

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 19th February 2013

Time: 10.30am – 6.05pm

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor J Powley (Chairman)
Councillors: S Austen, J Batchelor, I 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 Count, S Criswell, M Curtis, P Downes, J Dutton, R Farrer, N Guyatt, S Gymer, G Harper, D Harty, G Heathcock, S Hoy, W Hunt, C Hutton, D Jenkins, S Johnstone, L Kadić, G Kenney, S Kindersley, S King, V Lucas, I Manning, M McGuire, V McGuire, A Melton, L Nethsingha, A Pellew, L Oliver, T Orgee, J Palmer, P Read, P Reeve, J Reynolds, K Reynolds, T Sadiq, P Sales, S Sedgwick-Jell, , M Shuter, M Smith, T Stone, S Tierney, J Tuck, S van de Ven, R West, F Whelan, S Whitebread, K Wilkins, M Williamson, G Wilson, L Wilson and F Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors: R Pegram and C Shepherd

280. MINUTES – 11th DECEMBER 2012

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 11th December 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

281. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made a number of announcements as set out in **Appendix A**.

282. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct.

283. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Council noted one question received from a member of the public as set out in **Appendix B**.

284. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

285. ITEM FOR DETERMINATION FROM CABINET

(i) Council's Business Plan and Budget Proposals 2013/14

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, Councillor N Clarke, and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor M McGuire, that the recommendations of the Cabinet meeting of 29th January 2013 on the Business Plan, as set out in Section 1.9 of Agenda Item 6(i), be adopted, subject to the financial, textual and layout changes as set out in Appendix A of Agenda Item 6(i).

The Chairmen of the Council's five overview and scrutiny committees respectively moved the receipt of the reports of the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Enterprise, Growth and Community Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and Resources and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members then debated the Council's Business Plan and Budget Proposals 2013/14 and the scrutiny committees' responses. Several members, including Cabinet members and Chairmen of overview and scrutiny committees, paid tribute to the hard work undertaken by officers during the Business Plan process, and thanked them for their efforts.

The Liberal Democrat amendment, detailed in Agenda Item 6(ii) and modified by the addendum attached as **Appendix C**, was proposed by Councillor Bourke and seconded by Councillor Nethsingha.

Following discussion, the amendment, on being put to the vote, was lost.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives, Conservatives Non-Aligned, Green and UKIP against, Liberal Democrats for; Labour, the Chairman and Vice Chairman abstained].

The substantive motion, as detailed below, was then put to the vote and carried:

That approval be given to

- a. the Service/ Directorate cash limits as set out in Section 3, Table 3.2 of the Business Plan.
- b. a total County Budget Requirement in respect of general expenses applicable to the whole County area of £738,424,000 as set out in Section 3, Table 4.1 of the Business Plan.
- c. a recommended County Precept for Council Tax from District Councils of £226,400,292 (to be received in ten equal instalments in accordance with the fall-back provisions of the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 1995), as set out in Section 3, Table 4.1 of the Business Plan.
- d. a Council Tax for each Band of property, based on the number of "Band D" equivalent properties notified to the County Council by the District Councils (205,805), as set out in Section 3, Table 4.2 of the Business Plan reflecting a 1.99% increase:

Band	Ratio	Amount (£)
A	6/9	733.38
B	7/9	855.61
C	8/9	977.84
D	9/9	1,100.07
E	11/9	1,344.53
F	13/9	1,588.99
G	15/9	1,833.45
H	18/9	2,200.14

- e. the Prudential Borrowing, Prudential Indicators as set out in Section 3, Table 7.3 of the Business Plan.

- f. the Treasury Management Strategy as set out in brief in Section 3 and comprehensively in Section 5 of the Business Plan.
- g. the report of the Section 151 Officer on the levels of reserves and robustness of the estimates as set out in Section 3 of the Business Plan.
- h. Capital Payments in 2013-14 up to £134.2m arising from:
 - i. Commitments from schemes already approved; and
 - ii. The consequences of new starts (for the five years 2013-14 to 2017-18) shown in summary in Section 3, Table 6.4 of the Business Plan.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour; Conservatives Non-Aligned, Green, Labour, Liberal Democrats and UKIP against; the Chairman and Vice Chairman abstained]

286. MOTIONS

No motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

287. QUESTIONS

a) Oral Questions

Fifteen questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9.1, as set out in **Appendix D**. In response to these questions, the following items were agreed for further action:

- In response to a question from Councillor T Stone, the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, undertook to check whether bus companies were aware that subsidised services would continue as at present until alternative transport solutions were put in place
- In response to a question from Councillor M Williamson, the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor S Tierney, undertook to check that there were systems in place to ensure that the register offices outside Cambridge were equipped to minimise the number of sham marriages conducted in the future
- In response to a question from Councillor I Manning, the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, undertook to respond in writing to Councillor Manning's question about the future of the 16/17 bus after it had been on a year's commercial trial following removal of a subsidy, and to write to Stagecoach about its plans for the service
- In response to a question from Councillor S van de Ven, the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, undertook to discuss with officers how parish councils could obtain advice on schemes to remedy accident cluster spots, and to reply to Councillor van de Ven in writing
- In response to a question from Councillor A Pellew, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor M McGuire, on behalf of the Leader of the Council, undertook to reply in writing to Councillor Pellew's question about the cost of maintaining the Council's Highways Fault Reporting System

- In response to a question from Councillor P Downes, the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, undertook to ensure that a copy of any protocol drawn up for the street lighting replacement project contractors, Balfour Beatty, would be forwarded to members to enable them to pass it on to the parish councils in their divisions
- In response to a question from Councillor J Palmer, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty, agreed to write to headteachers to remind them of the impact on parents of closing schools because of bad weather
- In response to a question from Councillor D Jenkins, submitted in advance to the Leader of the Council, Councillor N Clarke, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor M McGuire, speaking on the Leader's behalf, assured Councillor Jenkins that the Leader would reply in writing to his question about the Council's plans to develop county farm land at Buxhall Farm north of Histon for housing.

b) Written Questions

Three written questions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2, as set out in **Appendix E**.

288. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

It was proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Powley and seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor K Reynolds, to make a number of changes to membership of committees, as set out in **Appendix F**.

After some discussion, the following amendment was proposed by Councillor K Churchill and seconded by Councillor P Reeve:

That one of the two seats allocated to the Conservatives Non-Aligned be on the Planning Committee rather than on the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The amendment, on being put to the vote, was lost.

The substantive motion, on being put to the vote, was carried.

Chairman

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 19TH FEBRUARY 2013
CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

PEOPLE

Former County Councillor Neville Pritchard

It is with regret that the Chairman reports the recent death of former County Councillor Neville Pritchard. Councillor Pritchard served on the County Council from 1987 to 1997, representing the Histon Division, on behalf of the Conservative Party. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman, Councillor John Powley, attended his funeral on 19th December 2012.

Former County Councillor Clive Hines

It is also with regret that the Chairman reports the recent death of former County Councillor Clive Hines. Councillor Hines served on the County Council from 1985 to 1997, representing the Willingham Division, on behalf of the Conservative Party. On behalf of the Council, the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Kevin Reynolds, attended his funeral on 4th January 2013.

Former Chief Fire Officer Alan Gray

The Chairman reports the death of former Chief Fire Officer Alan Gray. Alan was the longest serving Chief of Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service until his retirement in 2000.

Elaine Cox, John Leighton and Steph Smissen

The Chairman also reports with enormous sadness the deaths of Elaine Cox who worked as a support worker in Accommodation Services in March, John Leighton who worked as a Mental Capacity Act Training Manager, and Steph Smissen who worked as a Business Support Manager in the Council’s Physical Disability & Sensory Services Team. The Council’s thoughts are with their family, friends and colleagues at this very sad time.

Conservatives Non Aligned

Councillors Ken Churchill and Bob Farrer have resigned from the Conservative Group on Cambridgeshire County Council and have constituted a new Group (Conservatives Non Aligned).

Leader of Labour Group

The Council notes the appointment of Councillor Paul Sales as Leader of the Labour Group to replace Councillor Tariq Sadiq.

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire

Ruth Rogers has been appointed Chair Designate of Healthwatch Cambridgeshire to lead the organisation which will monitor health and social care services in the county. She has extensive experience of health and social care issues having previously chaired the South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust and Cambridgeshire Police Authority as well as being Chief Executive of Red2Green, a charity providing services to people with disabilities and disadvantages.

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire, which formally comes into force in April, will be part of a new national Healthwatch network, giving people a powerful voice locally and nationally. Locally the County Council has been working to create the local link in the national chain of Healthwatch groups. Through the network, Healthwatch England will make sure the voices of all people not just those using health and social care services are heard by the Secretary of State for Health, the Care Quality Commission, the NHS Commissioning Board, Monitor and every local authority in England.

AWARDS

The Larksfield Transitions Unit in Wisbech

A County Council support service which helps adults with learning disabilities move on to more independent living has been given top marks by Government inspectors. The Larksfield Transitions Unit in Wisbech provides supported-living services to nine people. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) recently carried out a routine inspection and found the transitions unit was meeting all the required standards of care and support. CQC inspectors spoke to people using the service and staff, and looked at all aspects of the service, including: involving and respecting people who use the service; care and welfare; safeguarding; and support arrangements for staff and service users.

Local Government Shared Services

Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) have won the award for Corporate Governance against strong opposition at the Local Government Chronicle Investment Awards 2012. This award is given to the council which has done the most to enhance corporate governance during the last year.

The Adult Placement Scheme

A County Council scheme which provides supported living placements, respite care and outreach services for people with learning disabilities in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, has been given top marks by government inspectors. The Adult Placement Scheme underwent a routine inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and was found to be performing well in all aspects of the inspection. The scheme provides support for 38 carers who provide permanent placements, respite care and outreach support to 50 people with a range of learning difficulties in the two districts.

CQC inspectors spoke to carers and service users and staff involved with the scheme. The inspection team concluded that: "We found the scheme to be well managed and organised. Good systems were in place for record keeping and quality monitoring. Care records and the training offered enabled carers to support people well."

The very positive outcome of this inspection is a tribute to all the staff involved.

SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

The Connecting Cambridgeshire Programme has reached a significant milestone with the award of a contract to BT Group plc by Cambridgeshire County Council. This means that more than 90% of homes and businesses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will be able to receive superfast broadband, with better broadband for very nearly 100% of premises by 2015. Once the contract has been signed in March, the roll-out plans will be agreed and publicised as soon as possible to let people know when their areas are likely to be reached.

The Council would like to thank everyone who supported the Connecting Cambridgeshire campaign to show the huge demand for better broadband.

MESSAGES

Adverse Weather Conditions

The Chairman, on behalf of the Council, would like to thank colleagues across the authority who worked over Christmas and the following weeks to deal with the floods in the County, and colleagues who worked so hard to keep the Network clear and provide services during the recent spell of cold weather.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge

The Chairman is delighted to report that he received a warm response from Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge to his letter congratulating them on their happy news. Their Royal Highnesses have sent both the Chairman and the people of Cambridgeshire their warmest thanks and best wishes.

CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN ACTIVITIES: 12 DECEMBER – 19 FEBRUARY 2013

Chairman's engagements

December

- Mayor of Huntingdon's Civic Carol Service, St. Mary's Church Huntingdon
- Mayor of Wisbech Carol Concert, St Peters Church, Wisbech
- Fenland District Council Chairman's Community Carol Service, Tydd St.Giles Parish Council
- Annual Sixth Form Presentation Evening, Mary Stuart Hall, Hinchingsbrooke School
- St Ives Town Mayor's Civic Service of Lessons and Carols, All Saints' Parish Church, Ramsey
- Funeral of Neville Pritchard, former County Councillor, Cambridge Crematorium
- Soham Village College Carol Concert

January

- Annual Peppercorn Lunch & Tour of Marshall Works
- Citizenship Ceremonies, Shire Hall
- Anglia Ruskin University – Charity Concert
- Huntingdon Community Radio
- Formal opening of the Old Palace by HRH Duke of Gloucester, King's School, Ely
- Holocaust Memorial Service, Huntingdonshire District Council, Huntingdon

February

- Citizenship Ceremony, Shire Hall
- High Sheriff Reception, Swaffham Prior.
- Ely and Soham Dial-A-Ride's Ninth Annual General Meeting – Witchford Village Hall

Vice-Chairman's engagements

December

- Mayor of March's Civic Carol Service – St. Peters Church, High Street, March
- Citizenship Ceremony, Shire Hall

January

- Funeral of former County Councillor Clive Hines, St Andrew's Church,
- Citizenship Ceremonies, Shire Hall

February

- Citizenship Ceremony, Shire Hall, Cambridge

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 19 FEBRUARY 2103
PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

1. Question from Ms Amanda Taylor, to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

In November 2012, the Council advertised Traffic Regulation Orders for parking restrictions in 18 streets in Queen Edith's. The comments cut-off date was 17th December. Two months on, we have heard nothing more. Can the portfolio holder advise what representations were received for each of the TROs, and tell us how he plans to address them, in order to expedite solutions to the continuing parking difficulties in these streets?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

Thank you very much. This question refers to Traffic Regulation Orders for new lengths of waiting restrictions or modifications to hours or days of current restrictions, and I understand that it was agreed with local members that the advertising process for these TROs should run concurrently with a South Area Plan Consultation process. Hence it's important that all these representations are considered together because some of the responses to these TROs were actually written on South Area Plan forms. So we are looking at all the representations and once all that work has been done and processed then we will progress the matter and I should say that I am going to have a meeting with local members on the South Area Plan at which these representations will also be considered in I think two or three weeks' time. So that is my response.

Supplementary question from Ms Amanda Taylor

Thank you very much, I thank Councillor Orgee for his response but I have to say I think it's very disappointing and I wonder if he would agree that the Council is taking an unusual and unacceptably long time to respond? As he says it's not just the Traffic Regulation Orders but we also have a parking plan in Queen Edith's; again, people are looking for responses, they feel that things are in paralysis and they feel abandoned by the Council. I've had countless people and I know the ward Councillors have, asking when are we going to see some results out of the consultation which took place last year? I would like to invite Councillor Orgee perhaps to come to Queen Edith's some time and walk around the ward with me and see just how much parking we have clogging up our streets. So I would like to issue that invitation and I look forward to some action which I believe is long overdue.

Reply from Councillor Tony Orgee, Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure

I'd be very happy to take up that invitation

Cambridgeshire County Council

Liberal Democrat Group

ADDENDUM TO THE 'STATEMENT ON AND AMENDMENT TO THE COUNCIL'S BUSINESS PLAN 2013'

The LGSS Joint Committee met yesterday afternoon and resolved that the 2012/13 accumulated surplus should be retained by LGSS for future investment and support to trading activities.

In view of this decision, the Liberal Democrat group proposes the following changes to the published Amendment to the Business Plan:-

1. Line 24 - Delete - LGSS dividend (£0.4m revenue saving in 2013/14)
2. Line 38 - Reduce - Investment in Enhanced gritting provision in 2013/14 to £100,000, from £200,000
3. Line 26 – Reduce - Re-opening youth clubs provision in 2013/14 to £100,000, from £200,000
4. Line 41 – Reduce – Better bus service and community transport investment in 2013/14 to £1.8m from £2.0m

To summarise, this means that the reduction in the proposed use of additional revenue from LGSS in 2013/14, as a result of the Joint Committee decision, has been matched by reductions in our proposed spending plans for 2013/14 in the sum of £400,000.

As a result, and apart from these alterations, the key reconciliation figures in Fig 4 of the Statement (Cumulative extra revenue spend; Cumulative call/repayment from the ITT Reserve; Net budget position) are unaffected.

Although these proposals, set out above, express reductions in the additional investment proposed in the Liberal Democrat Group amendment, they do still constitute significant enhancements to the existing service provided for within the proposed Business Plan for 2013/14.

**COUNTY COUNCIL – 19th FEBRUARY 2013
ORAL QUESTION TIME**

Unfortunately due to a technical problem at the council meeting (a cable became disconnected at some point during the meeting and the audio from Members' Oral Question Time was not captured), it has not been possible to produce a verbatim record as usual. This Appendix is therefore based on the Democratic Services Officer's notes of this item.

1. Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor T Stone

Bus subsidies are being withdrawn - many this coming September. Because of the lead time required for consultation and implementation of new arrangements, consultation should already have begun. Councillor Orgee has said that until alternative transport solutions are put in place, subsidised services will continue as at present. Can he confirm that the bus companies know this?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

Contracts for a subsidised route are issued for a fixed length of time, so some contracts are due to come to an end this year, some next year and some the year after. However, I can confirm that any particular bus subsidy will remain in place and will not be withdrawn until an alternative transport solution for that area is put in place following local consultations, so contracts can and will be extended. It should be noted that bus operators can decide to terminate contracts or change routes, but they have to give a period of notice.

Supplementary question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee from Councillor Stone

Have bus companies been told that they will continue to get subsidies when the subsidy runs out if there is no alternative in place?

Reply from Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure

Subsidies will remain in place until an alternative transport solution is put in place. I will check with officers to ensure that all bus companies in Cambridgeshire are aware that this is the case.

2. Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty, from Councillor V McGuire

What plans are in place to ensure that schools can continue to deliver extra services?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty

We have been trying to reach the Secretary of State and the Schools Minister in recent months. A lobby group went to see David Laws, and there has been a further meeting and correspondence through the Schools' Forum. We have raised the County Council's profile with the Department, especially with David Laws. He asked us for examples (and Councillor Downes has been involved too); we are getting our points across.

3. Question to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor S Tierney, from Councillor M Williamson

There was a record number of marriages at Cambridge Register Office on 14th February this year, but the number of fraudulent marriages is increasing. I would like to compliment the Register Office staff on detecting the sham marriage scam as reported in the Cambridge Evening News, but can the Cabinet Member give some assurance that we are on top of the issue, and is he confident that there are systems in place to ensure that Cambridge Register Office would minimise the number of such marriages conducted there in the future.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor S Tierney

Thank you for your question, and for giving me notice that you would be asking it.

I'd like to assure you that when it comes to institution of marriage this council's registry services take their role very seriously indeed.

Registration officers receive relevant training from both more experienced officers and staff from the UK Border Agency, this is based on, I kid you not, the "Sham Marriage Code of Practice" 2011. There is a legal obligation placed on all Registration Officers to report any marriage / civil partnership they suspect of being sham, and there is a formal process for doing so. There are a wide variety of reasons why a Registration Officer may feel something should be reported, based on excellent communication amongst the team and on the training received. Our registry service has a good record and reputation in this area and you will have seen news reports of recent successes.

I can confirm that I have full confidence our County Superintendent Registrar and all our registry staff carry out their duties and responsibilities in relation to sham marriages to the full, with all necessary support from the General Register Office.

I should point out that our staff are only responsible for detecting a sham marriage at its outset. If a marriage becomes a sham later – that is not our fault!

Supplementary question to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Councillor S Tierney from Councillor M Williamson

There have been more weddings in Cambridge than elsewhere in the county, are the staff at the smaller offices as well equipped as Cambridge to deal with this?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

I believe so. I will check that there are systems in place to ensure that the register offices outside Cambridge are equipped to minimise the number of sham marriages conducted there.

4. Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee from Councillor I Manning

The 16/17 bus has been on a year's commercial trial following the removal of its subsidy. What has been the result of the trial?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

I am happy to give Councillor Manning a written response.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor I Manning

I have been pressing Stagecoach to find out what they are planning and would welcome Councillor Orgee's input to Stagecoach.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

I was happy to write to Stagecoach about bus service changes that affected Waterbeach and Landbeach. Officers were also in contact with the bus company and services to these two villages were reinstated. I am happy to write to Stagecoach about the 16/17 trial.

5. Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor N Clarke, from Councillor P Reeve

Despite Councillor Nick Clarke, the Conservative Party is still very pro-wind farm. Can the Leader explain what he has done to offset the Conservatives' pro-wind farm policy?

Reply from the Leader of the Council, Councillor N Clarke

Nothing at all, I am focusing on the people of Cambridgeshire; focusing on Adult Social Care and helping others with their appeals to the Secretary of State.

Supplementary Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor N Clarke, from Councillor P Reeve

You have given a clear answer that you have done nothing. Are you willing to do more? This issue is ruining communities.

Reply from the Leader of the Council, Councillor N Clarke

It's a District Council planning issue. I must focus this Council on what we can do here. We've taken immediate action to preserve our farm estate. There will be a loss of local democracy on planning appeals. Any external influences I have is being directed at Adult Social Care.

6. Question to the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor M Curtis, from Councillor G Kenney

There have been glitches in the way that the new home care contract has been implemented. How is Councillor Curtis making sure that there are enough care workers and few missed calls?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor M Curtis

Recruitment and retention problems and missed calls are nothing new, particularly in certain areas because of the new contracts. We are having active conversations with officers where we are seeing underperformance, and will call providers to account.

We have had an indication of success for a bid to the NHS/care workforce, with £670,000 indicative funding for a business case for a hundred social care apprentices.

7. Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty, from Councillor S Hoy

Would the Cabinet Member deplore Councillor Downes's remark about schools converting to academies being stupid?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty

I am disappointed and hadn't picked up on the remark.

8. Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor S van de Ven

Meldreth has a particularly dangerous junction where it is felt there is an accident waiting to happen. The Parish Council understands that funds are tight and that local communities are increasingly being asked to pay for local highways work. Nevertheless, it does need advice as to what type of scheme might best address the traffic dynamic in questions. Having put the question to the County Council, the answer has come back that the County Council no longer has the resources to provide advice to parish councils. How can parish councils proceed?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

I will take this back to officers, discuss it with them and get back to you on how accident cluster spots are identified. I will check up on this issue. Advice is available and council officers will design schemes that are approved under the Minor Highways Improvement Schemes.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor S van de Ven

Not all of these dangerous areas will get onto the County Council list, what are parish councils supposed to do?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

I will take this back to officers but my understanding is that officers can suggest appropriate ways forward but that detailed designs would have to be drawn up by others.

9. Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor S Whitebread

I welcome the improvements to the Catholic Church junction in Cambridge. Councillors Harrison, Shepherd and I were invited to a briefing on the consultation. I was told that it could not be public and that I could not invite City Councillors.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

The briefing was to inform county councillors representing city divisions about the consultation responses before all the information was publicly available. This matter will come to Cabinet in March and the agenda papers will be available a week in advance of that meeting.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor S Whitebread

I would ask the Cabinet Member to reconsider. We have a lot of expertise about Cambridge traffic amongst the City Councillors; it would be of benefit to the end result to involve the City.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

This is a major scheme and the City Council is one of the statutory consultees, so the City Council is directly involved and city councillors have had an opportunity to submit their views.

10. Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty, from Councillor L Nethsingha

A letter was sent to Instrumental Music Teachers stating that they must accept a significant pay cut at the end of February or be dismissed at the end of April. Many individuals will not be able to afford to accept this cut. Dismissing staff at the beginning of the summer term shows disrespect to staff and pupils.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty

We have had four months of consultation with many meetings postponed – we are not able to retain Cambridgeshire Music and lose £26,000 per month.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty, from Councillor L Nethsingha

I am asking that pupils who are learning with music teachers be allowed to continue to the end of the school year, and that the Cabinet Member reconsiders.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty

I am not changing my mind.

11. Question to the Leader of the Council, Councillor N Clarke, from Councillor A Pellew

I am asking this question of Councillor Clarke so that he can delegate the answer. As you will have seen from the report from Resources and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee several members including myself expressed reservations about some of the IT projects that this Council is involved in - specifically Shape My Place and the MyBusTrip mobile application.

However my question relates to the County Council's investment in upgrading the Highways Fault Reporting System, which is the publicly-funded equivalent of the highly successful FixMyStreet system. FixMyStreet, in case you are not aware, is developed and run by the MySociety charity and is currently in use by other local authorities, for example the London Boroughs of Barnet and Bromley – both of which are Conservative-controlled.

Can I ask how much money is being spent on maintaining our own system? And what was the cost of the past upgrade project and are there any other upgrade projects in the pipeline?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor M McGuire, on behalf of the Leader of the Council

I will reply in writing, as there was no notice of this question.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor A Pellew

Given the fact that FixMyStreet is now offering a tailored version of their website for Councils including integration with back-office systems, which I know has been an obstacle previously. Can I ask that you work with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny chair to ensure that the option of working with the MySociety charity is considered before the next round of investment in the Council's custom service is approved.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor M McGuire

This will be something for discussion.

12. Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor P Downes

Regarding my earlier comment, I am happy to explain my concerns in detail to Councillor Hoy.

My question concerns the implementation of the street lighting scheme in small villages and whether operators are getting proper permission to dig trenches. Mechanical diggers are digging very close to trees that have Tree Preservation Orders on them, and are driving through tree roots. This has been brought to my attention by the District Council's Tree Preservation Officer. Could the Cabinet Member use his good offices to ensure that the matter is taken up with Balfour Beatty and that the same problem doesn't happen elsewhere.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

Tom Blackburne-Maze, the senior officer who deals with street lighting, is aware of this issue and is dealing with it.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor P Downes

If Tom Blackburne-Maze develops a protocol with Balfour Beatty, it would be worth passing it on to members for information for their parish councils.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

I am happy to do that. Members should contact the Street Lighting PFI Team in the first instance if urgent action is needed in any particular case.

13. Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor S Gymer

My question concerns potholes. Some have been filled and are coming apart again. Could you please look at doing a large patch or something if there are three failures?

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

This can be a difficult situation. If a pothole has been reported, we're liable if something happens, so we must act quickly. But if the temperature is too low, we cannot fix the pothole permanently, so we make a temporary repair and will go back to make a permanent repair in due course – we have to do something, we cannot leave a pothole until the weather is such (the temperature is high enough) that we can make a permanent repair. So sometimes we have to make a repair that we know is temporary.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee, from Councillor S Gymer

I am not sure that the permanent repair is always being followed up. Please talk to officers about having to fix it properly if two or three temporary repairs have been made.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

It looks bad when a temporary repair only lasts a short while, but the temperature needs to be above 6 or 7 degrees centigrade for a permanent repair to be possible. We are talking to officers all the time about alternative approaches and ways forward.

14. Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty, from Councillor J Palmer

In the recent bad weather, there were school closures although no roads were blocked from the middle of the night onwards. The closures seemed random, with one school open and another shut, leading to an unworkable situation. I ask the

Cabinet Member to send an email to every head teacher in Cambridgeshire asking them that the default position should be for schools to stay open at all times.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty

The decision rests with the headteacher, who will usually look at the conditions at about 7am and make a decision.

Supplementary Question to the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty, from Councillor J Palmer

This Council has a moral obligation to keep schools open. If the weather is not good enough for all children to get in, those children who can do so get in, and if it snows their parents can decide.

Reply from the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor D Harty

I'm happy to write to school and see what reaction we get.

15. Question to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor M McGuire, in the absence of the Leader, Councillor N Clarke, from Councillor D Jenkins

The Council has announced plans to develop for housing the county farm land at Buxhall Farm north of Histon. What does the Leader know about these plans?

Reply from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor M McGuire

Thank you for the advance notice, but you gave it to the wrong person. I'm sure that the Leader will write with an answer.

Supplementary Question to the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor D Jenkins

The schools in Histon and Impington are full, the B1049 through the village is heavily congested at peak times, the village's drainage and sewage systems have difficulty coping with current demand, there's limited spare capacity in the doctors' surgery and there's a shortage of open space in the village.

Can the Leader explain how he will get the various cabinet members involved to work together to address these issues and to ensure that adequate and appropriate funding is available to ensure that any development at the Farm does not have an adverse effect on the community at large?

Reply from the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor M McGuire

Thank you for the data.

COUNTY COUNCIL – 19 FEBRUARY 2013

WRITTEN QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9.2

Question from Councillor G Heathcock to the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor M Curtis

In the light of continuing difficulties surrounding Care Homes in the County - especially two in the Littleport area over recent weeks, can I ask the Cabinet Member for Adult Services whether the County Safeguarding team were aware of failings in the quality of care being delivered at these homes, what steps they were taking in conjunction with the Care Quality Commission to seek improvements and in what timescales, how many clients within these homes were being paid for by the County Council and what arrangements are in hand currently to ensure that particularly in the case of "alleged physical abuse" clients are either being properly protected or moved to alternative care facilities.

Can he give the Council an assurance - that such resources that are needed to properly investigate and where necessary prosecute are available to the Adult Services directorate.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor M Curtis

There are 6 care homes across the county that are currently not meeting the standards specified in the County Council's contracts or the standards of care described in the Care Quality Commission's Essential Standards of Quality and Safety. Two of these homes are located in the Littleport area of the county. There are currently 12 residents funded by the County Council in one of the Littleport homes and 11 funded in the other home.

Both of these homes have had a suspension of new placements put in place by the Adult Social Care Contracts Team who continue to monitor their progress against agreed Action Plans.

The Council's Safeguarding Team have held both Professionals meetings (involving staff from health, social care, the Police and the Mental Health Trust) and Safeguarding Strategy Meetings which involved representatives from each home. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has been routinely invited of all of these meetings and are sent minutes if they are unable to attend.

The County Council's Workforce Development Team are working closely with both homes and have provided a number of training courses for staff employed at each home. Additional training forms part of a detailed action plan developed to take account of any non-compliance identified by officers involved in the monitoring of services provided. The action plan also takes into account issues raised by the Contracts Team during recent inspection visits, recommendations made by Safeguarding Strategy Meetings and any current or new enforcement action put in place by the CQC. This ensures that agencies have a co-ordinated approach to improvement and that residents are safe.

Staff from the Contracts Team, Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS), Continuing Health Care, Safeguarding and other relevant professionals are continuing to visit both homes to ensure that residents are safe and the improvement action identified in the Action Plans are having the desired effect on professional practice and the quality of service provided to residents. These visits will continue for as long as is necessary. People who pay for their own care along with other local authorities who fund residents at both homes have been informed of the issues identified.

Any prosecutions are managed by the Police through the Safeguarding process. Regulatory action is the responsibility of the CQC. The County Council works with both the Police and CQC to support them in any action they choose to take in accordance with their responsibilities. The County Council is responsible for enforcing its contract and takes a robust approach to supporting organisations to improve whilst balancing that against the sanctions available through the contract.

Both homes have been given a challenging but realistic timeframe to improve. Timescales identified in the Action Plan are based on the risks identified and the need to ensure that new procedures, training, recording and other systems are given time to embed themselves in the home so that they have a positive affect on residents.

I am committed to ensuring that residents of residential and nursing homes in Cambridgeshire receive a good service that is safe and compliant with the standards required by the Care Quality Commission. Where this is not the case, the County Council will work with health colleagues and the Care Quality Commission to drive up standards and remedy any failings identified in homes.

Question from Councillor S van de Ven to the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

What lessons learned from street lighting work carried out so far does the council intend to apply to remaining work in the initial implementation phase of the PFI contract?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Community Infrastructure, Councillor T Orgee

The consultation process has not been to the standard we required or expected in a number of communities. The Leader and I have met with the Managing Director of our service provider to express our concerns and gain assurance that improvements are made. These improvements will be presented to members at the member seminar on 22nd March before being taken to “In your patch” meetings.

We have taken on board the feedback received from communities affected by the early phases of the Street Lighting PFI works and revised our streetlighting policy to reduce its impact upon residents.

The need to remove 10% of the County’s street lights for financial and environmental impact savings is a sensitive and emotive issue. Whilst the improved light produced from the new and upgraded columns will compensate for those that have been removed, this has given rise to the perception of “dark patches” in some lengths of residential roads. The previous policy was too prescriptive for identifying permanent street light removals.

The revised policy allows for greater flexibility in that the selection criteria will now apply to all columns within a given broad area, for example, a whole village. This will now provide a significantly larger selection of columns for street lighting designers to consider for permanent removal and allow the possible implications of these removals, or alternatives, to be given greater consideration.

The revised policy is also able to be retrospectively considered in areas where it has been justified that lighting levels have substantially reduced following column removals under the previous policy.

The policy also allows communities to adopt any existing streetlights that might otherwise be removed, or any new columns by making a request to the Authority.

Question from Councillor S van de Ven to the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor I Bates

When and how does the Cambridgeshire Future Transport team propose to meet with residents potentially affected by the removal of subsidy for the 31 bus and to scope out an as good or better replacement scheme? The Parish Briefing Pack confirming that a process will take place was formally sent out on January 22nd, but there has been no subsequent information or guidance for local people and elected representatives, and this is particularly concerning for students and work commuters who rely on the 31 bus and have no other means of public transport at their disposal.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor I Bates

I would like to thank Cllr Van De Ven for this question regarding Cambridgeshire Future Transport.

I have checked with the CFT team and they will shortly be sending out an invite to County and District members as well as Parish Councils within the Service 31 catchment area to attend a briefing session. The purpose of this session will be to give an overview of the CFT process and to ask for their help in the engagement programme. Community Engagement officers will also shortly begin to talk to local residents and will be riding on the service 31 to talk to users. The CFT team would welcome the help of the local member in ensuring that we engage with the right members of their community to both establish residents transport needs and to look at how these needs can be met. A commitment has been given that no services will be withdrawn unless a suitable alternative is in place.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2012/13

*Changes shown in bold type

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE (11)**

Cllr F Brown [Chairman]	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr Sir P Brown [Vice-Chairman]	C	Cllr K Bourke	LD
Cllr R Farrer	CNA	Cllr J Clark	C
Cllr N Guyatt	C	Cllr C Hutton	C
Cllr G Harper	C	Cllr S King	C
Cllr D Jenkins	LD	Cllr A Pellew	LD
Cllr L Nethsingha	LD	Cllr P Read	C
Cllr J Powley	C	Cllr C Shepherd	LD
Cllr T Sadiq	L		
Cllr M Smith	C		
Cllr M Williamson	LD		

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (12)

	CNA	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Gymer	LD	Cllr J Clark	C
Cllr S Johnstone	C	Cllr S Criswell	C
Cllr G Kenney	C	Cllr P Downes	LD
Cllr V Lucas [Chairman]	C	Cllr G Harper	C
Cllr I Manning	LD	Cllr C Hutton	C
Cllr V McGuire [Vice-Chairman]	C	Cllr L Nethsingha	LD
Cllr J Palmer	C	Cllr F Whelan	LD
Cllr M Smith	C	Cllr P Reeve	UKIP
Cllr R West	C		
Cllr G Wilson	LD		
Cllr L Wilson	UKIP		

ADULTS WELLBEING AND HEALTH (12)

Cllr S Austen	LD	Substitutes:	
Cllr J Batchelor	LD	Cllr B Brooks-Gordon	LD
Cllr N Guyatt	C	Cllr G Heathcock	LD
Cllr C Hutton	C	Cllr S Hoy	C
Cllr G Kenney [Vice-Chairman]	C	Cllr A Melton	C
Cllr V McGuire	C	Cllr J Palmer	C
Cllr P Reeve	UKIP	Cllr P Read	C
Cllr K Reynolds [Chairman]	C	Cllr C Shepherd	LD
Cllr P Sales	L	Cllr L Wilson	UKIP
Cllr S Sedgwick-Jell	G		
Cllr F Whelan	LD		
Cllr F Yeulett	C		

ENTERPRISE, GROWTH AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE (12)

Cllr N Bell	LD	Substitutes:	
Cllr R Butcher [Chairman]	C	Cllr B Brooks-Gordon	LD
Cllr J Clark	C	Cllr F Brown	C
Cllr N Harrison	I	Cllr J Dutton	C
Cllr B Hunt	C	Cllr S Hoy	C
Cllr D Jenkins	LD	Cllr S Kindersley	LD
Cllr L Kadic	C	Cllr M Smith	C
Cllr G Kenney	C	Cllr K Wilkins	LD
Cllr V McGuire	C	Cllr G Wilson	LD
Cllr P Read [Vice-Chairman]	C		
Cllr S van de Ven	LD		
Cllr S Whitebread	LD		

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES (12)

Cllr B Brooks-Gordon	LD	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Criswell	C	Cllr J Batchelor	LD
Cllr S Hoy [Vice-Chairman]	C	Cllr Sir P Brown	C
Cllr L Kadic	C	Cllr J Dutton	C
Cllr S King	C	Cllr G Harper	C
Cllr A Pellew	LD	Cllr L Nethsingha	LD
Cllr P Reeve	UKIP	Cllr R Pegram	C
Cllr J E Reynolds	C	Cllr P Sales	L
Cllr T Sadiq	L	Cllr T Stone	LD
Cllr M Smith	C	Cllr S van de Ven	LD
Cllr R West [Chairman]	C	Cllr L Wilson	UKIP
Cllr K Wilkins	LD		

COMMITTEES

PLANNING COMMITTEE (7)

Cllr R Butcher	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Kindersley	LD	Cllr B Brooks-Gordon	LD
Cllr P Read [Chairman]	C	Cllr F Brown	C
Cllr J Reynolds [Vice-Chairman]	C	Cllr J Clark	C
Cllr M Smith	C	Cllr B Hunt	C
Cllr T Stone	LD	Cllr L Kadic	C
Cllr M Williamson	LD	Cllr L Nethsingha	LD
		Cllr K Wilkins	LD

CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE (9)

Cllr C Carter	L	Substitutes:	
Cllr K Churchill	CNA	Cllr G Kenney	C
Cllr G Harper	C	Cllr P Sales	L
Cllr V Lucas	C	Cllr C Shepherd	LD
Cllr M McGuire	C	Cllr F Yeulett	C
Cllr P Read	C		
Cllr K Reynolds	C		
Cllr S van de Ven	LD		
Cllr M Williamson	LD		

APPOINTMENTS & REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (7)

Non-Cabinet nominee	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Count [Chairman]	C	N/A	
Cabinet Nominee [usually relevant Portfolio Holder]	C		
Cabinet Nominee or non-Cabinet nominee	C		
Liberal Democrat Group Leader or Nominee	LD		
Relevant Liberal Democrat Spokesman	LD		
Lib Dem Nominee	LD		

AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (7)

Cllr S Count	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr N Guyatt [Vice-Chairman]	C	Cllr K Bourke	LD
Cllr J Clark	C	Cllr D Jenkins	LD
Cllr J Reynolds	C	Cllr V Lucas	C
Cllr P Sales	L	Cllr A Melton	C
Cllr C Shepherd	LD	Cllr L Nethsingha	LD
Cllr T Stone [Chairman]	LD	Cllr A G Orgee	C
		Cllr T Sadiq	L
		Cllr M Williamson	LD

SERVICE APPEALS COMMITTEE (pool of members)

Cllr S Austen	LD	Cllr L Nethsingha	LD
Cllr F Brown	C	Cllr J Reynolds	C
Cllr S Criswell	C	Cllr K Reynolds	C
Cllr P Downes	LD	Cllr C Shepherd	LD
Cllr G Heathcock	LD	Cllr J Tuck	C
Cllr B Hunt	C	Cllr van de Ven	LD
Cllr G Kenney	C	Cllr R West	C
Cllr S King	C	Cllr M Williamson	LD
Cllr V McGuire	C	Cllr F Whelan	LD

STAFF APPEALS COMMITTEE (pool of members)

Cllr J Batchelor	LD	Cllr V McGuire	C
Cllr N Bell	LD	Cllr L Nethsingha	LD
Cllr S Criswell	C	Cllr L Oliver	C
Vacancy	C	Cllr A Pellew	LD
Cllr G Harper	C	Cllr J Reynolds	C
Cllr S Hoy	C	Cllr C Shepherd	LD
Cllr B Hunt	C	Cllr M Smith	C
Cllr C Hutton	C	Cllr J Tuck	C
Cllr S Johnstone	C	Cllr R West	C
Cllr G Kenney	C	Cllr F Whelan	LD
Cllr S King	C		

PENSION FUND BOARD (PENSIONS COMMITTEE) (6)

Cllr J Batchelor	LD	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Count [Chairman]	C	Cllr M McGuire	C
Cllr N Guyatt	C	Cllr P Downes	LD
Cllr V Lucas	C		
Cllr L Nethsingha	LD		
Cllr J Reynolds	C		

JOINT COMMITTEE ON APPOINTMENTS TO THE POLICE AUTHORITY (3)

Cllr M McGuire	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr A Melton	C	N/A	
Cllr F Whelan	LD		

JOINT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE FOR CAMBRIDGE FRINGES (4)

Cllr G Kenney	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr T Orgee	C	Cllr B Brooks-Gordon	LD
Cllr J Reynolds	C	Cllr R Pegram	C
Cllr C Shepherd	LD		

JOINT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE FOR NORTHSTOWE (4)

Cllr D Jenkins	LD	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Johnstone	C	Cllr S Gymer	LD
Cllr P Read	C		
Cllr J Reynolds	C		

JOINT COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT SHARED SERVICES (3)

Cllr S Count	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr T Orgee	C	Cllr R Butcher	C
Cllr L Nethsingha	LD	Cllr M Curtis	C
		Cllr D Jenkins	LD