

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 30th March 2010

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 3.05 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, 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, N Harrison, D Harty, W Hunt, C Hutton, J D Jenkins, S Johnstone, E Kadić, G Kenney, S G M Kindersley, V Lucas, L W McGuire, A K Melton, A G Orgee, J Palmer, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P Read, P Reeve, 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 Whitebread, S Wijsenbeek, K Wilkins, M Williamson, G Wilson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: G Heathcock, S King, V McGuire, R Moss-Eccardt and L Nethsingha

67. MINUTES: 16th FEBRUARY 2010

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 16th February 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

68. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Guests

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the Deputy Headteacher and pupils from Crosshall Junior School, St Neots.

Retiring officers

The Chairman led members in paying tribute to two officers who would be retiring at the end of March:

- Brian Smith, Executive Director: Environment Services – Councillors Johnstone, Carter, Sedgwick-Jell, Jenkins, Harrison and Reeve thanked him for his contributions and wished him well for the future
- Helen Whiter, Service Director: Learning – Councillors Harty, Downes, Sadiq and Reeve thanked her for her contributions and offered their best wishes.

Awards and achievements

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

- Spaldwick and Burwell Primary Schools receiving Platinum Sing Up awards
- The shortlisting of the redevelopment of Great Shelford Library in the 'Community Benefit' category of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors annual awards for the East of England
- The Government's highest Level 3 status for the Council's transitional arrangements for disabled young people
- The highest ranking of four stars from the Society of Information Technology Managers for the Council's website
- The securing of £426,000 from Sustrans and the Department for Transport to improve two cycle routes to schools, from Whittlesford to Sawston and from Lode to Bottisham.

Thanks

The Chairman also thanked:

- The 150 volunteers who had taken calls at the Council's contact centre on 19th March 2010 donating money to Sports Relief
- Those staff involved in snow clearance, winter gritting and pot hole repairs. 5,200 potholes had been repaired since January.

69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor	Minute	Details
Batchelor	80 b) 3)	Chairman of Linton Action for Youth
Gymer	General	Son at Hills Road Sixth Form College and in receipt of a bus pass
Jenkins	73 80 b) 4)	Son a serving police officer Lay member of Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS)
Johnstone	80 a) 11)	Board member of the East of England Development Agency
Lucas	80 b) 4)	Chairman of CCS
Melton	73 80 a) 11)	Daughter an employee of Cambridgeshire Constabulary Member of the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) and the Leaders' Board
Reynolds J	General	Chairman of EERA and Chairman and Director of Renewables East
van de Ven	General	Chairman of the Melbourn Anti-Social Behaviour Problem-Solving Group
Whelan	General 80 b)	Two children at Comberton Village College Member of Cambridge Older People's Enterprise and board member of the National Autistic Society for Cambridge

Williamson	80 a) 4	Board member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils
Wilson G	General 80 b) 4	Environment Agency employee Wife a health visitor

70. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

- Julian Huppert asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, to issue monthly public progress reports on the delivery and costs of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway. Given that the Cabinet report of 16th March 2010 had referred to legal issues that could continue until 2014/15, he also asked the Leader of the Council to reaffirm the assurance given by a former Leader of the Council that no Council Tax payers' money would be spent on the scheme.

Responding, the Leader of the Council noted that the Council and the contractor, BAM Nuttall, had issued a joint press release two weeks previously. Since then a number of high-level discussions had taken place, but progress had been disappointing. The Council would accept the Busway only when it was complete and defects had been corrected. It was not possible to confirm an opening date for the Busway at present; however, the cycle route would open at the same time as the Busway, with the exceptions of the Histon to Cambridge section, which would open a few weeks later, and the flooded section, which could need additional dry weather to correct. Details of costs were in the published Cabinet report.

Responding to a supplementary question, the Leader of the Council undertook to publish updates. She confirmed that the Administration would do all it could to protect Council Tax payers' money and would ensure that the Guided Busway was accepted by the Council as an asset, not a liability.

- Chris Powell expressed concern at the number of accidents occurring on Bridge Street and Magdalene Street in Cambridge. He noted that when the 20mph speed limit had originally been introduced, road bumps had been installed to reduce vehicle speed; these had since been removed. He asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, about the Council's plans to enforce the speed limit and to reduce accidents.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access noted that the reported accident rate for this stretch since 2001 had been 2.5 accidents per year, with various causes, of which speeding had not been a significant factor. The Council currently had no plans for remedial work in this area. The 'road bump' referred to had not been to reduce speeding but had been a raised crossing feature for pedestrians; it had proved difficult to maintain and so had been removed. Enforcement of speed limits was a Police matter. Concerns about speeding along this stretch would be raised with the Police; however, it was also noted that a 20mph speed limit would shortly be extended throughout the central area.

- David Mitchell asked why Council officers were declining to reinstate the former Park and Ride bus stop at Northampton Street in Cambridge, on the basis that its removal had been a commercial decision taken by Stagecoach,

even though the Park and Ride facility had been paid for by tax payers and reinstatement was supported by local businesses, residents and workers.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, noted that the purpose of Park and Ride was to provide high quality and frequent access to the city centre. A review, discussed with the Park and Ride Strategy Group which included a wide range of stakeholders, had agreed the removal of a number of intermediate stops to improve services. The Northampton Street stop had been removed on the basis of low usage and the presence of another stop on nearby Bridge Street. Since the removal of this and other intermediate stops, patronage of Park and Ride had increased by 1 million passengers in 12 months. Reinstatement of the Northampton Street stop would require the agreement of both the Council and Stagecoach; this had been discussed at numerous meetings, but to date no quantitative evidence had been provided to make the Council and the operator minded to reinstate.

Responding to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access noted that the figures for increased use had been provided by Stagecoach; if evidence could be provided that these were incorrect, he would ask officers to revisit them.

- Francesca Ashburner asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, how members of the public could contribute to the current view of residents' parking schemes in Cambridge. She expressed particular concern about arrangements for the Bateman Street and Newtown area. She explained that circumstances had changed since the scheme had initially been introduced, with increased parking restrictions and charges in the city centre and increased parking during the evenings and Sundays, meaning that many residents returning home from work were unable to park. She also noted that residents' parking schemes varied across the city, with implications for neighbouring areas.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access noted that the County Council would be assuming responsibility for on-street parking in Cambridge from 1st April 2010. He confirmed that a review of parking policy was currently underway; it had been discussed by the Cambridgeshire Environment and Traffic Area Joint Committee and the Growth and Environment Policy Development Group, and would be considered by Cabinet in April 2010. Once the new policy was in place, residents' permit costs would also be reviewed.

Responding to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access recognised that it was not always easy for members of the public to attend day-time meetings of the Area Joint Committee; he urged them to discuss their issues with local members, who would be involved in the parking review.

71. PETITION

Councillor Sadiq presented to the Chairman a petition containing approximately 1,500 signatures, which asked the Council to support Marshalls to remain on the Cambridge airport site and to help find alternative sites for houses currently proposed for this location.

72. COUNTY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

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

To approve the revisions to the Council Constitution as set out in Annexes 1 and 2 of the report to the meeting.

73. QUESTIONS ON THE POLICE AUTHORITY

With Council's agreement, this item was moved up the agenda to enable the Vice-Chairman of the Police Authority, Councillor Lucas, to be present.

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

- Councillors Lucas, Kindersley, Reeve, Sadiq, Clarke and Tuck paid tribute to the Chief Constable, Julie Spence, who had announced that she would be retiring shortly. Members particularly commended her work to develop local policing, for example through the Neighbourhood Panels, the work of Police Community Support Officers and the e-cops and 'The Kids are Alright' initiatives.
- Councillor Gymer expressed concern about the problem of graffiti on the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, which was currently in private ownership.
- Councillor Stone highlighted the need for public surveys asking about priorities for resourcing to explain the importance of some aspects of Police work, for example in relation to counter-terrorism and changing communities; otherwise respondents would reply solely on the basis of their own experience.
- Councillor Reeve challenged the view that overall crime in Cambridgeshire was falling, suggesting that crime was not always reported if residents did not believe that follow-up action would be effective. He also suggested that a directly elected Police Authority and/or Chief Constable would be more directly accountable to local people than current arrangements.
- Councillor Sadiq noted that the British Crime Survey was showing falling crime levels, and that people were feeling safer in their communities. He suggested that members had a role in helping residents to keep crime and the fear of crime in perspective.
- Councillor Clarke also emphasised that crime was falling, in a context of people being encouraged to report more, not less. He suggested that the strength of the Police force lay in its independence, separate from political considerations.
- Councillor Read suggested that crime was falling, since people would use Neighbourhood Panel meetings more if they wished to raise concerns. He called for better media coverage of positive Police activity.

- Councillor Shepherd expressed concern about Police use of taser guns.
- Councillor Brooks-Gordon drew attention to Cambridgeshire's strong performance in the investigation of human trafficking and the exploitation of women in the sex industry. She spoke against a directly elected Chief Constable.
- Councillor Whitebread requested an update on the possible relocation of Cambridge Police headquarters away from Parkside Police Station.

Responding, the Vice-Chairman of the Police Authority, Councillor V Lucas:

- Agreed to pass on members' tributes to the Chief Constable
- Commended the value of Neighbourhood Panels as an opportunity for the public to engage with the Police, and emphasised the importance of feeding back at subsequent meetings on issues raised
- Noted that presentations were given annually to the Neighbourhood Panels on Police priorities and issues such as counter-terrorism were explored
- Noted that the possible introduction of directly elected Police Authorities and/or Chief Constables would be a matter for national Government
- Reported that no suitable alternative to Parkside Police Station had yet been identified. A number of different options were being explored, alongside refurbishment plans that would enable the current building to be retained for the next ten years. A continuing city centre presence would be essential.

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

74. REPORTS OF CABINET MEETINGS – ITEMS FOR DETERMINATION

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, moved receipt of the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th March 2010.

- a) Review of Early Termination Discretionary Compensation (16th March 2010, Item 1)

It was moved by the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, and seconded by the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, that

The County Council agree a change of policy to remove the 50% enhancement currently being applied to redundancy payments made under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (SI 2914) by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Members speaking in support for the recommendation:

- Noted that the proposals sought to remove discrepancies between the redundancy payments available for local government employees and teaching staff and to make the payments available for local government employees non-discriminatory and affordable.
- Noted that similar changes were being implemented by a number of other local and public authorities.
- Noted that redundancies would be made only as a last resort; the Council still intended to implement as many reductions to posts as possible through natural wastage and redeployment.
- Noted that employees who were already subject a formal consultation that could lead to redundancy when the policy was implemented on 1st July 2010 would, if subsequently made redundant, be subject to the existing and not the new policy.
- Suggested that it was not appropriate for Council employees to be entitled to more favourable benefits than those available to many other Council Tax payers.
- Noted that the altered payments would still be higher than the statutory minimum.
- Noted that the Council had a fixed budget and that if less money was spent on redundancies, it would be possible to retain more posts to deliver services.
- Noted that the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance had met trade union representatives very recently, but they had not raised this issue.

Members speaking against the recommendation:

- Noted that the impact of redundancy on individuals was especially severe during a period of recession, when chances of finding alternative employment were limited; the effect of a reduced enhancement would therefore be felt more keenly.
- Expressed concern that the proposed policy change would not remove discrimination between employees on low and high pay. Employees on lower pay were likely to have fewer resources, such as savings or equity on property, to fall back on if made redundant. It was suggested that the Council should consider a tapering mechanism for enhancements, with payments highest for those employees on lowest pay.
- Expressed concern that there had been insufficient consultation with the trade unions.

- Expressed the hope that forthcoming consultations that could lead to redundancies would not deliberately be delayed until after 1st July 2010.
- Noted that no information had been provided on the level of savings that could be achieved by revising the policy. It was suggested that if redundancies were to be minimised, as was claimed, then any savings that would result from the reduced enhancements would be limited.

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried. [Voting pattern: Conservatives and UKIP member in favour; Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green members against; Chairman and Vice-Chairman abstained.]

75. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

- Councillor Downes had asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, for more information in response to earlier questions about demographic pressures on primary school places and about a secondary school at Cambourne; and about his stance in relation to Conservative proposals at a national level for a free market in school place provision.
- Councillor Stone had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, about delivery of Local Transport Plan consultation documents in the Duxford division.
- Councillor Jenkins had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, about the process for establishing a new subsidised bus route and about the process for reviewing existing subsidised routes.
- Councillor van de Ven had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, about the scope for Great Chishill Parish Council to augment County Council resources by undertaking some of its own essential highways maintenance.
- Councillor Jenkins had asked the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds,
 - For information about staff appraisals
 - About time and costs spent on the Making Cambridgeshire Count initiative.

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

76. ORAL QUESTIONS

Thirteen oral questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Harrison asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, whether he shared her opposition to the petition presented earlier in the meeting, seeking to keep Marshalls on the airport site and to find alternative locations for housing. She expressed her view of the importance of Cambridge East to the long-term viability of the Cambridge economy and expressed concern that other sites would be much less suitable. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning noted that the decision whether or not to relocate would be a commercial one for Marshalls to take. However, the airport site had been allocated for development and so the Council would welcome the land coming forwards to support the growth agenda.
- Councillor Reeve asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, whether she agreed that the County and other Councils should encourage tourism and small businesses in market towns by supporting local facilities such as public toilets. Responding, the Leader of the Council noted that such facilities were usually a District Council's responsibility; however, she confirmed that the County Council supported the promotion of jobs and skills.
- Councillor Kindersley asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, for an assurance that the 12,000 houses currently allocated to the Cambridge airport site would not be reallocated to another site in South Cambridgeshire, should the airport site not become available. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning and the Leader of the Council noted the comments, but that it was not possible to give a complete assurance, since it would be for Marshalls to decide whether or not to relocate.
- Councillor van de Ven asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, to keep the public up to date in relation to the Council's Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) bid and the demise of the TIF scheme. She expressed concern that the Council's TIF webpages had not been updated since October 2009. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning noted that negotiations with Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils were ongoing and that the website would be updated following a meeting held the previous day.
- [Councillor Sedgwick-Jell asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, how many schools for which the Council was responsible were not equipped with fire sprinklers. The Cabinet Member for Learning agreed to send a written response.](#)
- [Councillor Shepherd asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, whether the Council could respond to highways problems reported by the public via the national website FixMyStreet. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access noted that the Council operated its own webpages enabling the public to report highways problems. He agreed to send a written response relating to FixMyStreet.](#)

- Councillor Gymer asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, to review bus services to the Cottenham, Histon and Impington division, to respond to two recent petitions relating to Rampton and to the Citi 7 service and to a recent announcement relating to the 15b service. She called for more consultation with local residents and greater leadership from the County Council in its dealings with Stagecoach. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access noted that he would not personally conduct a review, but that officers would work with local members to keep them engaged and informed. He noted that Stagecoach and other operators worked on a commercial basis, but that the Council liaised with them closely through the Quality Bus Partnership.
- Councillor Whitebread asked the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, about the costs of the preview event for the refurbished Cambridge Central Library and for its official opening. She expressed concern that the official opening was not appropriate, given current proposals to cut budgets for libraries. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities reported that the preview had cost £330 and the official opening, attended by the Princess Royal, would cost £1,224. He emphasised the value of these events in publicising the library service.
- [Councillor Downes asked who had written comments in the recent edition of 'Countywide' attributed to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds. He expressed concern that one of the comments was inaccurate and another party political. As the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance had left the meeting, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, agreed to ask him to send a written response.](#)
- Councillor Brooks-Gordon asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, to review funding for St Luke's Primary School, given that one full-time teaching post was being made redundant at a time when pupil numbers were growing. She expressed particular concern that the school was not typical, since it acted as a 'holding' school for pupils in transition before they were placed elsewhere. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning offered to discuss the issues raised with Councillor Brooks-Gordon, but noted that resourcing was ultimately a matter for the school.
- Councillor Kenney asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, about the outcome of the recent legal dispute between Orkney Council and Cambridgeshire County Council concerning a looked after child. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children noted that agreement had been reached between Orkney and Cambridgeshire and the Social Work Inspection Agency had recently issued its report. The relationship between Cambridgeshire and the child's carers was currently good. The Cabinet Member for Children thanked the Chief Executive and the Executive Director: Children and Young People's Services for their work on this case.
- [Councillor Jenkins emphasised the importance of effective partnership working with commercial bus operators to deliver high quality bus services across the County. Referring to his written question, he asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor McGuire, to provide further information about the process for agreeing new subsidised routes, including responsibility for actions and decision points. Once this information was](#)

[available, he asked officers to test the process in relation to services from Cambridge to Rampton. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to provide a written response on process. He would seek officers' advice on the most appropriate locations for the testing of any new routes.](#)

- Councillor Stone asked the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation, Councillor Criswell, about a number of technical issues relating to members' IT, including the requirement to use an old version of Java, which could place systems at risk; Firefox being unsupported; and the Council's systems not being able to operate with Windows 7 or Windows Vista. He asked the Cabinet Member to ensure that members' IT was up to date and simple to use. The Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation agreed to send a written response.

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

77. QUESTIONS ON FIRE AUTHORITY ISSUES

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

- Councillor Gymer expressed concern at the proposals to seek improvements to efficiency by making more effective use of the retained duty system and volunteer fire stations, given that in some areas there were vacancies in the retained service and not the level of cover desired. Responding, the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Pegram, noted that the retained duty system was being reviewed, but that the Fire and Rescue Service was able to fulfil its operational duties in all parts of the County.
- Councillor Hunt asked what steps were being taken to recover costs incurred by the Fire Authority as a result of the 2009 Littleport fire. Councillor Orgee suggested that the Council report should have included more information about this fire, including when it broke out, when it was extinguished and its impact on the local population. Responding, the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Pegram, noted that the report of the Fire Authority to the Council meeting held on 13th October 2009 had contained more detailed information about this fire. He noted that the Service was legally barred from recovering costs associated with extinguishing fires; the costs of the Littleport fire would be contained within existing operational budgets.
- Councillor Read expressed the hope that following the recent fire at Spillers Mill in Cambridge, the building would now be demolished. Councillor Harrison disagreed, expressing sadness at the fire and suggesting that the building would have formed a historic centrepiece to the CB1 development.

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

78. MOTIONS

One motion had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

It was proposed by Councillor Jenkins and seconded by Councillor Bourke

That Cambridgeshire County Council:

- 1) Notes that the recent winter has been harsh (but not worse than a '20 year winter');
- 2) Recognises that well maintained roads, footways and cyclepaths are essential to facilitate easy movement within the county and to minimise the risk of accidents;
- 3) Is aware that most recent highways maintenance has been superficial and has not addressed the deteriorating condition of the sub-structure of its roads
- 4) Has observed continuing increasing costs with simultaneous reductions in output from its contract with WS Atkins
- 5) Resolves that Cabinet be requested to conduct an exhaustive review in order to:
 - (i) Determine whether or not it gets real value for money from the Atkins contract
 - (ii) Develop a map of its roads and their need for fundamental maintenance work
 - (iii) Establish a priority improvement programme to restore its roads, footways and cyclepaths to an acceptable condition
 - (iv) Enable it to explore and pursue alternative means of funding so that the necessary work can be done.

Councillor Jenkins sought the Council's consent to the motion being amended to include the following addition:

Under paragraph 5), insert the following new sub-section (iii) and renumber subsequent subsections accordingly:

- (iii) Quantify the cost, to the Council and to the wider Cambridgeshire economy, arising from insurance claims etc. associated with the bad condition of the County's roads.

On being put to the vote, the Council gave its consent to the amendment being included as part of the submitted motion. [Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour, Green and UKIP members in favour; Conservatives voted against or abstained.]

Members speaking in support of the motion as amended:

- Emphasised that the condition of the County's roads was key to the long-term success of its economy and its communities.
- Expressed concern that road conditions, as measured by national performance indicators, had been worsening even prior to the recent harsh winter.
- Expressed concern that the Council was focussing unduly on filling potholes, a short-term measure, and not on long-term funding and strategy to maintain and improve overall road condition.

- Noted that cyclists could be affected even more than drivers by road defects and asked for this to be taken into account.
- Expressed concern that the highways maintenance contract with Atkins was not being properly scrutinised and was not structured to ensure effective delivery against objectives and performance indicators.
- Noted that the Government had recently announced £100 million of additional funding to address the damage to roads caused by the recent severe weather and asked how much Cambridgeshire would receive and how this would be allocated.

Members speaking against the motion as amended:

- Emphasised that the Council was taking a strategic approach to road maintenance, resurfacing roads in accordance with agreed priorities.
- Commended also the Highways teams' flexibility to respond to emerging circumstances, repairing potholes and resurfacing where necessary.
- Noted that the current condition of Cambridgeshire's roads was due in part to decisions taken over a number of years by preceding Administrations.
- Noted that the condition of Cambridgeshire's roads continued to be better than that of many other authorities'.
- Noted that the Atkins contract was being monitored carefully. In response to the recent review carried out by the Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee, two members had now joined the supervisory board.
- Noted that Cambridgeshire would be receiving £1.289 million from Government to address the recent winter damage to roads.

On being put to the vote, the motion was defeated. [Voting pattern: Liberal Democrat, Labour, Green and UKIP members in favour; Conservatives against; Chairman and Vice-Chairman abstained.]

79. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

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

- Councillors Harper and Johnstone to replace Councillors Churchill and Shuter as full members of Audit and Accounts Committee
- Councillor Orgee to replace Councillor F Brown as a substitute member of Audit and Accounts Committee, but to provide cover for Councillor J Reynolds only (one Cabinet member substituting for another)
- Councillor Melton to be appointed to the vacancy for a substitute on Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee
- Councillors Jenkins and Whelan to replace Councillors Stone and Williamson as substitute members of Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee.

80. REPORTS OF THE CABINET – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, moved receipt of the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 23rd February 2010.

a) Report of the meeting held on 23rd February 2010

1) Cycling Town Infrastructure

Councillor Sedgwick-Jell expressed concern that discussion about a cycling lane along Gilbert Road, Cambridge, had been going on for many years. He noted that most Gilbert Road residents could park two cars on their driveway and therefore called for this issue to be resolved to the benefit of the majority, in favour of cyclists.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, noted that this issue had been discussed in detail at the Growth and Environment Policy Development Group. Local residents would now be consulted before the matter was returned to Cabinet for decision.

2) Local Government Shared Services

Councillor Jenkins noted that Slough Borough Council had decided to withdraw from this initiative and asked whether their decision had been linked to the expansion of the initiative to include professional as well as transactional services.

Councillor Harrison expressed concern that the initiative was failing to progress beyond the business planning stage and asked when promised savings would start to be realised.

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, responded to the speakers. He noted that commercially sensitive information had affected Slough Borough Council's decision to withdraw. Partnership with Northamptonshire County Council had already led to direct savings of £500,000 and more were expected as the initiative evolved.

3) Local Area Agreement (LAA) Refresh 2010

4) Community Engagement Strategy

Councillor Jenkins commended the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Panels in his local area. He noted that these were led predominantly by the Police and expressed concern that the County Council should not seek to impose a single template for Neighbourhood Panels across the County.

Councillor Williamson also expressed concern that 'Shaping Places, Shaping Services' defined Neighbourhood Panels without reference to the Police and emphasised the importance of Police involvement. In

relation to the Strategy's aim of encouraging people to seek office and to take part in local democracy, he asked the County Council to include information on its website on how to seek election as a Parish Councillor. He also reminded members that the Audit Commission defined 'keeping promises' as a critical successful factor for community engagement and emphasised the importance of delivering against stated objectives.

Councillor Gymer expressed concern at evidence of limited community engagement, for example at a recent minerals and waste meeting in Cottenham. She also expressed concern that some of her residents had still not received the Local Transport Plan consultation leaflet.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, noted that arrangements for Neighbourhood Panels were being reviewed; he agreed that it was important to recognise variations between the Districts. He noted that all national parties supported localism and he encouraged all County Councillors to become more involved in and to listen to their local communities. He also agreed that it was important to recruit more Parish Councillors.

- 5) Demographic Pressures on Primary Education Provision in Cambridge City
- 6) Better Utilisation of Property Assets: Business Cases for First Phase Projects
- 7) Early Years Single Funding Formula

Councillor Gymer noted that South Cambridgeshire District Council was amending the planning permission for Orchard Park to allow an additional 200 houses to be built; she urged for the implications of this for early years and other provision to be taken fully into account.

In relation to this and other items in the Cabinet report, Councillor Whitebread suggested that abbreviated web links should be introduced, as these were easier to type in than the lengthy links currently given.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, noted that the County Council was aware of the planning issues. He also agreed to investigate the scope to use shorter web links.

- 8) Developer Section 106 Deferral Requests: London Road, Godmanchester and St Ives Golf Course
- 9) Zero Carbon for New Non-Domestic Buildings: Consultation on Policy Options

The Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, welcomed this consultation but noted that it covered only new non-domestic buildings; it would be important also to retrofit carbon-reducing measures to existing buildings.

- 10) Glebe Farm Full Planning Application: County Council Response

- 11) Consultation by East of England Regional Assembly on the Scheme for the Establishment of a Leaders' Board for the East of England

Councillor Reeve expressed concern that these proposals were for the transfer of powers to less democratic body than its predecessor, to the detriment of local communities.

Responding, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, noted that these were the only proposals available at present; however, she also had concerns about the removal of power from local communities.

- 12) Issues arising from Scrutiny

In relation to the proposed federation of St Neots and Longsands Community Colleges, Councillor Downes sought assurance from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, that plans for the federation were detailed and robust, and that he would personally ensure that the federation was implemented to the benefit of all pupils in St Neots. He also expressed concern at the implications of the possible closure of the Huntingdon Regional College campus in St Neots.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning confirmed that he was fully involved in the development of the plans for federation, and to support St Neots Community College in the interim. On the Huntingdon Regional College St Neots campus, he noted that the Council had received a letter from the College Principal and would be discussing with her how the Council might help.

- b) Report of the meeting held on 16th March 2010

- 2) Civil Parking Enforcement

Councillor van de Ven noted that South Cambridgeshire District Council was not taking part in detailed discussions about possible extension of the civil parking enforcement scheme. She asked whether they had been approached.

[Councillor Harrison noted that £200,000 of revenue savings had originally been projected from the changed arrangements for Cambridge City. She asked for an update on whether and how these savings would be achieved.](#)

The Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation, Councillor Criswell, noted that South Cambridgeshire District Council had been involved in discussions but did not have any particular issues, as there was no off-street car parking in the District.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, agreed to send a written response to Councillor Harrison's question.

- 3) Integrated Resources and Performance Report: January 2010

Commenting on Local Indicator 206, the percentage of young people aged 13-19 participating in youth service activities, Councillor Gymer

expressed concern at anecdotal evidence of an increase in the numbers of young people and students attending Addenbrooke's due to alcohol-related incidents.

On the same indicator, Councillor Batchelor questioned the continuing relevance of the target, given the forthcoming change in youth service policy to move from universal to targeted services. He also noted that the voluntary and community sector were likely to be expected to play a bigger role in future in the delivery of youth services, but that the details were still unclear; he asked for members to be kept fully informed.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, drew attention to the effectiveness of the Drug and Alcohol Action Team. He and the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, also drew attention to the successful Community Alcohol Partnership in St Neots. Good practice would be shared across the County as appropriate.

On youth services, the Cabinet Member for Children confirmed that future commissioning arrangements were currently being developed in conjunction with partners, taking a long-term view. The Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, noted that he had recently met representatives from the Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service and had agreed to visit a range of voluntary organisations, to understand how best the Council could work with them in future.

[Councillor Stone expressed concern that the forecast year-end balance for the County Fund was now £8.8 million, £1.3 million more than the earlier projection of £7.5 million; and for the Pressures and Development Reserve was £2.9 million, following a £1.3 million transfer to adult social care, £600,000 more than the earlier projection of £2.3 million. Councillor Stone asked whether the total excess of £1.9 million, instead of being held in reserves, could be vired for highways maintenance, helping to address the red National Indicator 169, non-principal roads for which maintenance should be considered.](#)

In the absence of the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, agreed to arrange a written response to the question from Councillor Stone.

4) Annual Public Health Report 2009

Councillor Whelan noted that alcohol-related hospital admissions of young people and students in Cambridgeshire were significantly higher than the national average. She also expressed concern that local community services for children were not meeting their targets, particularly in relation to early years, in part due to difficulties in recruiting health visitors.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, noted that he was aware of difficulties in recruiting health visitors; this issue was being discussed with partners through the Children's Trust.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Yeulett, welcomed the Annual Public Health Report, noting that it would link well with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The Council would continue to work closely with the Director of Public Health and NHS colleagues.

5) Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

Councillor G Wilson noted that £2 million of work on the Busway had been deferred from the original scope of the project; he asked for this to be included in updates on actual and planned costs. He also noted the role of Atkins in approving works completed by BAM Nuttall and asked whether the Council had any recourse against Atkins for approving work that subsequently proved to be sub-standard.

Councillor Gymer expressed concern at unsightly and obscene graffiti on the Busway, which was overlooked. She also expressed concern that a crossing for toads had been promised and could not be implemented whilst the Busway remained in the ownership of the contractor.

Councillor Harrison noted that the Council report was generally positive but that the Leader of the Council had stated earlier in the meeting that the current situation was not so good; she called for the Council to issue a further statement to keep the public informed. She also noted that the Liberal Democrat Group would be calling for a detailed investigation in public into the problems surrounding the contract, supported by expert external investigators. She highlighted two particular concerns: the fact that the Leader of the Council was no longer able to repeat earlier assurances that no Council Tax payers' money would be used for the scheme, and the lack of robustness of the contract.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Communities, Councillor P Brown, expressed concern at the possible cost of an inquiry, using funds that could otherwise be spent on services.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, noted that the Council report had been based on the situation as reported to Cabinet on 16th March 2010; the situation was no longer quite as hopeful.

The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, acknowledged members' concerns. There were major issues relating to the contract and the Council's and the contractor's Chief Executives and senior officers were continuing to meet frequently. Members and the public would continue to be updated regularly. Outstanding issues relating to the northern section of the route identified in the Cabinet report of 16th March 2010 remained outstanding. Atkins were responsible for inspecting sections presented by BAM Nuttall as complete; the Council did not have any issues relating to their performance. Graffiti was the responsibility of BAM Nuttall as current owner of the Busway, working in conjunction with the City or District Councils and possibly the police if the graffiti was offensive. On costs, the contract value when let had been £116.2 million. The final cost was expected to be just above the original budget, but would not be known until all bills had been received, including those relating to land purchase.

Given this unknown, the Council had prudential plans in place to cover a range of outcomes. Councillor Pegram noted that the Administration had no plans to carry out an inquiry, having been as open as it could given the sensitivities relating to an under-performing contract.

Chairman: