

## **COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES**

**Date:** Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2003

**Time:** 10.30 a.m. - 4.05 p.m.

**Place:** Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillor: R Driver (Chairman)

Councillors: C M Ballard, R S G Barnwell, I C Bates, Dr T J Bear, B S Bhalla, A J Bowen, S V Brinton, J Broadway, C Carter, R L Clarke, J E Coston, P J Downes, M Farrar, H J Fitch, S A Giles, P D Gooden, A Hansard, G F Harper, V A Hearne-Casapieri, G J Heathcock, W G M Hensley, J L Huppert, S F Johnstone, J D Jones, A C Kent, I C Kidman, S J Kime, S J E King, M L Leeke, V H Lucas, A R Mair, R B Martlew, L W McGuire, A K Melton, S B Normington, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, A G Orgee, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P A E Read, A A Reid, J E Reynolds, P W Silby, R C Speechley, A B Stenner, P L Stroude, J M Tuck, J K Walters, R Wilkinson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

**Apologies:** Councillors: J A P Eddy, B Hardy and C E Shaw

### **152. MINUTES: 8<sup>th</sup> JULY 2003**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **153. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### Guide Dogs for the Blind/'Bring Your Dog to Work' day

The Chairman explained that Councillor J E Reynolds was involved in a puppy-walking scheme for the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. To promote this worthwhile cause and to mark 'Bring Your Dog to Work' day, he had brought his puppy with him to the Council meeting.

#### Awards and achievements

Members joined the Chairman in congratulating officers on a number of recent awards and achievements, including:

- The achievement by Cambridgeshire pupils of their best ever results in National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds
- Primary schools in Cambridgeshire avoiding the permanent exclusion of any pupil for the second year running
- The appointment of Andrew Rowson, the Head of Property and Procurement, as the representative of the UK, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands on the European Board of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

## County Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2003

Members noted that the meeting of the Council on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2003, which was marked as a reserve date in the calendar of meetings, would be taking place.

### **154. REPORT OF THE COUNTY RETURNING OFFICER**

The County Returning Officer reported the resignation of Councillor M Y Chapple. Members noted that the by-election for the resulting vacancy in the Melbourn electoral division would be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2003.

### **155. REPORTS OF THE CABINET**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, moved receipt of the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2003 and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003.

#### Items for determination relating to the Council's Accounts for 2002/03

Members noted that both Cabinet reports contained items for determination relating to the Council's Accounts for 2002/03 and agreed that these be taken together as a single item for debate.

#### 1) Financial Outturn and Statement of Accounts for 2002/03

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor J E Reynolds,

- (i) That the Council approves that the overspend on debt charges be met from the Capital Financing Fund, rather than County Fund Balances;
- (ii) That the Council approves the addition to the Capital Programme of £1.2 million for the Windows 2000 upgrade;
- (iii) That the Council approves the 2002/03 Statement of Accounts.

Councillors S V Brinton and M L Leeke expressed serious concern at the Council's financial position, both at the end of 2002/03 and in the present financial year. They commented particularly on the overspend on the Social Services budget, expressing concern at the delay in the production of the three-year recovery plan, and urged accountability from the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Social Services.

Councillor S V Brinton also asked the Leader of the Council about the note in the Statement of Accounts to the effect that the Council's accounts were not in accordance with Standard Accounting Procedure 24, because the Council's employer contributions were insufficient to meet its liabilities.

Councillor P J Downes reported that all members of the Policy Scrutiny and Audit Committee had been concerned at the non-collection of Social Services debt for a period of 14 months from January 2002, due to IT problems. He asked the Cabinet Member for Social Services to comment on the impact on the Directorate and Social Services clients.

Councillors H J Fitch and J Broadway commented on the impact of disruptions to invoicing, namely delay in issuing invoices and overcharging for services, on vulnerable clients.

Councillor J D Jones drew attention to the wider problem of national under-funding of Social Services. She expressed concern about a number of issues relating to Cambridgeshire's Social Services budget, including problems with IT systems, under-spending in some areas, including mental health, and growing waiting lists for services such as occupational therapy.

Councillor G J Heathcock asked the Cabinet Member for Social Services how many people were having to wait longer for Social Services assessments because of the current budgetary difficulties.

Councillor R B Martlew commented that, as increasing numbers of older people met the Council's eligibility criteria for receipt of services, budgetary provision would have to be made, rather than letting the overspend grow. Initiatives would also have to be taken to address pressures in different ways.

Councillor T J Bear asked the Leader of the Council for an update on the consideration of alternative operating systems to Microsoft Windows, particularly in the context of recent IT difficulties and the proposed £1.2 million to be spent on the Windows 2000 upgrade.

Councillor J E Coston commented on the recent disruptions to the IT service for Councillors, which had resulted in loss of e-mails and diary commitments. She suggested that the Council should have given greater publicity to these difficulties, so that residents were aware of the reasons why Councillors might not have responded to their enquiries.

Responding to the speakers, Cabinet Members made the following comments:

The Lead Member for Vulnerable Adults, Councillor D R Pegram, acknowledged that there had been problems in using Social Services IT systems to collect debt. He reported that work was in progress to link FAMIS, the corporate financial management system, to SWIFT, the main Social Services system, by the end of October 2003. Social Services debts over six months old had reduced by £128,000 from 7<sup>th</sup> August 2003 to 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003, showing that the reintroduced dunning process was now taking effect.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, and the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, emphasised that Cambridgeshire was not unique in overspending on Social Services. They confirmed that there was no intention to vary the eligibility criteria for older people's services and that the Council would continue to provide services to those who qualified for them

With regard to Councillor Brinton's query on the note in the Statement of Accounts on the Council's employer contributions to the Pensions Fund, the Leader of the Council reminded members that, in common with many

other local authorities, Cambridgeshire had agreed to stagger the increase in the employer contributions. He agreed to respond in writing to Councillor Bear's query on the consideration of alternatives to Microsoft Windows.

The motion on the Financial Outturn and Statement of Accounts was then put to the vote and carried.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in favour; Labour group abstained]

#### Report of the Cabinet meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2003 - Key decisions for information

- 2) Supporting People Strategy
- 3) Community Care (Delayed Discharges) Act

Councillor C M Ballard reported that the Labour group was opposed to the introduction of charges to local authorities for delayed discharges. He welcomed the use of the £475,000 reimbursement received from Government and £800,000 from the Social Services budget, apart from £100,000, to establish a joint team with partner agencies to tackle delayed discharges. However, he expressed concern that the remaining £100,000, which had been earmarked to pay fines, was likely to be insufficient given current levels of delayed discharges and the approaching winter and emphasised the need to maintain tight budgetary control.

Councillor G J Heathcock asked when targets would be agreed with health partners for reducing the numbers of delayed discharges.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, commented that Cambridgeshire's approach in establishing a delayed discharge team was being replicated elsewhere in the country. However, he shared members' concern about the unquantifiable level of future charges that the Council might have to pay.

*Councillor S F Johnstone declared a personal interest in this item under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as a non-executive director of Addenbrooke's NHS Trust.*

- 4) Local Government On-Line Partnership Funding and Smart Card Project
- 5) Local e-Government National Projects and Common Assessment Tool
- 6) Implementation of the Single Status Agreement

Councillor L J Oliver reported that implementation was underway and that changes would be reflected in October pay packets. She thanked both the Human Resources division and the unions for their hard work and pragmatic approach throughout the process.

Report of the Cabinet meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2003 - Other decisions

7) Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum

Councillor J Broadway asked whether progress had been made in appointing to the Forum a County Councillor for Fenland.

The Lead Member for Environment, Councillor L J Oliver, reported that Group Leaders would be asked to agree County Councillor representatives, including one from Fenland, prior to the first formal meeting of the Panel on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2003.

8) Social Services Budgetary Outturn 2002/03 and Financial Position 2003/04

Councillors S V Brinton, M L Leeke, J D Jones, A C Kent and J L Huppert all referred to the investigation into the Social Services budgetary position being undertaken by the Lead Member for Vulnerable Adults, Councillor D R Pegram and asked: whether, given Councillor Pegram's membership of the Cabinet, the review would be sufficiently independent; whether there would be any input into the inquiry from external sources and if so, who these people would be; who had agreed the terms of reference, and which officers had advised on them; whether the inquiry would look at future financial pressures; and when it was expected that the investigation might report.

The Lead Member for Vulnerable Adults, Councillor D R Pegram, confirmed that the terms of reference for the investigation had been prepared and would be published shortly. Subject to agreement with the Leader of the Council, he would report to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2003. An accountant from Deloitte would assist throughout the investigation and two other local authorities had been invited to nominate independent appraisers of the report. Councillor Walters confirmed that he had agreed the terms of reference of the inquiry, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Director of Social Services.

Councillor S V Brinton commented on the way in which the sale of the Council's residential homes for older people had been recorded in the Statement of Accounts. The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, commented that the Statement of Accounts with regard to the sale had been drawn up in accordance with District Audit requirements, quoting the value of the properties with vacant possession, but with a footnote that as they were to be sold as operating residential homes, their actual market value was likely to be £10 million less.

Councillor J D Jones commented that there should be no raising of the Council's eligibility criteria for services to older people. If any changes were to be made, the criteria should be lowered to provide more preventative services.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, confirmed that there was no intention to tighten eligibility criteria, despite the increased and unfunded costs to the County Council that had resulted from the implementation of the 'Fair Access to Care' legislation.

However, he suggested that lowering the eligibility criteria would increase the Council's difficulties, as the Council would be obliged to provide services to all those who were assessed as meeting them.

Councillor M L Leeke asked that written replies be given to those questions that had not been replied to at the meeting.

9) Registration Services Best Value Improvement Plan - Outstations

Councillor R L Clarke welcomed the decision to extend the consultation period on the proposed closure of the register offices at St Neots, Chatteris and Whittlesey. He suggested that greater publicity should be given to the offices, as some people did not use them because they were not aware they were there. He and Councillors S A Giles and A Hansard urged the Cabinet to reconsider the proposed closure of the St Neots office and to liaise with St Neots Town Council on possible ways of continuing to provide a service.

With regard to the offices in Chatteris and Whittlesey, Councillor A K Melton asked officers to discuss with Fenland District Council the possibility of providing registration services through the one-stop shops proposed for each of the four market towns in Fenland.

Councillor J D Jones requested an update on proposals for the register office at Shire Hall and on the reasons for the recent photographing of the building. The Leader of the Council agreed to provide a written response.

10) The Education Act 2002: Transition to New Instruments of Government – Maintained Nursery Schools

11) The Windmill School, Fulbourn – Change of Category Proposal

12) Invitation to Participate in National Pilot for Education

13) Member Led Review of the Promotion of Welfare Benefits Take-Up

Councillor C M Ballard paid tribute to the Chairman of the review team, former County Councillor M Y Chapple. He drew attention to further evidence of the efficacy of promoting welfare benefits take-up, which had come to light since the review had concluded, relating to a project run by Directions Plus in Cambridge and to work undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council. He emphasised that Hertfordshire had as yet found no evidence of diminishing returns on investment.

Councillor G J Heathcock asked for a timetable for preparation of the business case agreed by Cabinet, and to be advised to which member group it would be reported.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, noted that there was already considerable expertise in the voluntary sector in the provision of welfare benefits advice and suggested that this should be developed. He urged caution in employing significant numbers of Council employees to advise non-Social Services clients. The Chairman

of the Social Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee, Councillor J M Tuck, agreed that it would be important to develop the County Council's partnership with the voluntary sector in this work and also to involve the District Councils and Primary Care Trusts.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, invited Councillor Ballard to forward his additional information to the officers preparing the business case. He noted that there was no timescale for its completion at this stage and agreed to send a written response to members in due course.

14) Cambridgeshire's Action Plan in Response to Lord Laming's Report

Report of the Cabinet meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2003 - other matters

15) Update on Integration of Children's Services and of Adults' Services

Councillor A C Kent noted that the Green Paper on children's services had now been published and would have significant implications for work on integration. She emphasised the importance of providing adequate short-term funding for the radical changes envisaged.

Councillor S V Brinton expressed concern about a possible democratic deficit in the new arrangements and asked how the Council would have input into shaping the strategy and services of future Trusts.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, endorsed Councillor Kent's comments on the difficulties of implementing major change within the current funding constraints. He noted that Primary Care Trusts in Cambridgeshire and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership Trust were also projecting significant overspends.

16) 2002/03 Performance on Public Service Agreement (PSA) Targets and Key Performance Indicators

Councillor C M Ballard noted that targets on helping older people to live at home continued to be a cause for concern. He emphasised the importance of strengthening independent sector provision in this area.

17) Delegations to Individual Cabinet Members

18) Issues Arising from Scrutiny Committees – Call-In of Adult Learning Inspectorate's Report and the Cambridgeshire Adult and Community Learning Plan

Report of the Cabinet meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003 - Items for determination

19) Structure Plan Review – Response to Proposed Modifications

At the beginning of this item, Andy Cave presented a petition with 50 signatures on behalf of the Oakington Action Group, opposing the selection in the Structure Plan of Oakington/Longstanton as a site for a new town. He was asked one question of clarification by the Cabinet

Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone. The Chairman then thanked him for taking the time to present the views of the Action Group to the Council.

It was moved by the Lead Member for Strategic Planning, Councillor J E Reynolds, and seconded by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone,

- (i) That the Council approves the changes to the proposed modifications to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Joint Structure Plan (Deposit Draft 2002) as set out in the appendix to the report presented to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003;
- (ii) That the Council delegates to the Director of Environment and Transport the power formally to adopt the Structure Plan, subject to Peterborough City Council having also resolved to adopt the Plan.

The following amendments were proposed.

It was proposed by Councillor I C Kidman and seconded by Councillor C M Ballard

That recommendation (i) on page 2 of the Cabinet report be amended by the addition of the following words after ‘... 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003’:

‘... with the exception that the further amendments to

- a) bullet point 1 of Policy P7/1 with regard to the protection of sites for statutorily protected species (paragraph 2.3 of the Appendix)
- b) the second sentence of the final paragraph of Policy P9/2 with regard to the setting of thresholds in Local Plans (paragraph 2.6 of the Appendix)

be deleted and the wording of the relevant parts of the two policies as set out in the published Proposed Modifications be retained’.

With regard to a), Councillor T J Bear noted that all sites had the potential to be colonised by statutorily protected species.

Part a) of the amendment was put to the vote and defeated.

[Voting pattern: Labour group in favour; Conservatives and Liberal Democrats against]

With regard to b), Councillor J L Huppert spoke in support of the amendment, noting the need to provide guidance to District Councils and to discourage developers from building to just below the threshold at which the requirement for affordable housing was triggered.

Councillors R B Martlew and M L Leeke also spoke in support of the amendment, as it would assist negotiation between District Councils and developers. If a proportion of affordable housing were not to be required



for most developments, then larger developments would have to provide a higher proportion of affordable housing than smaller ones. There was also concern that developers involved in early phases of major schemes might otherwise be able to negotiate the provision of a lower proportion of affordable housing than later developers. This could delay provision and depress the value of land later in the development. Councillor P J Downes emphasised the importance of the County Council giving clear direction to the District Councils, rather than leaving this to their Local Plans.

Councillor I C Bates commented that the proportion of affordable housing in each development should be for District Councils to determine, as the appropriate proportion varied from area to area.

Part b) of the amendment was put to the vote and defeated.

[Voting pattern: Labour and Liberal Democrat groups in favour;  
Conservatives against]

*Councillor S V Brinton declared a personal interest in this item under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as a member of the University of Cambridge.*

*Councillor A J Bowen declared a personal interest in this item under Paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as a member of the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Jesus College.*

It was proposed by Councillor S V Brinton and seconded by Councillor M L Leeke

That recommendation (i) on page 2 of the Cabinet report be amended by the addition of the following words after ‘... 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003’:

‘... subject to the reinstatement in Policy 9/3c of references to a requirement to assess the impact of the A14 corridor improvements and new settlement prior to the development of land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road, which were deleted by Proposed Modification 90’.

The amendment was put to the vote and defeated.

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

It was proposed by Councillor A C Kent and seconded by Councillor R B Martlew

That recommendation (i) on page 2 of the Cabinet report be amended by the addition of the following words after ‘... 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003’:

‘... with the exception that, in view of the large number of objections received to the inclusion of land west of Trumpington

Road, reference to this land be deleted from the Proposed Modification of Policy P9/3c'.

In speaking to the amendment, Councillor Kent asked the Lead Member for Strategic Planning, Councillor J E Reynolds, whether inclusion of land west of Trumpington Road in the Proposed Modification of Policy P9/3c would mean that it would be at least a further eighteen months before the future of this site was determined, through the Cambridge City Local Plan.

The Lead Member for Strategic Planning confirmed that the site would need to be considered through the Cambridge Local Plan process, which was expected to be completed in the spring of 2005. He urged members to reject the amendment, commenting that in his view it was essential to obtain the evidence for the retention of this land in the Green Belt by seeing to completion the current environmental and traffic impact assessments.

The amendment was put to the vote and defeated.

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

The main motion on the proposed modifications to and adoption of the Structure Plan was then put to the vote and carried.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in favour; Labour group abstained]

20) Rapid Transit – Resolution to Apply for Transport and Works Act Orders

It was moved by the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, and seconded by the Lead Member for Strategic Planning, Councillor J E Reynolds,

- (i) That the Council applies for an Order under the Transport and Works Act 1992 to confer powers for the purposes of the construction and operation of a guided bus-way between Trumpington and Cambridge City Centre (with provision for a link to Addenbrooke's Hospital) and between St Ives and Cambridge City Centre;
- (ii) That the Council authorises the Director for Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, to address procedural matters that may arise in relation to the application under the Transport and Works Act 1992 and to enter into undertakings or commitments in relation to it.

Councillor A J Bowen commented that whilst he supported the development of a high quality public transport scheme along the A14 corridor, the proposal for guided bus continued to be controversial. In particular, he expressed concern about the frequency of services and routing into Cambridge city centre, given the existing problems of congestion in the historic core.

Councillor M L Leeke also expressed concern about the proposals for guided bus, noting that the Transport and Works Act (TWA) application related only to those parts of the scheme running outside Cambridge city centre. He noted that the Government was already intending to add an extra lane to the A14. This could mean that the guided bus would be most effective on those sections of the route where it was not needed, as conventional buses would be able to run along the improved A14. Use of the Cambridge to St Ives railway line for guided bus would prevent this from being returned to rail use in future.

Councillors J L Huppert and P D Gooden noted that the recent public consultation exercise had identified support for the rapid transit scheme, but had not given respondents the opportunity to comment on alternative rail options. Despite this, a significant number of respondents had expressed support for light or heavy rail.

Councillor T J Bear commented that the final report of the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi-Modal Study (CHUMMS) included support for the development of guided bus. However, it made clear that whilst initial routing into Cambridge should be on-road, on the longer term, the expectation was that guided bus would be routed alongside the railway. He commented that future publicity of the scheme should highlight this intention.

Councillor A A Reid expressed concern that until such time as the link along the railway in Cambridge was available, the road-running section would mean that the route was disconnected. This would lengthen journey times and increase traffic congestion in the city centre. He urged the Council to reconsider rail options.

Councillor P J Downes and P W Silby commented that many residents in the western part of the County had reservations about the scheme, particularly in terms of the environmental impact on Huntingdon, and emphasised the importance of sharing proposals with them. Councillor I C Bates welcomed the extension of the route from Huntingdon to Hinchbrooke.

Councillor S J E King commented that the design of the scheme had been considered in detail at Service Development Groups and the Environment and Transport Scrutiny Committee. He recognised the challenges of delivering a guided bus scheme, but considered that of the possible alternatives, this was the only one that would be financially viable.

A number of members expressed concern that although they were being asked to vote only to support the principle of making a TWA application, the motion referred specifically to guided bus.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, explained that the proposed resolution was a procedural requirement under the Local Government Act 1972, to affirm the Council's intention to submit a Transport and Works Act application. It was not about the detail of the proposed scheme. The Council would

have the opportunity to debate this at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2003, prior to submission of the application in January 2004. She confirmed that the intention for the long term was to route guided bus through Cambridge along the railway line, but for the short term, road-running would be unavoidable. She emphasised that this proposal provided an opportunity for step change in the provision of public transport.

The motion was put to the vote and carried.

[Voting pattern: 30 in favour (Conservatives); 7 against; 10 abstentions (Liberal Democrat and Labour members either against or abstained)]

#### Report of the Cabinet meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003 - Key decisions for information

##### 21) Property disposals

Councillor J E Coston expressed disappointment that she had neither received the Cabinet papers relating to the proposed rowing lake at Milton/Waterbeach nor been invited to attend the Cabinet meeting. She sought assurance that she would be involved in future discussions and emphasised the importance of agreeing public access agreements and adequately addressing land drainage.

##### 22) Oasis Resources Centre, Wisbech

With regard to the index of multiple deprivation, Councillor P J Downes asked to be advised out of how many wards Wisbech North ranked twenty-eighth. The Lead Member for Community and Economic Development, Councillor A K Melton, agreed to provide this information.

#### Report of the Cabinet meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003 - Other decisions

##### 23) The Education Act 2002: Transition to New School Instruments of Government – Maintained Schools

##### 24) Beacon Council Application

#### Report of the Cabinet meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2003 - Other matters

##### 25) Emergency Planning National Review

##### 26) Budget Monitoring 2003/04

Councillor S V Brinton expressed concern that in addition to the projected overspend in Social Services, overspends were also projected in Education, Libraries and Heritage and Policy. She also expressed concern at the cost of coping with the recent IT problems, given the constraints on that budget, and asked whether a report could be brought to a future Cabinet meeting.

Councillor F H Yeulett, the Lead Member for Education Resources, commented that the budgetary position with regard to home to school

transport, learning support assistants and heritage would continue to be monitored closely and action taken to address projected overspends.

## **156. EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BYELAWS**

It was proposed by the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, and seconded by Councillor D R Pegram

That the Council approves the draft byelaws on the employment of children, as set out in the agenda papers.

Answering a question from Councillor S V Brinton, the Cabinet Member for Social Services confirmed that this was not a Cambridgeshire initiative, but a response to a request from Government to update existing byelaws to reflect national legislative changes.

[Voting pattern: agreed without dissent]

## **157. WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Members noted that no written questions had been submitted under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules.

## **158. ORAL QUESTIONS**

Three oral questions were asked under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules:

- Councillor P J Downes asked the Cabinet Member for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Councillor R Wilkinson, about arrangements being made to mark Local Democracy Week and its particular emphasis on the involvement of young people.
- Councillor P W Silby asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, about the Highways Agency's decision not to proceed with a scheme for four grade-separated junctions west of the A1 on the A14 and the Highways Agency's failure to advise local Councillors of this decision. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport agreed to write to the Highways Agency expressing the Council's disappointment and asking about their future plans for these junctions.
- Councillor J L Huppert asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport about arrangements for cycling over bridges crossing the River Cam in Cambridge. The Cabinet Member updated him on work to review the Fort St George and Green Dragon bridges and agreed to keep him informed of progress.

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

## **159. QUESTIONS ON POLICE AND FIRE AUTHORITY ISSUES**

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

### Report of the Chairman of the Cambridgeshire Police Authority

- Councillor R Driver asked the Chairman of the Police Authority, Councillor J E Reynolds, to pass on his thanks for a recent initiative to stop illegal hare coursing.
- Councillor T J Bear asked the Chairman of the Police Authority about contingency plans made by the Police to prevent additional traffic from joining the A14 in the event of severe congestion caused by an accident. The Chairman of the Police Authority, who had received previous notification of the question, provided him with a partial written response and agreed to send further details.
- Councillor S J E King asked the Chairman of the Police Authority about the scope for the Constabulary's archive collection to be included in the County Council's Historical Resource and Cultural Centre. The Chairman of the Police Authority advised that this collection was the responsibility of the Police Authority and requested copies of relevant correspondence to enable him to follow this up.

### Report of the Chairman of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

- Councillor R L Clarke asked the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor L W McGuire, about future plans for the fire station in St Neots. The Chairman explained that all the Fire Authority's property holdings, including the fire station in St Neots, were currently being reviewed to ensure that they met modern requirements.

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

## **160. MOTIONS**

Members noted that no motions had been submitted under Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules.

## **161. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

The following membership changes were proposed by the Chairman of Council, Councillor R Driver, seconded by Councillor S B Normington and agreed unanimously:

### Ad hoc Scrutiny Panel on Foster Care

Councillor P L Stroude to replace former Councillor M Y Chapple.

### Staff Appeals Committee

Councillors P W Silby and J M Tuck to be added to the pool of members from which the Staff Appeals Committee is drawn.

[Voting pattern: unanimous]

Chairman: