

## **COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES**

**Date:** Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2002

**Time:** 10.30 a.m. – 3.45 p.m.

**Place:** Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillor P W Silby (Chairman)

Councillors: P D Bailey, 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 M Carter, M Y Chapple, J E Coston, P J Downes, R Driver, J A P Eddy, M Farrar, H J Fitch, S A Giles, J L Gluza, P D Gooden, A Hansard, B Hardy, G F Harper, V A Hearne-Casapieri, W G M Hensley, J L Huppert, S F Johnstone, J D Jones, A C Kent, I C Kidman, S J Kime, M L Leeke, V H Lucas, A R Mair, L W McGuire, A K Melton, E Meyland-Smith, S B Normington, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, A G Orgee, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P A E Read, J E Reynolds, C E Shaw, 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 G J Heathcock, S J E King and R B Martlew

### **99. MINUTES: 1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2002**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2002 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **100. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Director of Social Services**

Liz Railton, the Director of Social Services, would be leaving the Council in early January to take up the post of Deputy Chief Executive (Learning and Social Care) at Essex County Council. The Chairman led members in thanking Mrs Railton for her outstanding achievement during her time with Cambridgeshire and in wishing her well for the future.

The Council's Appointments Committee was in the process of appointing a new Director of Social Services.

#### **Head of Customer Contact**

Pat Harding had recently been appointed to the newly created post of Head of Customer Contact and would be joining the Council in late February.

#### **Addenbrooke's NHS Trust Board**

The Chairman congratulated Councillor S F Johnstone on her recent appointment as a Non-Executive Director of the Addenbrooke's NHS Trust Board.

## Lord Lieutenant

The Chairman reported that she had received a letter from James Crowden, the former Lord Lieutenant, thanking all members and officers of the Council for their support over the past ten years.

## Comprehensive Performance Assessment

The Audit Commission had announced the results of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment the previous week. Cambridgeshire had been classified as 'good', only one point short of 'excellent'. The Chairman congratulated all those involved on this achievement.

## Awards and recognitions

The Chairman announced that the Council had recently received a number of awards and recognitions, including:

- Short-listing as a Beacon Council for the theme of promoting social inclusion through the application of information technology
- An award for outstanding achievement in procurement from the Society of Procurement Officers
- Assessment of the Council's Capital Strategy and Corporate Asset Management Plan by the Government Office for the East of England as 'good', the highest possible score, for the second year running
- Re-awarding of Chartermarks for the County Farms and Park and Ride services
- Listing as a runner-up in the Bus Industry marketing awards for the marketing of the new Citi bus services in Cambridge. Alex Smith, one of the Park and Ride Co-ordinators at the Babraham site, had also been listed as a runner up in the employee of the year award
- Certificates of commendation from the County Surveyors' Society for two initiatives in the Environment and Transport Information Team
- Receipt of funding from the European Union for exploring practical solutions to flooding problems within the region
- The national Growing Centre award for promotion of initiatives that helped teaching and learning through farming and growing.
- The Partners in Excellence award for the Care and Education Partnership's work with Norfolk on the joint Sure Start programme.

The Chairman led members in congratulating all those involved on these achievements, which reflected the excellent work taking place across many areas of Council activity.

## **101. REPORT OF THE CABINET**

### **(a) Cabinet meetings of 29<sup>th</sup> October and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2002**

It was moved by Councillor J K Walters that the report of the meetings of the Cabinet on 29<sup>th</sup> October and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2002 be received.

## Key decisions for information

### 1) Developments in Community Education

*Councillor S V Brinton declared a prejudicial interest in this item under paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct because she was the Chairman of the Cambridgeshire Learning and Skills Council. She withdrew from the Council Chamber whilst the item was discussed.*

Councillor T J Bear and other members welcomed the review of Community Education and urged the Council to use it as an opportunity to boost the status of the service and to put more investment into it. Members emphasised the links between adult education and local prosperity, and between youth services and health improvement and reductions in crime.

### 2) Special Educational Needs – Revised Policy

### 3) Agreement to Secure Park and Ride Facilities for John Lewis Partnership

## Other decisions/matters for information

### 4) Regional Planning Guidance Options Consultation and South East Regional Airport Study Consultation

*Councillor S J Kime declared a personal interest in this item under paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct as the owner of a freight-boarding company specialising in air cargo.*

At the beginning of this item, the Chairman reported that a petition had been received containing 223 signatures. It objected to the Government's proposals for an airport at Alconbury airbase on the ground that such a development would be very detrimental to the area. Mark Custerton attended the meeting and spoke in support of the petition and answered members' questions.

A number of members spoke on this item:

- Councillor T J Bear commented on the impact that the development of four runways at Stansted would have on the south of the County. This would include both noise pollution and increased housing pressures.
- Councillors P J Downes and I C Bates emphasised local residents' concern at the impact that development of an airport at Alconbury would have, including increased pressure on housing and transport networks. Some Parish Councils had made considerable efforts to consult local residents and the majority of respondents were opposed to any such development. Huntingdonshire District Council had also responded to Government expressing concern that the environmental disadvantages of airport development at Alconbury would outweigh the envisaged economic benefits to the area.
- Councillor R Wilkinson expressed particular concern at the disturbance that would be caused by night flying from Alconbury. He endorsed the criteria proposed by the Council for evaluating development options, but emphasised that the Council would not be the final decision-maker.

- Councillor A K Melton asked members to recognise the opportunities for investment, particularly in the Fenland area, that development at Alconbury and Stansted would bring. He emphasised the opportunity provided by the emerging Regional Planning Guidance Note (RPG) 14 to bring forward infrastructure development in Fenland.
- Councillor S F Johnstone commented on the need for a national, strategic overview of airport provision, based on a 'plan, monitor and manage' approach.
- Councillor J E Reynolds noted that it would be essential to co-ordinate RPG 14 with the findings of the airport studies. He also commented that the role of Gatwick should be considered further as part of the regional development plan for airports.

5) Corporate Improvement Agenda (including Draft Best Value Review Programme)

Councillor A J Bowen led members in thanking the Chief Executive for his personal contribution to the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment outcome.

6) Integrated Discharge Planning at Addenbrooke's Hospital

*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 the Addenbrooke's NHS Trust Board.*

7) IEG2 – Implementing Electronic Government

8) Budget Monitoring

[With regard to the Social Services budget, Councillor J L Huppert noted that further remedial action might be necessary later in the year and asked what this might be and how it might affect services. The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, agreed to send him a written response.](#)

**(b) Cabinet meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> December 2002**

It was moved by Councillor J K Walters that the report of the meeting of the Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2002 be received.

Key decisions for information

1) Review of Provision for Children and Young People with Emotional and/or Behavioural Difficulties

Councillor M Farrar commended the work of the Manor School, Wilburton, which he had visited as part of Inclusion Week. He expressed hope that the achievements of its staff would be sustained when the school was amalgamated with Littleton House School, Girton. The Cabinet Member for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Councillor R Wilkinson, endorsed these comments and noted that a report would be brought to Cabinet in due course on the siting of the amalgamated school.

2) Accident Remedies and Traffic Management Programme – Medium-Sized Schemes

Councillor P A E Read thanked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, for the remedial measures agreed for Witcham Toll, between Sutton and Haddenham. He also commented that, in his view, a roundabout would be the only long-term solution to the problems at this site.

Other decisions/matters for information

3) Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2003/04

Agenda item 3(c), the report of the Chief Executive on the implications of the Revenue Support Grant 2003/04 announcement, was considered in conjunction with this item. Appended to the report was a statement from the Leader of the Council on budget guidelines and the Council Tax increase for the coming year.

A number of members spoke on this item, making the following points:

- [Councillor P J Downes asked about the 4% addition to Formula Standard Spend \(FSS\) due to the Area Cost Adjustment \(ACA\). The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, agreed to send him a written response.](#) Councillor Downes also noted that the Government was encouraging local authorities to set three-year budgets, to promote greater financial stability, and asked the Leader how far this had been taken into account in preparing the current options.
- Councillor S V Brinton noted that this Council would not receive £10 million of its settlement in 2003/04, due to the ceiling imposed by Government. She suggested that this and other local authorities affected by the ceiling should lobby Government to have it lifted. Councillor Brinton also asked the Leader of the Council formally to thank all of those partners who had been involved in lobbying for Cambridgeshire to receive the ACA, especially schools. She commented that it should be the Council's duty to ensure that the ACA gains were passed on to partners, so that they too received the benefits.
- Councillors S V Brinton and J M Tuck asked for clarification to be provided as soon as possible as to whether there was any scope under options 1 or 2, as set out in the Chief Executive's report, to avoid library closures. Councillor Tuck emphasised the importance of equity of service, noting that many parts of Fenland had never received the service that some areas might now lose.
- A number of members, including Councillors J D Jones, J L Gluza and I C Kidman, welcomed the settlement as the most favourable that the Council had received for many years, being based on a realistic assessment of local needs and costs and placing the Council in a proper financial relationship with neighbouring authorities. They urged the Council to set a budget in recognition of this, noting that if it did not, it was likely that its settlement would be reduced when the Formula Standard Spend (FSS) was reviewed in three years' time.
- Councillor I C Bates urged the Leader urgently to seek clarification on how and when the ceiling would be lifted, as this would be central to the Council's future financial planning.

- Councillors A J Bowen and M L Leeke spoke of the opportunity now presented to the Council to consider not which services should be cut, but which should be extended. They opposed proposed cuts to management costs, commenting that inefficiencies could be the result of an inadequate management strategy and that rigorous budgetary control by management would continue to be essential.
- Councillor Shaw noted that this year's transport capital settlement was 16% higher than that received the previous year, in recognition of the Council's commitment to meeting the Government's targets on transport and waste.
- Responding to Councillor Shaw, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor Johnstone, agreed that the transport capital settlement was good but noted that inflationary costs in Environment and Transport continued to be higher than in other areas.
- Responding to the other speakers, Councillor J K Walters, the Leader of the Council, commented that it would be a good settlement, when the Council received it all. However, the imposition of the ceiling meant that the Council would not feel the full benefit of the settlement for some time: the £10 million lost in the present year equated to 7% on the Council tax. Furthermore, although the Government had indicated that the methodology would be frozen for three years, it was possible that there could be variations within this. He noted that the Council's MTSP process already enabled financial planning to look ahead over a three-year period. He advised that he had already thanked partners who had helped to campaign for inclusion in the ACA on the radio and in the papers.

4) Adoption and Permanence Annual Report 2001/02

5) Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Review of the School Syllabus

Councillors A G Orgee and A J Bowen commended SACRE members on their constructive approach to revisions to the syllabus. It was noted that the new version had been amended stylistically to provide additional assistance to teachers who were not religious education specialists.

6) Work Place Parking Levy

7) Report from the Local Government Ombudsman

8) The Queen's Speech

9) Social Services Revenue Budget Position

Councillor S V Brinton expressed concern at the level of detail in the information contained in the Council papers and in the papers for the meeting of Cabinet on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2002. She commented that the Cabinet Member for Social Services had given assurances that there would be no cuts to Social Services, but that the virement of £400,000 from the Learning Disability Partnership would effectively have this result, as there would be a reduction in the ability to provide respite facilities. Expenditure on community equipment would also be reduced at a time when there were significant numbers of people waiting for assistance. She further noted that it now appeared that the end of year overspend

would be £1.6 million, but the Director of Social Services was not confirming this figure, saying that further pressures during the year could make further action necessary. Councillor Brinton asked for information to be made public to make these points clear.

- 10) Social Services Inspectorate Autumn Position Statement
- 11) 2002/03 Performance Indicator Report

[Councillor P J Downes sought clarification from the Lead Member for Lifelong Learning, Councillor V H Lucas, of the statement that the performance indicators for Libraries were 'on track'. Councillor Lucas agreed to respond in writing.](#) Councillor C M Ballard noted that in its self-assessment for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the Council had identified preventative services for older people as a priority for action. He expressed concern that performance indicators continued to show under-performance in this area.

Responding to Councillor Ballard, the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, reported that the Council was likely to meet this year's target for addressing delayed discharges at Addenbrooke's, although it was slightly behind on that for Hinchingsbrooke. The Assistant Director (Children) in Social Services was working with colleagues in Education to address targets set jointly for both services.

- 12) Cabinet Outline Agenda – 7<sup>th</sup> January 2003

Councillor J E Coston expressed concern that Waterbeach Library was one of those shortlisted for possible closure. She reported that hundreds of local people had already signed a petition opposing this and commented that in her view, usage would decline if a static service were replaced with a mobile one. Councillor Coston also read out a letter she had received from the Carnegie Trust, who had asked to be kept informed of the outcomes of the review.

Councillor S V Brinton asked for clarification about the most appropriate time for members of the public to make representations to the Cabinet.

Responding to Councillor Coston, the Lead Member for Lifelong Learning, Councillor V H Lucas, reported that meetings were being held in every community where it was possible that a library would be closed. He commented that he also had received a letter from the Carnegie Trust and would be replying.

Responding to Councillor Brinton, Councillor Lucas explained that the Cabinet would be making its initial decisions on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2003 and that all communities were welcome to submit petitions at that stage. They might wish to submit further petitions on alternative provision to the subsequent meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2003. Councillor Lucas stated that a note had been produced explaining the process.

## **102. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – SCRUTINY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

*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 the Addenbrooke's NHS Trust Board.*

Amendments to the Council's Constitution to introduce arrangements for health and social care scrutiny were proposed by Councillor P W Silby and seconded by Councillor R Driver.

Councillor C M Ballard welcomed the proposed arrangements, which would increase democratic input into the provision of health services and would help to promote the integration of health and social care. He also recognised the value of the Area Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panels in providing a focus for local involvement in health issues. However, he expressed some concern at the demands that would be placed on members' time, and at how County-wide and regional health issues should most appropriately be scrutinised. He also expressed concern that the Government had provided no additional funding for health and social care scrutiny, thereby limiting the officer resource available.

Councillor I C Bates sought and received confirmation that the Papworth Hospital NHS Trust had been involved in the development of the arrangements.

It was resolved:

- i) That the amendments to the Council's Constitution set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to these minutes be approved for phased implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2003, effecting:
  - The dissolution of the Social Services Scrutiny Committee
  - The creation of a Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee
  - The creation of a Social Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee
  - The creation of four Area Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panels, based upon the four Primary Care Trusts within Cambridgeshire:
    - Cambridge City
    - East Cambridgeshire and Fenland
    - Huntingdonshire
    - South Cambridgeshire
- ii) To appoint members to the Area Health and Social Care Scrutiny Panels as set out in Appendix 3 to these minutes.

[Voting pattern: unanimous]

### **103. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – COUNCIL DEBATES AND WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

It was proposed by Councillor P W Silby, seconded by Councillor R Driver and resolved that the following amendments to the Council's Constitution be approved:

- i) That the following paragraph be added to Council Procedure Rule 12.5 [page 83 of the Constitution]:
  - '(g) to speak in a personal capacity as an ordinary member where the member has already spoken in moving a Scrutiny Committee



report.'

- ii) That paragraph 4.1 of Annex B to the Council Procedure Rules [page 89c of the Constitution] be amended to read:

'4.1 A response to a written question shall take the form of a written reply from the member concerned which shall be made available to members of Council and to the public by 9.00 am on the day of the meeting.'

[Voting pattern: unanimous]

#### **104. WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

Two written questions had been submitted under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules, to which written responses were tabled:

- Councillor S V Brinton asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, to provide information on the audited level of balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 1993 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 1997; the amount by which the balances of the Council had fallen between 31<sup>st</sup> March 1989 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 1993; the amount by which balances had fallen since 1<sup>st</sup> May 1997; and the estimate for the balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003.
- Councillor C M Ballard asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, what measures were being taken to protect school children crossing Perne Road in Cambridge from dangers caused by vehicles parked near the pedestrian crossing by the Radegund Road/Birdwood Road roundabout.

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

#### **105. ORAL QUESTIONS**

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

- Councillor J Broadway asked the Lead Member for Environment, Councillor L J Oliver, to review gardening contracts for Council premises to ensure that sustainable materials such as coir were used instead of Irish peat moss.
- Following on from the response to her written question, Councillor S V Brinton asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, to write to the Cambridge Evening News correcting statements he had included in his letter to the newspaper dated 20<sup>th</sup> November 2002.
- Councillor S A Giles asked the Cabinet Member for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Councillor R Wilkinson, about the provision of a community room in the new building at Bushmead Junior School, Eaton Socon.

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

#### **106. MOTION**

*Councillor V H Lucas declared a prejudicial interest in this item under paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct by reason of having a relative engaged in the Grand Arcade scheme, of which the refurbishment of Cambridge Central Library was a part. He withdrew from the Council Chamber whilst the item was discussed.*

The following motion was proposed by Councillor M L Leeke and seconded by Councillor T J Bear in accordance with Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules:

‘This Council requests that the Cabinet consider the installation of a sprinkler system as part of the forthcoming refurbishment of Cambridge Central Library.

The Cabinet is also requested to consider a policy for installing similar fire protection measures in all major refurbishment and new build projects, after taking advice from the Chief Fire Officer.’

Councillor L W McGuire proposed the following amendment to the motion, which was seconded by Councillor J A P Eddy:

‘This Council requests that the Cabinet give further consideration to the practicalities and cost benefits that might arise from the installation of a sprinkler system as part of the forthcoming refurbishment of Cambridge Central Library.

The Cabinet is also requested to consider reviewing at reasonably regular intervals its policy for installing fire protection measures that include sprinkler systems in all major refurbishment and new build projects. In carrying out its reviews, the Cabinet should take into consideration trends in the incidence of fire in public buildings and seek advice from the Chief Fire Officer and the National Fire Sprinkler Network.’

The amendment was accepted by Councillor Leeke and therefore became the substantive motion.

Councillor I C Kidman proposed a further amendment, which was seconded by Councillor J L Gluza, that the first paragraph be amended to read,

‘This Council requests that the Cabinet give further consideration to the practicalities and cost benefits that might arise from the installation of an effective and proven fire protection system as part of the forthcoming refurbishment of Cambridge Central Library.’

Following debate, a vote was taken and the amendment was defeated.

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

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion, which was carried.

[Voting pattern: agreed without dissent.]

## **107. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

It was resolved unanimously to approve the following appointments:

- Policy Scrutiny and Audit Committee – replacement of Councillor H J Fitch by Councillor P J Downes as a member of the Committee
- Environment and Transport Scrutiny Committee – replacement of Councillor R S G Barnwell by Councillor A B Stenner and of Councillor J Broadway by Councillor H J Fitch as members of the Committee
- Social Services Scrutiny Committee – replacement of Councillor R S G Barnwell by Councillor A Hansard as a member of the Committee.

Chairman