

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 18th May 2010

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 3.10 p.m.

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor L J Oliver (Chairman)

Councillors J D Batchelor, I C Bates, N Bell, K Bourke, B Brooks-Gordon, F Brown, P Brown, R Butcher, C Carter, K Churchill, J Clark, N Clarke, S Criswell, M Curtis, P J Downes, J Dutton, R Farrer, N Guyatt, S Gymer, G Harper, N Harrison, D Harty, G Heathcock, S Hoy, W Hunt, C Hutton, J D Jenkins, S Johnstone, E Kadić, G Kenney, S G M Kindersley, S King, V Lucas, L W McGuire, V McGuire, A K Melton, L Nethsingha, A G Orgee, J Palmer, D R Pegram, A Pellew, J A Powley, P Read, P Reeve, J E Reynolds, T Sadiq, S Sedgwick-Jell, C Shepherd, M Shuter, M Smith, T Stone, S Tierney, J M Tuck, S van de Ven, J West, F Whelan, S Whitebread, S Wijsenbeek, K Wilkins, M Williamson, G Wilson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillors S Austen, D Brown, K Reynolds, R Moss-Eccardt and R West

81. ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS

The Chairman advised members that she was exercising her discretion under the Local Government Act 1972 to add three items of urgent business to the agenda, in order for the Council to comply with the requirements of legislation and the Council's Constitution. Council then considered the three items, as follows:

Election of Chairman

It was moved by Councillor Orgee, seconded by Councillor Pegram and resolved unanimously:

That Councillor Oliver be elected Chairman of the County Council for the period to the next annual meeting of Council.

Councillor Oliver signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office, took the Chair and thanked the Council for her re-election.

Election of Vice-Chairman

It was moved by Councillor Johnstone and seconded by Councillor Lucas:

That Councillor Powley be elected Vice-Chairman of the County Council for the period to the next annual meeting of Council.

It was moved by Councillor Whelan and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

That Councillor Heathcock be elected Vice-Chairman of the County Council for the period to the next annual meeting of Council.

On being put to the vote, Councillor Powley was elected.

[Voting pattern: Conservative and UKIP members in favour of Councillor Powley; Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green members in favour of Councillor Heathcock; two abstentions.]

Councillor Powley signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office, took the Chair and thanked the Council for his re-election.

Approval of calendar of County Council meetings

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

That the following calendar of meetings for the County Council be approved:

- 20th July 2010
- 19th October 2010
- 7th December 2010
- 15th February 2011
- 18th February 2011 (reserve date)
- 29th March 2011
- 17th May 2011.

82. MINUTES: 30th MARCH 2010

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 30th March 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

83. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcomes

The Chairman welcomed to their first meeting of Council:

- Councillor Samantha Hoy, the new Conservative member for the Wisbech North electoral division
- John Onslow, following his appointment as Acting Executive Director: Environment Services.

Executive Director: Children and Young People's Services (CYPS)

The Chairman reported that the Executive Director: CYPS, Gordon Jeyes, would be leaving the Council on 30th June 2010. The Chairman and Councillors Curtis, Nethsingha and Sadiq paid tribute to his achievements during his time with the Council and wished him well for the future.

Political Group Leaders

The Chairman reported that Councillor Whelan had replaced Councillor Jenkins as Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and that Councillor Sadiq had replaced Councillor Carter as Leader of the Labour Group. The Chairman and Councillors Tuck, Downes and Sadiq paid tribute to Councillor Jenkins and welcomed Councillor Whelan to her new role. The Chairman and Councillors Tuck, Whelan and Sadiq paid tribute to Councillor Carter; the Chairman and Councillors Tuck and Whelan welcomed Councillor Sadiq to his new role.

Awards and achievements

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

- The shortlisting of Cambridgeshire Together in the Total Place Achievement of the Year category of the Municipal Journal Achievement Awards
- The Legal Services Team on passing its Law Society Quality Assessment, receiving commendation for continuing to achieve a very high level of compliance against the Lexcel standard.

Other matters

The Chairman also:

- Reported on the official opening on 31st March 2010 of the new Cambridge Central Library by HRH The Princess Royal
- Advised members that she had welcomed a group of choristers from Kreis Viersen, who had sung with Cambridgeshire choirs on 8th and 9th May 2010 in celebration of Europe Day
- Reported that the Council had been awarded:
 - £1.289 million by the Department for Transport to address some of the road damage caused by the extreme winter weather
 - £125,000 by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to improve sub-standard drainage systems in March and Coton
- Drew members' attention to a display outside the Council Chamber on the Homeshield service, aimed at enabling older and vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes.

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Councillor	Minute	Details
Whelan	95	Associate member of Cambridge Older People's Enterprise (Cope)

		Board member of the National Autistic Society in Cambridgeshire Parent of a child with a learning disability
Williamson	95 (11)	Member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils

The following member declared a prejudicial interest under Paragraph 10 of the Code of Conduct:

Councillor	Minute	Details
Wilson L	90	Subject of one of the complaints reported

85. REPORT OF THE COUNTY RETURNING OFFICER

Members noted that Councillor Samantha Hoy of the Conservative Party had been elected in the by-election for the Wisbech North electoral division held on 15th April 2010.

86. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Three members of the public had given notice that they wished to ask questions. As two were not present, Mike Mason and Bridget Smith, it was agreed that these people would be sent written responses by the relevant Cabinet member.

The third, Brian Ing, asked the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, about the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, specifically with what certainty the County Council could be sure that it was fully financially protected and would not have to bear extra construction costs through not achieving full recovery from the contractor.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning noted that the position was complex. The Council's legal advisors had prepared a written response, which had been given to Mr Ing and made available to members. In summary, he was confident that the Council would encounter little or no difficulty in recovering the sums owed by BAM Nuttall.

As a supplementary question, Mr Ing expressed concern at the Council's reliance on a parent company guarantee from a European company, noting that the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) had previously advised that these should not be relied upon; he asked whether the OGC had since changed its advice. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning undertook to send a written response.

A full transcript of the question and response is available from Democratic Services.

87. COUNTY COUNCIL PETITIONS PROCEDURE

The following motion was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor M McGuire:

That the Petition Scheme attached as an appendix to the Council report be adopted by the Council for application from 15th June 2010, subject to the following modifications:

- (a) The threshold for Petitions for Debate at full Council shall be 15,130 signatures (equivalent to just over 2.5% of the local population as defined by the Registrar General's population estimates for England and Wales published by the Office of National Statistics);
- (b) The threshold for Petitions calling Officers to Account shall be 2,000 signatures;
- (c) An amendment being made to the Scheme to provide that no threshold shall be set for Ordinary Petitions (in line with the current scheme) but petition organisers will be able to speak on a petition only where the petition has 50 signatures or more;
- (d) Petitions Calling Officers to Account at meetings of Scrutiny Committees may apply only to members of the Council's Strategic Management Team, i.e. the Chief Executive and Executive and Corporate Directors;
- (e) The correction of minor typographical errors.

The following amendment was proposed by the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Whelan, and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

That paragraph (a) be amended to read:

- (a) The threshold for Petitions for Debate at full Council shall be 1,500 signatures.

Members speaking in support of the amendment:

- Expressed concern that a requirement for 15,130 people to sign a petition in order to trigger a debate at Council was unrealistically high; it would take a significant number of working days to collect this number of signatures. If a procedure to enable petitioners to trigger a debate at Council was going to be introduced, it should be a useable tool.
- Expressed particular concern that this number of signatures would be attainable only in urban areas and would be impossible to achieve in practical terms in rural areas.
- Highlighted a further challenge that the figure was based on a percentage of the total population of people of all ages, including children who would be too young to participate.
- Suggested that if the Council wished to engage with its community, to encourage more open government and greater participation in Council meetings and to make Councillors more accountable, a more realistically attainable target should be set. In particular, it was suggested that the threshold for triggering a debate by members should not be higher than the threshold for triggering scrutiny of officers.

- Noted that 1,500 signatures had been suggested as this was approximately 20% of the number of residents in an electoral division, a realistic threshold for a major local issue to be brought forward.
- Suggested, however, that if 1,500 signatures was considered too low, this point should be deferred to enable further discussion to take place between the political groups and a possible compromise to be reached.

Members speaking against the amendment:

- Emphasised local members' role in representing their residents at Council meetings; members should already be raising major issues at an early stage.
- Noted that the number of signatures proposed to trigger a debate at full Council was already half the number proposed in the statutory guidance, which was 5% of the local population.
- Expressed concern that a significantly lower threshold for triggering a debate at full Council could open the process to abuse, as had been experienced elsewhere.
- Suggested that a formal petitions process was not the most effective means of achieving community engagement, or engagement with the democratic process. It was noted that a number of other avenues were available to members of the public wishing to raise issues with the Council, including the existing ordinary petitions scheme, which required only 50 signatures to enable a representative of the petitioners to speak at a Council meeting; public question time at Council meetings; and discussion at Scrutiny Committee meetings, at which members as well as officers were held to account.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated. [Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats in favour, Conservatives against, other members' voting unknown; two abstentions.]

The main motion was then debated. Members made the following comments:

- Commented that any enhancement to public interaction with the Council was to be welcomed. However, petitions would be effective only if they were considered by a meeting proportionate to the issue being raised; and if they received properly considered, full responses.
- Noted that petitions could be particularly valuable in enabling local residents to raise issues when their views were not shared by their local member.
- Expressed concern that e-petitions were at risk of being manipulated and noted that appropriate safeguards would be needed to ensure that each respondent could reply only once.
- Called for use of the new elements of the petitions procedure to be monitored carefully and for thresholds to be revisited if facilities to trigger Council debates or scrutiny of officers were not being used.

Members then voted on the main motion, which was carried. [Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour; other members' voting unknown; two abstentions.]

88. COUNTY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor M McGuire,

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

The following amendment was proposed by the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Whelan, and seconded by Councillor Jenkins:

To defer the proposed changes relating to Planning delegations in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to the next meeting of Council, to enable further discussion with members to take place.

Members speaking in support of the amendment:

- Expressed concern that the proposed changes would result in a reduced role for Committee and local members, since it would remove their ability to require development proposals to be determined under delegated powers to instead be considered by the Committee, making this at the discretion of the Chairman of the Development Control Committee.
- Noted that increasing the number of development proposals to be determined under delegated powers would reduce the opportunity for Parish Councils and other interested parties to make representations to Development Control Committee members.
- Suggested that limited evidence had been provided to justify the proposed changes; in particular, it was possible that other elements of the process were causing greater delay to the determination of planning applications than the Committee stage.
- Expressed concern that members had been consulted about the proposed changes by e-mail during the purdah period preceding the recent General Election, a time when members had had numerous other priorities. It was suggested that other, more effective means of consultation should also have been used.

Members speaking against the amendment:

- Noted that the Head of Strategic Planning had consulted relevant members by e-mail and had received no objections.
- Noted that Committee and local members would still be able to raise concerns with the Chairman of the Development Control Committee; the current Chairman, Councillor Read, undertook to consider all concerns raised by members seriously. However, he also noted that the proposed changes would help to streamline officers' workloads, at a time when

diminishing resources made this essential.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated. [Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats in favour, Conservatives against, other members' voting unknown; one abstention.]

The main motion was then debated. Members made the following comments:

- Expressed concern that reports to Council proposing changes to the Constitution were difficult to follow and should be more clearly presented. More detailed explanations of the reasons for the proposed changes were also requested. The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor M McGuire, agreed to address these concerns.

On being put to the vote, the main motion was carried. [Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour, Liberal Democrats abstained, other members' voting unknown.]

89. REPORT OF CABINET MEETING – ITEMS FOR DETERMINATION

Members noted that the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 27th April 2010 contained no items for determination.

90. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

The Chairman of the Standards Committee, David Boreham, moved receipt of the annual report of the Standards Committee for 2009/10. He highlighted a number of points, as follows:

- 2009/10 had been the first year in which initial assessment of complaints made against members under the Code of Conduct had been conducted locally, rather than nationally.
- Only three such complaints had been received, indicating a generally high standard of conduct by Cambridgeshire's Councillors.
- The local assessors had not considered that any of the three complaints received needed to proceed to a formal hearing, although one was still the subject of correspondence.
- Another area of the Committee's work of note was its consideration of the Council's use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA). Five authorisations had been made for the use of RIPA powers, all of which the Committee had considered to be justified.

Council noted the report and the Chairman of the Council thanked Mr Boreham for attending.

91. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

One written question had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Bell had asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access,

Councillor M McGuire, when Thistle Corner roundabout in Ely would open.

The response was circulated at the Council meeting and a copy is available from Democratic Services.

92. ORAL QUESTIONS

Twelve oral questions were asked under Council Procedure Rule 9:

- Councillor Gymer asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, how the Council ensured that the children of illegal immigrants were not persecuted, but received a consistent education. As Councillor Gymer's question had been prompted by a specific case, it was agreed that she would write to the Cabinet Member for Learning with further details and that he would respond.
- Councillor Bourke asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, about bus services through Caldecote. He explained that when the Whippet 2 service had been replaced by the Stagecoach 14, it had been agreed that concessionary passes for older people would continue to be valid, even though the service left before 9.30 a.m., but that this was not being honoured by all drivers. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access confirmed that concessionary passes should still be valid on this service. Where there was evidence that they had not been accepted, officers were investigating whether the individuals involved would receive refunds, but he was unable to guarantee this.
- [Councillor Pellew asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, when the FixMyStreet replacement service would be going live. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access explained that the Council's own system, enabling people to track the responses to the issues they raised, would be going live later in the year. On the longer term, it was hoped to integrate the Council's system with FixMyStreet to make it even more robust. Councillor Pellew asked how many requests for highways repairs were received via FixMyStreet, as compared with other routes. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to send a written response.](#)
- Councillor van de Ven asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, whether some Policy Development Group (PDG) reports and minutes could be made available on the Council's website, on the basis that they were not confidential. She gave an example of detailed information in a recent report which had been made public via a Scrutiny Committee. She also noted that the website currently referred to PDGs as an unexplained acronym, and included links that did not go anywhere. Responding, the Leader of the Council agreed to check the information on the website. She noted that information given to PDGs might subsequently move into the public domain, but that this would depend on its nature and on the stage of discussion reached. She emphasised the benefit of frank, private meetings and expressed the hope that the Liberal Democrats would rejoin the PDGs.
- Councillor Whelan asked the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Councillor Yeulett, about a specific case relating to a

vulnerable young person who was in the process of being discharged from hospital but who still required significant levels of support, which did not currently appear to be available, despite recent improvements to the Transitions service. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing agreed to liaise with the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, and to respond to Councillor Whelan.

- Councillor Whitebread noted that the new national coalition Government had signed up to the 10:10 climate change initiative. She asked whether the Council would now reconsider its position in relation to this initiative, particularly given its benefits in encouraging other organisations and the public to become involved. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, noted that the Council's own targets in relation to climate change were longer-term and more ambitious. He also noted that national indicators monitored not only the Council's internal actions, but also its work to inspire change by partners and others.
- Councillor Brooks-Gordon noted that the Council's Policy Development Group (PDG) arrangements dated from a time when the Council had been led by a coalition. As this was no longer the case, she asked the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation, Councillor Criswell, to establish a cross-party forum to discuss possible changes to the PDG arrangements. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation noted that this had been done recently by the Political Management Arrangements PDG; he was not willing to initiate another review at this time.
- [Councillor Nethsingha asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, whether the number of Cambridgeshire children in out of County placements had increased or decreased during the past two months and whether the Council was on target to achieve savings in this area. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children noted that the number of looked after children had increased. He agreed to send a written response on the specific issue of out of County placements.](#)
- Councillor Sedgwick-Jell asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, whether she and the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group would be lobbying the new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles MP, for a more favourable grant settlement for Cambridgeshire. Responding, the Leader of the Council reported that she would be submitting a joint representation together with District Council Leaders, and had already had a brief discussion with the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.
- Councillor Downes asked the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, for an update on the review of home to school transport, in particular when the final report would be published. The Cabinet Member for Learning agreed to send a written response.
- [Councillor Jenkins noted that a number of villages had not received Local Transport Plan consultation documents to the intended timescale; the deadline for responses to the consultation had therefore been extended. However, he expressed concern that the new arrangements for timing and](#)

[input were unclear and asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, for clarification. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to advise.](#)

- Councillor Stone expressed concern that the Local Transport Plan consultation document had been received by residents of none of the ten villages in his division. He asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, to find out what had gone wrong, to address the situation and to ensure that it did not recur in future. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to do so.

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

93. MOTIONS

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

94. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The changes to Committee memberships and appointments to outside bodies attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes were proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Oliver, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Powley, and agreed unanimously.

95. REPORT OF THE CABINET – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, moved receipt of the report of the Cabinet meeting held on 27th April 2010.

1) Building Schools for the Future (BSF): Contract Award

Councillor Downes drew attention to the recent announcement by the new Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, of the Government's intention to reduce the national BSF budget to fund the introduction of 'free schools'. He asked whether this would affect Cambridgeshire's BSF bid for Fenland, and whether it would be disadvantageous to other Cambridgeshire schools with inadequate buildings currently programmed for subsequent BSF waves.

In relation to this and other items, Councillor Pellew asked whether shorter hyperlinks could be used in Cabinet reports to Council.

[Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, reported that the BSF contract for Fenland was expected to be signed imminently. He agreed that other schools in Cambridgeshire also required capital investment and confirmed that the implications of any changes to the BSF programme would be considered carefully. The Cabinet Member for Children agreed to find out what had been done in response to a previous request for shorter hyperlinks in Cabinet reports.](#)

2) Network Service Plan 2010

Councillor Bourke expressed concern that highways maintenance had been underfunded for a number of years and that the budget allocated in the current year would mean that road conditions would continue to decline. He also expressed concern that funding had been removed from Highways and Access to offset Guided Busway costs, with consequences for a number of aspects of the Directorate's work, including community transport and road safety.

Councillor Batchelor noted that Network Service Plans had previously been discussed at Area Joint Committees, giving local members an opportunity to input; he asked for this practice to be reinstated. He also emphasised the need for local members to be kept informed of changes to plans, citing a local instance in which roads identified for repair in Balsham had been reduced in number from four to two.

Councillor Whelan expressed concern at the poor quality of permanent pothole repairs on Madingley Road in Cambridge and asked how the Council monitored the performance of its contractors.

Councillor Dutton requested an analysis of figures relating to numbers of people killed or seriously injured by local area, to enable members to consider how these related to local schemes and proposals.

Councillor P Brown commended officers' work on highways maintenance, noting that his Parish Councils had generally been satisfied with the winter maintenance service and that Cambridgeshire's roads remained in better condition than those of many other local authorities.

Councillor Stone questioned why the Environment Services capital programme included expenditure on highways maintenance.

Councillor G Wilson asked when, based on the current five-year programme and the recently announced Government grant to address winter damage, the Council's roads and footways would be returned to the condition they had been in two years previously.

Councillor Pellew asked whether there was any evidence that 20mph speed limits on residential roads would reduce the need for road maintenance.

Councillor Gymer questioned why only £1,000 had been allowed for Safer Routes to School initiatives in the south of the County.

Responding to Councillor Gymer, the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, explained that Safer Routes to School funding was allocated in response to applications from specific schools.

Responding to the other speakers, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, noted that the Network Service Plan was usually discussed with the Area Joint Committees and agreed to follow this up. He also agreed to follow up the suggestion of poor-quality repairs on Madingley Road in Cambridge. He reminded members that

Cambridgeshire had received an additional £1.289 million from Government, but emphasised that resources for highways maintenance remained finite; the risk of further harsh winters was also a concern, affecting the rate at which roads could be restored to their previous condition. However, Cambridgeshire's roads were an asset and officers' work to maintain them should be commended.

3) Lorry Management Strategy and Advisory Freight Map

Councillor Gymer suggested that a night-time ban could be appropriate for lorry routes that ran through villages.

Councillor Jenkins commented that the review of the environmental weight limit policy and further work on lorry parking would both be important to village communities. He also requested further information about the Freight Quality Partnership and its reporting mechanisms, suggested that this could be a vehicle for discussions with local businesses about not using village routes at night.

Councillor Hunt expressed concern that the A1123 was overused by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). He welcomed the advisory freight map, which would help to address this problem, and called for the review of weight limits to be carried out as soon as possible.

Councillor Johnstone expressed concern that the B1050 was still considered an acceptable route for HGVs, even though it required regular repairs to its banks and was not considered safe for bus use by Stagecoach. She also expressed concern at the impact of HGVs using this route on residents of Willingham and asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, to meet local representatives to discuss the impact of noise and vibrations.

Councillor Stone reported local concerns about an HGV route along Fowlmere High Street, especially since there was a chalk tunnel underneath the road. He also called for a proper parking policy for freight drivers, to address nuisance currently caused to local communities.

Councillor Dutton expressed concern at the routeing of HGVs between Godmanchester and Huntingdon over the old town bridge, highlighting the damage caused and the gradual erosion of this historic feature.

Councillor Williamson commented that in order to be effective, the advisory routes needed to be incorporated into satellite navigation systems and not only published on paper.

Councillor Kenney called for a bypass for Harston. She reminded members that local residents had expected the A10 to be downgraded but that this had not happened; the road through Harston had now been included as an advisory freight route, reinvigorating local concerns.

Councillor Butcher noted that there were limited choices for freight routes in the north of the County, but particularly highlighted the impact of HGVs on villages on the A605 and called for a bypass for Whittlesey.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, emphasised that the freight map was advisory; it was not possible to require HGVs to use particular routes unless specific restrictions were put in place. The Freight Quality Partnership included representatives of the national trade organisations and therefore provided a good opportunity to discuss a range of issues, including satellite navigation systems. Work on the weight limit policy would start shortly and would be discussed at the Growth and Environment Policy Development Group, enabling local members to contribute. Parking would also be addressed, including through the A14 inquiry; the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access expressed concern that proposals for the A14 upgrade did not yet take HGV parking properly into account.

- 4) Agency Agreement for the Delivery of Highways-Related Functions in Cambridge
- 5) Integrated Resources and Performance Report: February 2010

Councillor Stone asked for greater clarity of terms used in these reports, particularly to differentiate between debts owed to and by the Council.

In relation to National Indicator 171, registration of new businesses, Councillor Jenkins expressed concern that Cambridgeshire's performance was below the regional average, but that the Council's target had been renegotiated to a lower level.

Councillors Whelan and Harrison expressed concern that an overspend of £2.2 million was already being predicted for Community and Adult Services for 2010/11, due mainly to pressures on adult social care. This was of particular concern given the scale of the overspend in this area in 2009/10.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, Councillor J Reynolds, reported that the 2009/10 overspend in Community and Adult Services had been reduced to £0.5 million, taking into account the call on reserves and a range of cost-reducing measures. Overall, the Council's year-end budget was expected to balance. The greatest area of saving had been in Corporate Services in relation to debt charges. The Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance also noted that the Council was taking rigorous action to reduce debts owed to it; many outstanding debts were now covered by payment plans.

- 6) Lead Accountable Body for Informal Adult Learning

Councillor Williamson expressed concern that the Cabinet report on this item had contained no reference to the role of the Village Colleges as providers of informal adult learning. He asked what future role was envisaged for them.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Learning, Councillor Harty, noted that as the lead accountable body for informal adult learning, the County Council would be responsible for drawing together a range of partners and providers. This could include the Village Colleges, in recognition of the services they provided.

- 7) Development on Cambridge Southern Fringe: Section 106 Agreements
- 8) Review of Process for Considering Section 106 Deferral Requests
- 9) Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy

Speaking as the local member for a number of villages encompassed by the Strategy, Councillor Lucas commended the consultation process that had taken place and the responses in the Strategy to the issues raised. He welcomed the Strategy's focus on sustainability of local communities and highlighted the importance of reliable bus services that were not frequently altered. However, he noted that implementation would depend on availability of funding; the Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy would cost £4.5 million in total, but only £1.3 million was available in the current year to support all of the Council's Market Town Transport Strategies.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, noted that it was not possible to guarantee the timing of funding to implement the Strategy, but that this would come via the Local Transport Plan and Section 106 contributions. He agreed that reliable bus services were essential and drew attention to the Council's work through the Quality Partnership to promote these.

- 10) Highway Charges
- 11) A Rural Strategy for Cambridgeshire: Consultation Response

Councillor Bourke welcomed the aims of the Rural Strategy but expressed concern that it would not be possible to implement it fully, since the Council had made cuts to funding for issues such as community transport, demand-responsive buses in rural areas and the Market Town Transport Strategies.

Councillor Williamson drew attention to Priority 3, to halt the decline of essential rural services, and the comment that discussions about potential joint provision with other services would need to be conducted quickly. He emphasised that local communities would need to be supported to be able to contribute to such discussions effectively. In relation to Priority 6, supporting and strengthening local communities, he particularly emphasised the role of Parish Councils and suggested that the County Council should work to strengthen their role in engaging local communities.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Economy and the Environment, Councillor Orgee, noted that the Cabinet had also agreed that it would be essential to strengthen the role of District and Parish Councils and other community groups. In relation to resourcing, he emphasised the need for the Council to operate within its means.

- 12) Department for Transport Consultation on the Greater Anglia and InterCity East Coast Rail Franchises

Councillor Hunt welcomed the Cabinet's response to the consultation. He emphasised the importance of a range of factors in keeping traffic off roads, including maintaining Peterborough as a transport hub; enhancing services to Stansted; and increasing power to the line north of Cambridge to Kings Lynn.

Councillor Jenkins welcomed the suggestion in the consultation response that reopening of the Bramley line be considered further. He requested an update on this issue.

Councillor Powley welcomed the suggestion that the reopening of a station at Soham also be considered.

Councillor F Brown spoke in support of freight improvements between Nuneaton and Felixstowe but emphasised the need to consider the implications for the A142. Councillor Butcher expressed concern at the impact that such improvements could have on the A605 and the level crossing at Whittlesey.

Councillor Williamson welcomed the reference in the consultation response to the need for effective car parking provision at stations, noting that this was a particular issue for rural communities. Councillor Wijzenbeek asked what action the Council could take if rail operators did not provide adequate parking, for example for bicycles at Cambridge station.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, noted that the Council would continue to work with commercial and political partners to promote an integrated transport system. He noted that the longer franchises being offered meant that operators were likely to be willing to invest more, to achieve greater returns. He shared members' concerns about the need for an Ely southern bypass; improvements to the A605 were likely to depend on Section 106 contributions. On parking, he noted that a range of options for accessing stations were being promoted; at Cambridge station, the enhancements to the surrounding area would include parking for 3,000 bicycles.

13) Quarterly Update on Key Partnerships

Councillor Whelan expressed concern at the brevity of this item on the Council report, given the importance of partnership working and that one of the updates at Cabinet had been an oral report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, reminded members that the full versions of the written reports to Cabinet were available on the internet.

14) Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

Councillor Harrison noted that she was looking forward to the opening of the Guided Busway, but asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor Tuck, if she would hold a public inquiry to examine how the present difficulties had arisen. She also asked whether the Council would ever

again consider entering a contract on the same terms, under which it had to pay out significant sums to the contractor and subsequently seek to reclaim these.

Councillor Whelan expressed concern that there had been no opportunity for members to discuss the information contained in the confidential Cabinet report; the Cabinet meeting had been held during the purdah period, when members had been busy elsewhere, and the seminar at which members were to have been briefed had been cancelled.

Councillor Jenkins asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, about yellow lines relating to the route of the Guided Busway that had recently been painted outside a number of businesses in Impington, prohibiting parking and unloading.

Responding, the Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor Pegram, noted that a public inquiry would not be helpful at this stage, as it would compromise ongoing negotiations. Some information about the contract terms had been provided in the written response to Mr Ing, who had asked a public question earlier in the meeting. Members had had the opportunity to attend the Cabinet meeting, had they wished to receive more detailed confidential information. The Cabinet Member for Growth, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning reported that progress was being made against all six issues identified by the Council, but that none was yet complete.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, reminded members that local communities were typically consulted before new road markings were implemented. He agreed to send a written response to Councillor Jenkins about the yellow lines in Impington.

Chairman:

SCHEDULE OF APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Scrutiny Committee Membership 2010/11

CORPORATE ISSUES (11)

Cllr N Clarke	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr N Guyatt	C	Cllr D Brown	C
Cllr G Harper	C	Cllr J Clark	C
Cllr J Powley	C	Cllr C Hutton	C
Cllr M Shuter (Chairman)	C	Cllr P Read	C
Cllr M Smith	C	Cllr K Bourke	LD
Cllr S Tierney	C	Cllr N Harrison	LD
Cllr J Batchelor (Vice-Chairman)	LD	Cllr C Shepherd	LD
Cllr B Brooks-Gordon	LD		
Cllr M Williamson	LD		
Cllr C Carter	L		

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (11)

Cllr C Hutton	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Johnstone (Chairman)	C	Cllr K Churchill	C
Cllr S Hoy	C	Cllr N Clarke	C
Cllr V McGuire	C	Cllr S Tierney	C
Cllr J Palmer	C	Cllr J West	C
Cllr R West	C	Cllr D Jenkins	LD
Cllr L Wilson	C	Cllr F Whelan	LD
Cllr P Downes	LD		
Cllr S Gymer	LD		
Cllr S van de Ven (Vice-Chairman)	LD		
Cllr S Sedgwick-Jell	G		

ADULTS, WELLBEING AND HEALTH (11)

Cllr B Farrer	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr S Hoy	C	Cllr A Melton	C
Cllr G Kenney	C	Cllr J Palmer	C
Cllr S King	C	Cllr P Read	C
Cllr V McGuire	C	Cllr M Smith	C
Cllr K Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)	C	Cllr P Downes	LD
Cllr J West	C	Cllr S van de Ven	LD
Cllr S Austen	LD	Cllr K Wilkins	LD
Cllr G Heathcock (Chairman)	LD		
Cllr L Nethsingha	LD		
Cllr C Shepherd	LD		

ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY (11)

Cllr D Brown	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr R Butcher (Vice-Chairman)	C	Cllr J Dutton	C
Cllr J Clark	C	Cllr B Farrer	C
Cllr B Hunt	C	Cllr N Guyatt	C
Cllr L Kadic	C	Cllr M Smith	C
Cllr G Kenney	C	Cllr S Gymer	LD
Cllr P Read	C	Cllr S Kindersley	LD
Cllr N Bell (Chairman)	LD	Cllr Moss-Eccardt	LD
Cllr S Whitebread	LD	Cllr T Stone	LD
Cllr S Wijsenbeek	LD		
Cllr G Wilson	LD		

STRONGER COMMUNITIES (11)

Cllr D Brown	C	Substitutes:	
Cllr N Clarke	C	Cllr K Churchill	C
Cllr L Kadic	C	Cllr J Dutton	C
Cllr S King	C	Cllr G Harper	C
Cllr M Smith	C	Cllr J West	C
Cllr S Tierney	C	Cllr S Kindersley	LD
Cllr R West	C	Cllr F Whelan	LD
Cllr N Harrison	LD		
Cllr C Shepherd	LD		
Cllr M Williamson	LD		
Cllr K Wilkins	LD		

APPOINTMENTS TO OTHER COMMITTEES REMAIN UNCHANGED EXCEPT AS INDICATED BELOW:

- (i) Councillor F Whelan to replace Councillor Jenkins as a member of the Joint Committee on Appointments to the Police Authority
- (ii) Councillor Smith to replace Councillor Clarke as a member of the Joint Development Control Committee for the Cambridge Fringes
- (iii) Councillor Orgee to replace Councillor Kadić as a member of the Anglia Regional Flood Defence Committee*
- (iv) Councillor Dutton to replace Councillor Kadić on the Huntingdonshire Forum of Voluntary Organisations*.

* Subsequently identified as partnership appointments which in accordance with the Constitution are confirmed by the Leader of the Council in consultation with Opposition Group Leaders.

ORAL QUESTIONS

COUNTY COUNCIL – 18 May 2010

Minute 92, Oral Questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor Jenkins

Councillor Jenkins noted that a number of villages had not received Local Transport Plan consultation documents to the intended timescale; the deadline for responses to the consultation had therefore been extended. However, he expressed concern that the new arrangements for timing and input were unclear and asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, for clarification. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to advise.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire

Following comments from members and residents on the non-delivery of leaflets, analysis of the distribution of responses received showed that there were many areas across the County where full delivery of leaflets had not been achieved. This is clearly not acceptable and has limited people's opportunities to comment on the emerging Plan.

The consultation on the third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan will therefore be extended until 30 July 2010. A further leaflet delivery will take place in June and early July to areas where leaflets may not have previously been delivered. Details of the areas that will be covered by the redelivery will be placed on the Local Transport Plan webpages and publicised on the front page of the County Council website and through press releases. The facility to fill in the questionnaire online will also remain available until 30 July 2010. Members will be informed of areas where redelivery will take place by 5 June 2010.

COUNTY COUNCIL – 18 May 2010

Minute 92, Oral Questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor Pellew

Councillor Pellew asked how many requests for highways repairs were received via FixMyStreet, as compared with other routes. The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access agreed to send a written response.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire

Approximately 10% of Streetscene faults come in via FixMyStreet. The rest are received via the Contact Centre and the Council's own on-line form. In the last two months, figures were as follow:

- In May, FixMyStreet sent 73 of a total of 789 requests
- In April, FixMyStreet sent 90 of a total of 1069 requests.

COUNTY COUNCIL – 18 May 2010

Minute 92, Oral Questions

Question to the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor M Curtis, from Councillor Nethsingha

Councillor Nethsingha asked the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor Curtis, whether the number of Cambridgeshire children in out of County placements had increased or decreased during the past two months and whether the Council was on target to achieve savings in this area. Responding, the Cabinet Member for Children noted that the number of looked after children had increased. He agreed to send a written response on the specific issue of out of County placements.

Response from Councillor M Curtis, Cabinet Member for Children.

There are currently 503 Looked After Children, the highest number for over 5 years. The main reasons for the increase are several fold and include a significant rise in relinquished babies, a rise in homeless 16-17 year olds, sibling groups where neglect is a major factor and adolescents where the carers are refusing to continue care. As an example there were 4 Out of County foster placements made in June 2010 compared with 1 in June 2009, and 6 in June 2008. A total of seven 16+ supported living placements were made in June 2010, figures were not being collected for this group in June 2009.

There is not one consistent trend and certainly cannot be attributed to the aftermath of Baby Peter. In fact our numbers of children subject to a Child Protection Plan has remained relatively stable at 353.

As a consequence the placements budget is currently overspent by £3m. This trend is also being seen both regionally and nationally. In response, Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire are meeting later this month to compare strategies and consider any work which could benefit the region.

Locally, considerable activity is being undertaken to address the current increase in numbers and to deliver savings in the longer term. A placements strategy is being drafted which focuses on the measures and changes to be undertaken to reduce the likelihood of children becoming looked after, reducing the length of time for which children are looked after and reducing the risk of children having left the care of the Council being looked after again. The strategy will set out the measures that are underway and planned to reduce the unit cost of placements, including delivering the required placement mix. A consultation on the future role of the Family Support function and the development of an edge of care service is underway.

Minute 95, Report of the Cabinet: Items for Information

2) Network Service Plan 2010

Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor Batchelor

Councillor Batchelor noted that Network Services Plans had previously been discussed at Area Joint Committees, giving local members an opportunity to input; he asked for this practice to be reinstated.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire

The Network Services Plan is a document that sets out the policies and work programme for the County's transport capital investment for the relevant financial year. The remit of Area Joint Committees does not extend to setting work programmes (other than for any joint County/District funded work programmes) or transport policy. As such, it has never been the practice to consult Area Joint Committees on its content.

However, once the Network Services Plan is approved, Area Joint Committees receive a report setting out its content and purpose, which provides clarity over the schemes that require Area Joint Committee input and gives an opportunity for Area Joint Committee members to raise any questions or issues.

Minute 95, Report of the Cabinet: Items for Information

2) Network Service Plan 2010

Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor Whelan

Councillor Whelan expressed concern at the poor quality of permanent pothole repairs on Madingley Road in Cambridge and asked how the Council monitored the performance of its contractors.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire

It would not be practical or cost-effective for staff to check every individual works order (typically over 20,000 are raised each year). Therefore, the management system (Insight) which is used to raise orders for delivery through the Highways Services contract, is configured to randomly select 10% of small work orders, which are then subject to quality checks by staff after completion of the order. All larger schemes are subject to post-completion checks by staff. The success/failure rate of these inspections is monitored and reported as part of the performance indicators for the contract.

The work delivered by the service provider, Atkins, is subject to a 12-month maintenance period, during which any defects are required to be remedied at no cost to the Council.

In the case of Madingley Road, the route suffers regularly from ground movement associated with the clay soils in that area and crack sealing and patching has been undertaken regularly on the route. Whilst it is acknowledged that the work recently undertaken has done nothing to improve the patchwork quilt appearance of the road, the repairs have been inspected by staff and are considered to be sound and of an acceptable standard.

Further machine-laid patching work is planned in June near the TGWU offices and once this is completed, all the road markings covered over by patching and sealing works will be remarked which will help to refresh the road's appearance.

Minute 95, Report of the Cabinet: Items for Information

14) Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

Question to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, from Councillor Jenkins

Councillor Jenkins asked the Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, about yellow lines relating to the route of the Guided Busway that had recently been painted outside a number of businesses in Impington, prohibiting parking and unloading.

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Access, Councillor M McGuire, reminded members that local communities were typically consulted before new road markings were implemented and agreed that a written response be sent to Councillor Jenkins.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Growth , Infrastructure and Strategic Planning, Councillor R Pegram

The waiting and loading restrictions implemented outside businesses in Cambridge Road, Impington at the guided busway crossing were approved as part of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway Order. The purpose of the restrictions is to ensure that parked vehicles do not obstruct traffic in such a way that vehicles might queue back onto the busway crossing. In response to objections the order was modified to provide a limited waiting area outside Station Stores. This required some widening of the carriageway.

Histon and Impington Parish Councils raised concerns about traffic queuing back to the crossing at the Public Inquiry, in response to which officers gave assurances to the Inspector that the waiting and loading restrictions would be implemented in accordance with the order as amended. It would therefore be inappropriate to review these restrictions until after the busway has been operational for a period of time.

It should be noted that much of the length of the restriction coincides with a 'keep clear' marking covering the access to the rear service yard of one of the businesses.

COUNTY COUNCIL – 18 May 2010

Minute 95, Report of the Cabinet: Items for Information

1) Building Schools for the Future(BSF): Contract Award

Question to the Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor M Curtis, from Councillor Pellew

Councillor Pellew asked in relation to this and other items whether shorter hyperlinks could be used in cabinet reports.

The Cabinet Member for Children, Councillor M Curtis, agreed to find out what had been done in response to a previous request for shorter hyperlinks in Cabinet reports.

Response from the Cabinet Member for Customer Service and Transformation, Councillor S Criswell

The use of hyperlinks in Cabinet reports to Council is an effective and convenient means of providing links to associated documents, allowing Members and the public access to documents which provide more information on an issue than could be provided within the summary Cabinet report. It is often used to link the original officer report to Cabinet as well as providing links to long strategy documents which would be expensive to circulate in paper form. When viewed electronically the length of the hyperlink is irrelevant, as clicking on the link or cutting and pasting the link into a web browser is all that it is required. However for those viewing the Cabinet report in paper form it is tedious and time consuming to have to re-type the link to access these documents.

The possibility of using shorter hyperlinks had been raised by Members at the March 2010 Council meeting. In response, the Council's IT department has considered the issue, including options and the requirement for the links to remain valid in the future, and has recommended the use of Tiny URLs. These are very much shorter than those used previously and their use has already been implemented.