Executive Board
Heathcock	54 (a) 7	Member of Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise (COPE)
Hunt	54 (a) 7	Trustee of Care and Repair agency
Jenkins	54 (a) 7 54 (b) 3	Lay member of Cambridgeshire Community Services Member of EERA
Johnstone	54 (a) 9 54 (b) 4	Board member of the East of England Development Agency
Kindersley	54 (b) 3	South Cambridgeshire District Council substitute on Joint Cambridgeshire Regional Spatial Strategy Review Panel
Melton	49 54 (a) 9	Mother in receipt of social care
Orgee	54 (b) 3	South Cambridgeshire District Council substitute on Joint Cambridgeshire Regional Spatial Strategy Review Panel
Read	54 (a) 7	Member of COPE and of East Cambridgeshire District Council

J Reynolds	54 (b) 3 General	Member of EERA Chairman of Renewables East
Tierney	54 (a) 7	Trustee of the Bowthorpe Centre Association
Tuck	54 (b) 3	Member of the EERA Executive Board and a developer
Whelan	51 54 (a) 7	Parent of two children at Comberton Village College Member of COPE
G Wilson	54 (b) 3	Employee of the Environment Agency
L Wilson	54 (a) 7	Member of COPE

45. PETITION

Chris Dickinson presented a petition signed by 203 residents of Rampton, calling for the Stagecoach Citi 7 bus service to be extended to Rampton. In presenting the petition, she noted the lack of facilities in the village; that the village was currently served by only one outward and one return bus to and from Cambridge on weekdays; the distance to neighbouring villages served by better services; and the unsuitability of walking routes to these villages.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, accepted the petition and agreed to send a written response.

46. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Four members of the public attended the meeting to ask questions:

- Marcus Cornish, the Chairman of West Wickham Parish Council, asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, whether the speed limit at Streetly End, West Wickham, could be reduced from 40mph to 30mph. He noted that the Parish Council had been pursuing this reduction for some time and that some soft measures were already in place.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access noted that the reduction sought was consistent with Council policy, but that soft measures would need to be sufficient to ensure compliance with the new limit; speed checks showed that the average speed on this road was currently 33mph, not the 30mph required. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to ask the Head of Network Management (South and City) to work with the Parish Council to see if agreement could be reached on a package of soft measures, to enable the reduction in the speed limit to be taken forward.

- Sue Woodsford, Branch Secretary of the Cambridge World Development Movement, drew attention to the potentially catastrophic implications of climate change and to the international talks currently taking place in Copenhagen. She asked the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, about the Council's 2005 commitment to reduce carbon emissions from its business mileage by 8%, noting that from 2005/06 to 2008/09, emissions had actually gone up by 13%, representing an extra £2 million of expenditure as well as increased pollution.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment noted that the Council's target had been to reduce emissions from business mileage by 8% by 2010/11. He accepted that it was unlikely that this target would be met. The Council would be setting new measures and targets from April 2010 and taking a variety of actions to reduce business mileage. However, the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment also emphasised that business mileage accounted for only 3% of the Council's total carbon emissions. The Council had agreed and funded an ambitious Carbon Management Plan, which sought to reduce total emissions by 30% over five years.

As a supplementary question, Sue Woodsford asked how the Carbon Management Plan actions would be measured and monitored, and what incentives would be offered to ensure that they were implemented.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment noted that tracking systems were in place and that examples of good practice would be promoted.

- On behalf of the Trumpington Community Orchard and the Trumpington Allotment Society, and as a local resident, Susanna Colaco asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, about measures taken to protect local wildlife during development. She expressed particular concern about badger setts in the old railway cutting in Trumpington; water voles in the drainage ditch running alongside the Addenbrooke's spur of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway; and the hedgerow separating the Trumpington Community Orchard and Allotment from the old railway.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning described the steps taken by both the Council's ecologist and its contractor's ecologist to monitor and ensure the safety of badgers and water voles on this site. He offered to make details of records available.

As a supplementary question, Susanna Colaco asked the Council to make more detailed and more timely information available to residents and wildlife organisations about future local developments. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning noted that there had been extensive consultation on the developments at the Cambridge Southern Fringe. However, he also agreed to monitor communications from the Council's contractors, to ensure that residents were kept informed.

- Mike Mason asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, about the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB), specifically why the underpass at Hills Road was blocked, why construction of the interchange facilities at Cambridge railway station had all but ceased, and what was causing the delay to work in the Trumpington cutting.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning noted that the Hills Road underpass was not blocked but was being constructed using a top-down method. Once complete it would be lower

than the railway, giving clearance to all single-decker buses. Work on the interchange facilities at Cambridge railway station was progressing. Works relating to the gas main in the Trumpington cutting were taking longer than had been anticipated and were being discussed by the Council and contractor.

As a supplementary question, Mike Mason asked whether the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for Transport and the Treasury were being regularly updated on the delays to the CBG scheme, and on the likely costs of the contract overrun, any borrowing requirement and anticipated legal costs. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning agreed to send a written response.

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

47. COUNTY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

Introducing this item, the Chairman noted that the report had not been available for public inspection five clear days in advance of the meeting. However, she was exercising her discretion under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act to allow discussion of the report, as she believed it was important for Council to be able to consider at the earliest opportunity proposed changes to the Constitution arising from the recent decision of the Leader of the Council to cancel all meetings of Service Spokesmen and Group Leaders.

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor L W McGuire,

To agree the amendments to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1 to the Council report.

In moving the recommendation, the Leader of the Council reminded members that Spokesmen's meetings had been set up when the Council had no overall political control, to encourage the efficient co-operation of the Groups. She expressed concern that the meetings were no longer achieving this purpose but were being misused, and that inaccurate information from the meetings was being released by Opposition members to the media.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Jenkins, expressed disappointment at this decision, noting that Spokesmen's meetings did not make policy or take decisions, but were invaluable in enabling senior officers to brief and discuss issues on a cross-party basis. Cancelling the meetings would not improve efficiency or address underperformance. Councillor Jenkins also denied the allegation that members of his Group had leaked or distorted confidential information; he had requested a list of the alleged instances, but this had not yet been received.

Other members speaking against the proposed changes to the Constitution:

- Expressed concern that the Leader of the Council had not properly consulted the other Group Leaders before taking the decision to cancel Spokesmen's and Group Leaders' meetings.

- Expressed concern that cancelling Spokesmen's and Group Leaders' meetings would necessitate an increased number of individual briefings, which they estimated would cost an additional £50,000 per annum.
- Queried the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegations to Officers, suggesting that they would mean that Cabinet members could avoid accountability.
- Suggested that the proposed amendment to the Members' Code of Conduct: Guidance on Confidentiality was unnecessary, since individual members were already able to share information they received with other members.
- Suggested that further amendments to the Constitution were necessary to explain how consultation with Group Leaders would occur if Group Leaders' meetings were no longer taking place.

Members speaking in support of the changes to the Constitution expressed sadness at the decision to cancel Spokesmen's meetings but agreed with the Leader of the Council that they were no longer being used as they had been in the past, to generate constructive challenge and debate and to further residents' best interests.

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

[Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour, Liberal Democrats and Green member against, two abstentions including the Labour member present.]

48. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

It was proposed by the Chairman of Scrutiny Management Group, Councillor Johnstone, and seconded by the Vice-Chairman of Scrutiny Management Group, Councillor Heathcock,

To agree the work programme of the Council's Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Jenkins commented that it would be helpful for the work programmes to show more specific commitments to dates and timing. He also suggested that it could be useful for Scrutiny Committees to review the implementation of Council policies agreed as a result of motions to Council, including: identifying the cost of building all new schools to the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'excellent' standard; agreement to register under the Sustainable Communities Act; and a decision on tax increment funding referencing the Bramley Line.

Councillor Heathcock highlighted the need for sufficient Scrutiny resourcing, especially for the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee, given its extensive workload. He suggested that the spacing and frequency of Scrutiny Committee meetings should be reviewed and that more frequent meetings could be necessary. He also expressed concern about the timeliness and adequacy of reports prepared for Scrutiny Committees and asked the Leader of the Council to raise this with officers and partners.

Councillor J West reiterated Councillor Heathcock's concerns about the workload of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee. He referred to some of the Committee's achievements and paid tribute to supporting officers.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, noted members' concerns about Scrutiny resourcing and explained that this would be reviewed through the Integrated Planning Process. She also confirmed that she would ask Councillor L W McGuire as Cabinet Scrutiny Liaison Member to investigate concerns about the timeliness of Scrutiny reports.

Summing up, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Management Group thanked all members and officers for their support. She noted that concerns about the timeliness of reports had been raised at the most recent Scrutiny Management Group meeting and would be addressed as part of an ongoing piece of work to improve the Committees' effectiveness.

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

[Voting pattern: All members in favour, other than one abstention.]

49. 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 24th November 2009.

- a) Strategy for the Transformation of Adult Social Care – Shaping Our Future (Item 1)

It was proposed by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Yeulett, and seconded by the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, that the Council

Approve the draft Strategy for the Transformation of Adult Social Care as a policy framework document.

Members speaking in support of the motion made the following comments:

- Noted that the draft Strategy had been positively received by a range of partners, including those represented at the Community Wellbeing Partnership.
- Welcomed the key principles set out in the Strategy relating to universal services, early intervention, prevention, social capital and choice and control.
- Emphasised that the Strategy provided an opportunity to influence and improve services and to respond effectively to the expanding client base. Clients' needs for services were identified through a rigorous assessment process.

Members speaking against the motion made the following points:

- Welcomed the stated aim of transforming adult social care but suggested that despite recent more favourable inspections, there was still significant distance to travel.
- Questioned whether the Strategy was realistically deliverable, given the current overspend on adult social care and the increasingly difficult financial situation lying ahead. It was suggested that policy should be set taking into account capacity to deliver.
- Expressed concern that the Council should not place undue reliance on the voluntary and community sector.
- Expressed concern that the aim of 'preventing unnecessary dependency on public services' could be achieved by varying the definition of 'unnecessary' and sought assurance that all people who genuinely needed services would continue to receive them.
- Expressed concern that an overly ambitious Strategy could detract from the achievement of aims and objectives already set.

One member suggested that the Council should look inwardly at the organisation of its own services, for example the links between social care transport and the role of Highways and Access in promoting public and community transport. On this point, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, accepted the comment about linking social care transport and Highways and Access and noted that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, had already been tasked to carry out a review.

Following the debate, a vote was taken and the motion was carried.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives and Green member in favour, Liberal Democrats and Labour member against, one abstention.]

50. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

- Councillor Brooks-Gordon had asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, about planning for educational leisure time facilities at the National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB) site in Cambridge.
- Councillor Brooks-Gordon had asked the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation, Councillor Criswell, about members and officers' use of Facebook, and about MPs' briefings.
- Councillor Brooks-Gordon had asked the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, about the Council's response to the Pitt review and flood risk.

- Councillor Brooks-Gordon had asked the Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor J Reynolds, about the Council's expenditure on consultancy contracts.
- Councillor Pellew had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, about real time bus information and the electronic display relating to the Citi 1 bus route in north Cambridge.
- Councillor Pellew had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, about the removal of a zebra crossing from Emmanuel Street in Cambridge.

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

51. ORAL QUESTIONS

Thirteen oral questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Bourke drew attention to public concerns about possible rising costs of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway contract. He asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, whether she would renew the previous Leader's commitment not to spend any Council Tax payers' money on the scheme. Responding, the Leader of the Council reported that new circumstances were now faced, as members had been briefed. The Council would do all it could to address the situation and to launch the bus service.
- [Councillor Wilkins drew attention to Council reports in November 2008 and November 2009 identifying serious shortages of school places in Cambridgeshire. He asked the Leader of the Council whether the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, had acted appropriately in the intervening period and whether she had confidence in him. Responding, the Leader of the Council confirmed that she had confidence in the Cabinet Member for Learning and that the Council was acting appropriately, but that it could not control external factors such as increases in the birth rate. She agreed to send a written briefing on the actions being taken.](#)
- Councillor Shepherd asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, about the recent High Court judgment relating to Child I, a looked after child, and the child's foster carers, who had lived in the Orkneys but now lived in Cambridgeshire. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children explained that this case was complex. He read out an extract from the judgment, noting that the judge had recognised that both Councils had acted financially appropriately, but that their actions had been highly detrimental to the carers of the child. He noted that English and Scottish ministers had now been asked to resolve the matter.
- Councillor Whelan asked the Cabinet Members for Learning, Councillor Curtis, and for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, about secondary places and school transport for children from the growing community at Cambourne and for children from Gamlingay who

would be affected by changes to Bedfordshire schools. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning reported that the Council was assessing school place requirements in south-west Cambridgeshire and that a report would be shared with members at the Children and Young People Policy Development Group on 19th January 2010.

- Councillor Moss-Eccardt asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, if the Council's Netilla platform suffered from the vulnerabilities described in US Notice 261869. He also asked about measures to support the Government's Code of Conduct. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation, Councillor Criswell, explained that the Notice flagged potential difficulties with remote access sites. No problems with Netilla were anticipated, but the supplier had been asked to investigate and report back. Further information was available from the Head of IT.
- [Councillor Sedgwick-Jell asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, how many of the schools for which the Council was responsible were not equipped with automatic fire sprinklers. The Cabinet Member for Learning agreed to send a written response.](#)
- Councillor Stone drew attention to a range of community engagement objectives and targets adopted by the Council. He noted that the Council was currently consulting on its Community Engagement Strategy. He asked how many people had responded, and whether the public could be engaged more effectively. The Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, reported that over 50 responses had been received to the web-based consultation. In addition, 150 people had attended the consultation meeting held in the autumn, and 150 people a similar event in the spring. The Cabinet Member for Communities noted that a range of approaches were being used to engage the public but that new ideas were welcome.
- [Councillor Kindersley expressed concern at the apparent secrecy surrounding the Making Cambridgeshire Count initiative and asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, whether it was appropriate to participate in a meeting making decisions on behalf of residents in this way. He also asked whether he could attend a meeting. Responding, the Leader of the Council explained that the initiative was not secretive but was being led by Cambridgeshire Together, who met in public. It was not possible for Councillor Kindersley to attend Making Cambridgeshire Count meetings arranged for Cabinet and Board members of relevant organisations; however, information from the meeting scheduled for 14th December 2009 would be circulated to all members.](#)
- Councillor Tierney referred to a recent public meeting of the Tydd St Giles A1101 action group. He asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, whether he supported the addressing of this accident blackspot as a medium-sized safety scheme. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access confirmed that he did and noted that Cabinet would be considering medium-sized safety schemes on 15th December 2009.

- Councillor Downes highlighted the pressure on primary school places in some parts of the County, particularly Cambridge and Ely. He noted that the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) had made £300 million available nationally for additional primary places, but none had been given to Cambridgeshire. He asked whether the Council had challenged the DCSF criteria, and what the implications of not receiving additional funding would be for the rest of the Council's educational capital programme. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning outlined the Council's actions to address pressures on primary places. In relation to the DCSF decision, he agreed to share the letter received with Councillor Downes, and noted that a response was being prepared.
- [Councillor Jenkins asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, about the decision to run the South Cambridgeshire 20mph speed limit trial in Melbourn instead of Girton, as it had not been supported by Girton Parish Council. He expressed concern that the change had not been discussed with the South Cambridgeshire Traffic Management Area Joint Committee. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to send a written response detailing the decision-making process followed.](#)
- Councillor Pellew asked the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation, Councillor Criswell, what progress the Council had made in introducing e-petitions. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation noted that if the relevant section of the Local Government, Economic Development and Construction Act came into effect in April 2010 as expected, the Council would have a duty to respond to petitions, including e-petitions. Officers were currently considering a consultation document recently issued setting out draft statutory guidance.
- Councillor Johnstone asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, how much had been spent on repairs to the Earith Bank section of the B1050 during the past five years, and how much on repairs to the rest of the B1050 during the same period. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access noted that £240,000 had been spent on the Earith Bank section, as compared with an estimated £300,000 on the remainder of the road. He agreed that this was not good value for money and noted that a more permanent solution was being sought. Councillor Johnstone asked for options to be discussed fully with the Parish Council and local member.

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

52. MOTIONS

No motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

53. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

It was proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Oliver, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Powley and agreed unanimously to make the following appointment:

- Councillor Heathcock to replace Councillor Shepherd as a member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority.

54. REPORTS OF CABINET MEETINGS: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, moved receipt of the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 20th October 2009.

a) Cabinet meeting held on 20th October 2009

- 1) End of Year Performance Report 2008/09 and Review of Integrated Plan 2008-11 National Indicator Targets
- 2) Shirley Community Primary School, Cambridge

Councillor Batchelor reminded members that land at the Shirley site had previously been transferred to a charitable trust at no cost; the same trust was now proposing to charge the Council several million pounds for its return. He asked whether the Council had entered this situation unknowingly, or had done so knowing the possible future implications for the Council.

[The Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, agreed to send Councillor Batchelor a written update on the situation.](#)

- 3) Development at Cambridge North West: National Institute of Agricultural Botany Frontage Site (NIAB1) – Section 106 Agreement Update

This issue was discussed under item 8 of the Cabinet report of 24th November 2009, below.

- 4) Cambridge Environment and Traffic Management Area Joint Committee (AJC) Issues

Councillor Wilkins expressed concern that the Council should not seek to impose 'one size fits all' traffic management policies across the County. He noted that the Cambridge City AJC had taken a number of decisions in recent months based on local knowledge and consultation with residents. He asked for the value of these information sources to be taken into account in the forthcoming review of the Area Wide Parking Policy.

Councillor Sadiq welcomed the review and agreed that some local variation could be appropriate, for example for residential streets close to

Cambridge railway station.

Councillor Harrison called for discussions about the future of the AJCs and of the Neighbourhood Panels and Cambridge Area Committees to be drawn together, to enable full consideration of devolution of power to local communities to take place.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, reminded members that the terms of delegation to the AJCs meant that they had to comply with both County and City/District Council policies where relevant. However, he accepted that one approach was not necessarily appropriate for all parts of the County. He noted that the review would initially be discussed with the Growth and Environment Policy Development Group (PDG), then with the Cambridge City AJC, before being reconsidered by the PDG and forwarded to Cabinet as part of the annual Highways review.

5) Integrated Performance and Resources Report – August 2009

Councillor Whelan drew attention to the overspend on adult social care. She expressed concern that members had still not received details of the recovery action plan and cost savings, and called for these as a matter of urgency. Councillor Jenkins echoed this concern and expressed reservations about the Council's ability to implement the Strategy for the Transformation of Adult Social Care, given the service's current financial standing.

Councillors Stone and Jenkins expressed concern that the December Council meeting was considering the August performance and resources report. They called for processes to be changed to enable members to comment publicly on these reports much earlier.

[Councillor Stone also expressed concern that the report presentation was not clear and asked a number of specific questions:](#)

- From which corporate reserves was the virement of £485,000 to Children and Young People's Services being made
- Why the figure for the Council's total expenditure for 2009/10 had changed since last reported to Council
- Why the Future Pressures and Development reserve still stood at £2.6 million, when the Council's stated aim was to reduce it to £1.09 million by year-end.

Councillor Harrison noted that the projected year-end underspend on debt charges had been £1.7 million at the time of the August report. She commented that in recent years, underspends on debt charges had been used to offset overspends elsewhere. However, she suggested that such underspends should not be relied upon and that the debt charges budget should be forecast more accurately.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J

Reynolds, agreed to send a written response to the points raised by Councillor Stone. He also agreed to consider the phasing of reports to members. On debt charges, he highlighted the difficulty of forecasting interest rates 15 months ahead, and emphasised that the Council's objective was to obtain the best possible value for money.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Yeulett, noted that the total overspend on the older people's pooled budget was currently £4.9 million. The risk share agreement with the Primary Care Trust meant that the County Council's liability was for £3.3 million. The total overspend in Community and Adult Services was £3.8 million. The recovery plan and cost savings were being published that day and would be considered by the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on 11th December 2009. Similar pressures were being experienced across the Eastern region; Cambridgeshire was doing all it could to resolve its situation satisfactorily.

6) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA): Strands for Migrant Workers and Homeless People

Councillor Kindersley drew attention to the 'Willow Walker', a homeless people's publication that had previously been funded by a Church Trust. He noted that this funding could no longer be continued and asked the County Council to consider favourably any request to contribute to the publication's costs. Councillor Kindersley also suggested that the JSNA's strand on homelessness should consider the needs of single young men in employment but unable to afford housing, who regularly slept in their cars; and of veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq, who could have specific housing and other needs.

Councillor Brooks-Gordon drew attention to the needs of young women who had to leave home because of violence and abuse and became 'sofa-surfers', hidden homeless people staying with a sequence of friends or relations. She also called for a joined-up approach to the housing needs of younger people and adults, which could be interrelated.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Yeulett, welcomed members' comments. He noted that the recommendations had now been considered by Cambridgeshire Together and would be taken forward.

7) Amendments to Policy for Offering Financial Support for Housing Adaptations (Disabled Facilities Grant Top-Up)

8) Deferral of Planned Opening Dates for the Cambridge Southern Fringe Secondary School and Trumpington Meadows Primary School

Councillor Shepherd accepted that the opening of the Trumpington Meadows Primary School had been deferred because of the economic downturn and slowdown in the rate of house construction. However, she expressed concern that the school would also have been an important community facility and sought assurance that a cohesive approach would still be taken to the development of the new community. She also

suggested that assurance be sought from the developers that no further delays would be incurred.

The Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, accepted the points made.

9) Policy Statement on Regional Strategies and Guidance on the Establishment of Leaders' Boards – Consultation

Councillor Wilkins expressed concern that the new arrangements would not be politically proportionate and that the new Leaders' Board would be composed almost entirely of Conservatives. He suggested that the County should not be seeking to entrench the power of the majority groups across the region.

Councillor Bates noted that Cambridgeshire's District Leaders had met to discuss representation on the Leaders' Board and had agreed that the representative should be Conservative, since the majority of Cambridgeshire District Leaders were Conservative.

Councillor Harrison noted that local authorities in the region had had scope to adopt a more politically representative model. She suggested that proportionate representation of Opposition groups should be welcomed.

The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning commented that it was important to reflect the outcome of the elections held earlier in the year.

10) Cambridgeshire County Council Response to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 15, Planning and the Historic Environment

Councillor Bourke called for practical application of principles relating to the historic environment and expressed concern at the high number of buses travelling along Bridge Street in Cambridge, with adverse consequences for Magdalene College and Magdalene Bridge.

[Councillor Brooks-Gordon made a similar request, asking about the removal of cobbles from Senate House Passage and York stone from Senate Hill in Cambridge.](#)

Responding, the Cabinet Members for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, and for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, noted that options to reduce the frequency of buses entering Cambridge were limited and that buses were preferable to a greater number of cars. They undertook to find out what was happening in the Senate House area and to respond in writing.

11) Consultation on Draft Noise Action Plans by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Councillor Stone noted that identification as a 'noise-generating authority' could have significant financial implications for the Council. However, he

noted that noise from the A1307 and A505 was a significant issue for residents of his division. He suggested that it was appropriate for the Council to address this, as part of its aim to make Cambridgeshire a place where people want to live and work.

Councillor Hunt suggested in relation to the A1123 between Soham and Earith that the issue should be reduction of traffic, not of noise. He suggested that Government be lobbied for the construction of more appropriate routes, including an Ely southern bypass.

Councillor Williamson expressed concern at the unresponsiveness of the Highways Agency in relation to noise arising from the widening of the A14, particularly in terms of its impact on Milton Country Park.

Councillor Wijzenbeek suggested that appropriate road surfacing was more effective in reducing tyre noise than the construction of glass or concrete barriers.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor L W McGuire, noted that the Council already carried out some noise reduction surfacing.

The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, expressed concern that as a 'noise-generating authority', the Council would become responsible for third-party noise. He also noted that the Highways Agency had given an assurance that it would use the most modern road surfaces to assist noise reduction, including as part of the widening of the A14.

12) Green Paper – Shaping the Future Together

13) Quarterly Update on Key Partnerships

Councillor Jenkins noted that this was described as a 'quarterly' report but that the last report to Council had been in July. He also expressed concern that he and the Leader of the Council had agreed at that time on more timely and more visible reporting of partnership activity, but that this report was briefer than the previous one. He noted that the Political Management Arrangements Policy Development Group had discussed the option of partnership-facing Overview and Scrutiny Committees and encouraged improvement in this area.

The Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, urged the Liberal Democrat group to re-engage with partnership working within as well as outside the Council, by rejoining the Policy Development Groups.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, reminded members that the full partnership reports had been widely available as part of the papers for the Cabinet meeting of 20th October 2009, some weeks earlier.

14) Petitions

- b) Report of the Cabinet meeting held on 24th November 2009
- 2) Better Utilisation of Property Assets (BUPA): Phase 1 Project Business Case

Councillor Harrison welcomed the focussing of the Shire Hall campus project on reuse of the existing site. She suggested that energy efficiency could be improved by reducing unnecessary lighting, for example of corridors, toilets and kitchens; and by pursuing a project as proposed by the Carbon Trust to replace boilers, better to regulate heating.

The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, welcomed these comments and agreed that it would be essential to pursue efficiencies, including environmental efficiency.

- 3) Consultation on 'East of England Plan > 2031' and Consideration of Cambridgeshire Authorities' Joint Response

Councillor Stone thanked members and officers for the robust response submitted, particularly in relation to Hanley Grange and Mereham.

Councillor Hunt also welcomed the collaborative working and outcomes to oppose Mereham.

Councillor Harrison welcomed the agreement of a joint response by the County and five District Councils and commended the Head of Strategic Planning and his colleagues on this achievement.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, echoed Councillor Harrison's views. He emphasised key points from the response, including: the need to model a lower growth scenario; the need to address the County's existing infrastructure deficit before planning more growth; the scope to enhance the market towns; and doubts about the viability and sustainability of new settlements. He noted that climate change considerations should be at the heart of all decision-making.

Councillor Kindersley highlighted the difference in ambitions of the District Councils to the north and south of the County; those to the north were keen to receive growth, but were being advised that it would not be possible to attract employers there. He welcomed the Government's recognition that Northstowe should be an eco-town, but expressed concern at recent media reports that Northstowe would have 30% affordable housing; he reminded members that the agreement was for 40% affordable housing.

The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, also commended partners' collaborative working. Responding to speakers' points, he reminded members that Fenland was a catchment area for employers in Peterborough and Kings Lynn as well as those to

the south of the County. He confirmed that the intention for Northstowe was for 40% affordable housing.

- 4) Economic Participation Investment Plan 2010/11
- 5) Developer Section 106 Deferral Requests
- 6) Cambridgeshire Integrated Development Programme
- 7) Cambridge Cycle Town: Compulsory Purchase Orders
- 8) Development at Cambridge North West: National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB) Frontage

Councillors Bourke and Brooks-Gordon queried the situation in relation to Section 106 payments from the development of the NIAB site for the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, as mentioned in the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 20th October 2009.

The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, noted that no sum had ever been assumed from the NIAB Section 106 payments for the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway. Elaborating on this, Councillor Jenkins noted that Cabinet members had suggested that NIAB be asked for a contribution, but had been advised at the later Cabinet meeting on 24th November 2009 that this was not appropriate.

Councillor Brooks-Gordon noted that she had asked to speak on this item at the Cabinet meeting of 20th October 2009, but had not been called. She asked officers to ensure that due process was followed. The Chairman advised Councillor Brooks-Gordon of her understanding that the request to speak had been sent to the wrong officer.

- 9) Supporting People: Exemption from Contract Regulations for Contracts Being Let under New Framework Agreements
- 10) Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) Inspection of Safeguarding and Services for Looked After Children 2009

Councillors Nethsingha and Jenkins expressed disappointment at the reported comments of the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, at the Cabinet meeting, suggesting that these focussed unduly on terminology and insufficiently on the need to drive improvements to children's services. Councillor Nethsingha noted that the inspection report identified issues of real concern, especially in relation to the Integrated Children's System and the need for effective early intervention.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, emphasised that she and the Administration were fully committed to improving services, but that she shared the concern of the Cabinet Member for Children that 'adequate' was not a helpful term when requirements were being fully met.

The Cabinet Member for Children reminded members that of 34 separate judgments, not one had been 'inadequate'; and that Ofsted had significantly raised the bar in its inspection of local authorities. However, he agreed that there was no scope for complacency and that there were important issues to be addressed, particularly given the difficult financial situation.

11) County Council's Carbon Reduction Commitment, Including the 10:10 Pledge

Several Liberal Democrat members expressed disappointment at the Cabinet's decision not to participate in the 10:10 carbon reduction initiative. They made the following points:

- The 10:10 initiative particularly encouraged local authorities to participate as community leaders, who could influence residents, partners and contractors to follow their lead.
- It was also important to set a good example for schools; some schools were already taking very positive actions to reduce carbon emissions.
- The 10:10 guidelines encouraged participants to adapt the scheme to their individual circumstances, meaning that it would be possible to include schools' emissions.
- The Council should not allow concerns about its reputation to limit its ambitions; furthermore, the 10:10 initiative specifically stated that it would celebrate the achievement of any participant achieving a reduction of 3% or more to its emissions during 2010. The Liberal Democrat group would not be critical if only 3% were achieved.
- Reducing carbon emissions should be of paramount concern to Cambridgeshire, given its fragile infrastructure and flooding risk.
- The costs of acting now would be less than those that subsequent generations would otherwise face.

These members urged the Cabinet to reconsider its decision not to participate.

Other members commented on:

- The need for a realistic and an honest approach
- The valuable work already being done by the Council through the Environmental Education Service to support schools.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, noted that the 10:10 initiative's own website described any large organisation achieving a 10% reduction to emissions during 2010 as a 'climate hero' and confirmed that it would celebrate any

reduction of 3% or higher. Similarly, the Government was committed to a 34% reduction by 2020, equivalent to a reduction of 3% per annum. Friends of the Earth was urging a reduction of 40% by 2020, a slightly higher percentage. In this context, the County Council's stated aim in its Carbon Management Plan of reducing emissions by 30% over 5 years, equivalent to 6% per annum, was highly ambitious, almost double the other targets cited. It also already encompassed emissions from Cambridgeshire's schools. The Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment urged members to commit to the delivery of the Carbon Management Plan.

12) Tax Increment Funding: Expressions of Interest

Councillor Jenkins welcomed this project and suggested that any form of funding should be pursued. However, he expressed disappointment that the earlier suggestion that this funding be used to reopen the Bramley Line was not being followed up.

Councillor Butcher commented that in his view, the Bramley Line would only ever be a heritage railway line.

Chairman: