

ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Thursday, 13th September 2018

Time: 10.00 a.m. to 10.55 a.m.

Present: Councillors: D Ambrose-Smith, I Bates (Chairman), D Connor, R Fuller, T Sanderson (substituting for D Giles), (substituting for Cllr Ambrose-Smith) N Harrison (substituting for Cllr Batchelor). M Howell (substituting for Cllr Connor), N Kavanagh, S Tierney, J Williams and T Wotherspoon

Apologies: Councillors H Batchelor and D Giles

143. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

144. MINUTES

Subject to the inclusion in the attendance record of Councillor Harford as a substitute the minutes of the meeting held on 16th August 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

145. MINUTE ACTION LOG

The following updates were provided orally:

- Minute 88 Transport Scheme Development b) Local member involvement on the A141 Schemes Listed – The comment included in the Minute Action Log stating that there was a report on the current agenda seeking Councillor appointments to the A141 Huntingdon and St Ives Transport Study Steering Group was not appropriate to Councillor Connor's request to be kept updated on the A141 schemes, as his expressed interest was in those schemes based in Fenland.
- The three actions under Minute 130 and Minute 140 in respect of previous Finance and Performance Reports for action by Andy Preston were still being progressed. The reply regarding Guided Busway passenger numbers projections clarification requested at the August meeting was at the draft response stage. The expectation was that a response would be sent out to Members within the week. **Action: Andy Preston**

The Minute Action Log was noted.

146. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No petitions or public questions were received.

147. DRAFT CAMBRIDGESHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The County Council is required to have a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

which sets out how stakeholders, including the local community, district and parish councils, and statutory consultees, can participate in the land use planning processes which are undertaken by the County Council in its role as the Mineral and Waste, and County Planning Authority. The current SCI was approved in 2014 and under 'The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017' requires to be reviewed no less than every 5 years. The report invited the Committee to consider the draft Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement 2018 setting out how the community can be involved in mineral and waste land use planning activities undertaken by the County Council in its role as the Mineral and Waste Planning Authority.

The draft SCI covers the following land use planning activities setting out who, and how, the County Council would consult on them:

- The preparation of mineral and waste planning policy (local plan, supplementary planning documents);
- The preparation of the Local Enforcement Plan; and
- The determination of the planning applications for mineral and waste management development; and the County Council's own development proposals.

The report also detailed how people can engage with Members, and the democratic processes of the Council.

Issues raised by Members in the discussion included:

- It was suggested that it would be useful to list all those who were strategic partners to be the subject of consultation with. In reply it was explained that detail on this was provided in Appendix 1 with the point made that anyone interested in the planning process could get involved.
- As a supplementary, the same Member queried how the Committee members were meant to know if any strategic partners had been missed from the list. The Chairman suggested that it was all councillors responsibility as local representatives to help publicise the consultation with their parish councils and other potentially interested local organisations.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the draft Cambridgeshire Statement of Community Involvement (Appendix 1 of this report) for the purpose of public consultation commencing in autumn 2018.
- b) Delegate to the Executive Director, Place and Economy in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, the authority to make any minor non-consequential amendments to the consultation document attached to the officer's report, prior to consultation.

**148. KENNET GARDEN VILLAGE EXTENSION – OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION
COSULTATION REPORT**

This report had been withdrawn to allow further discussions on the planning application.

**149. ANNUAL UPDATE FROM CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH TRADING
STANDARDS SHARED SERVICE REPORT**

On 1st April 2017 Cambridgeshire County Council's Trading Standards Service merged with Peterborough City Council's Trading Standards Service to become 'Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards', overseen by Peterborough City Council's Head of Regulatory Services. It was agreed that combined service should bring an annual update report to this Committee to keep Members informed of its activities, and to provide the opportunity for Members to steer priorities and direction of the service within Cambridgeshire. Appendix 1 of the report contained the annual report.

Areas highlighted in respect of the Service included that:

- the merger of the two services had proved highly successful, with all but one of the merger objectives achieved within 2017-18 and projected financial savings realised and performance objectives met. The Service was also on target to meet its 2018-19 savings target. The final objective outstanding was to implement a shared database with a target date in anticipation of the systems merger in the autumn and also moving it to a web based platform.
- Intelligence-led tasking was operating well across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, giving a greater picture of trends and issues across both authorities, and with a greater 'pool' of officers to whom intervention work would be allocated, making the best use of limited resources. Cross-border projects were being undertaken to tackle issues affecting both local authority areas.
- Skills had been mapped across the service and training needs identified and fulfilled. Recruitment continued to be a challenge, with universities offering fewer regulatory courses since the economic downturn with market supplements having had to be offered for some posts to attract the right calibre of staff.
- Policies had been merged and refreshed, as had Business Continuity Plans and an Animal Disease Contingency Plan in order to underpin a streamlined, consistent approach to service delivery and any emergency response.
- Opportunities for revenue generation and partnership working with other Authorities had been identified explored and pursued, with the Service now providing financial investigation services as well as vapour recovery services to many of the District Councils in Cambridgeshire. The Service also provided regulatory services to Rutland Council.
- The Service was successful in attracting grant funding to support service delivery costs as well as funding from National Trading Standards to offset

advocacy costs. Utilising in house legal resources also delivered savings, helping to mitigate against the risk of high legal costs.

- Paid for business advice, the majority of which was delivered through Primary Authority Partnerships, remained an important revenue stream being provided to over a 100 national companies, with a number of new businesses forming partnerships during the year.
- The Service continued to be recognised nationally for Excellence, as demonstrated in its awards for “Best service team of the year” at the prestigious Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Awards on 7th September in the category for Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Regulatory Services.

The report attached as an appendix itself was sub divided into the following headings with examples of Service activity provided:

- Supporting and maintaining confidence in the economy
- Protecting the health and wellbeing of people
- Supporting and protecting vulnerable people
- New for this year
- Challenges for the forthcoming year.
- Performance.

The officer was congratulated on a very thorough, informative report.

issues / questions raised included:

- Seeking clarification of what vapour recovery entailed. This was in respect of permits issued to petrol sellers to restrict petrol fume emissions.
- Whether as the report highlighted that 7 out of 25 weighbridges were not accurate there was come back from businesses demanding compensation if it was later shown that they had been overcharged. To date the Service was not aware of any claims. With regards to police overweight checks the tolerance levels were quite wide, to ensure they were certain that a vehicle was overweight before any action was taken.
- A supplementary question involved asking who operated private weighbridges and who policed them e.g. Fulbourn Mill. In reply they were often business owned, needed to weigh their own vehicles but then also opening the facility to the public to obtain additional income. They were required to be certified by the local authority.
- How many staff were undertaking inspections compared to management? There were 22 officers and support staff, with the majority of posts involved in front line delivery.
- In answer to who benefitted from proceeds of crime confiscation judgements the Government received the largest share of any money / recovered / goods liquidated with the Service receiving approximately a third, and if a victim could be identified, the Service would seek a victim compensation order to try to put the victim back into the position they were before the loss occurred.
- Concern that rogue traders appeared to be targeted during bank holiday markets etc. with the Members asking that if it was known, what would stop them deliberately avoiding trading at such times. It was explained that as large profits were involved

they often considered it worth taking the risk getting court, especially where organised crime was involved. Most enforcement activity was now intelligence led, with information often provided by other market stall holders. This included spot checks at car boot sales

- Highlighting Rogue Trader prosecutions as detailed in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.4 some of these appeared to have received low penalty fines compared to the scale of the crime committed. It was explained that fines were often no deterrent to such traders, however financial investigations run in tandem with the threat of a seizure of assets which were seen as a concern by illegal traders.
- With reference to paragraph 5.5 'securing the future of primary authority within the authority' reading that it was "critical that the Service was appointed as one of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's 'strategic partners' in their selection process later in the year" one Member asked what was preventing this? It was explained that the Service operated in a competitive environment and actively encouraged businesses to seek its advice. Resourcing had been an issue with a key officer having left during the report timeframe but that new staff had been recruited and was therefore no longer an issue.

Having commented on the service being delivered by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Trading Standards on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council,

It was resolved unanimously:

To endorse the report.

150. COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENTS TO THE A141 HUNTINGDON AND ST IVES AREA TRANSPORT STUDY STEERING GROUP

Both the A141 Huntingdon Study and St Ives Area Transport study are in the early stages of development. However, the project team wish to set up the A141 Huntingdon and St Ives Area Transport Study Steering Group in preparation for Councillor involvement being required. The proposal as set out in the report was for the establishment of single advisory group to be titled the A141 Huntingdon and St Ives Area Transport Study Steering Group to comprise of two Cambridgeshire County Councillors for each study, four in total and to appoint two substitutes with the same number being appointed from Huntingdonshire District Council.

The details and terms of reference for the Steering Group were to be agreed at the first meeting with it envisaged that the Steering Group would make recommendations to this Committee and to Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet. Ultimate responsibility for the St Ives Area Transport Study, as well as the A141 Huntingdon Study through delegated powers from the Combined Authority, resides with this Council's Economy and Environment Committee.

Having received expressions of interest from relevant local Members to serve on the group in advance of the meeting the Chairman proposed names and an additional recommendation to make any changes required in light of any clashes of appointments that might occur as at the current time it was not known who the district council appointees would be. These were fully supported by the Committee.

One Member asked whether the Member Steering Group was to be held in public or private. In reply the presenting officer stated that the intention was that they would be held in public.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) approve the establishment of the A141 Huntingdon and St Ives Area Transport Study Steering Group,
- b) appoint the following four County Councillors to the Steering Group –

Councillors Criswell and Fuller representing the St Ives Area with Councillor Reynolds as the substitute
Councillors Sanderson and Wilson with Councillor Shellens as the substitute member.
- c) To delegate authority to the Executive Director in consultation with the Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee to make any changes to Cambridgeshire County Council membership of the Member Steering Group if necessary, in order to co-ordinate membership with Huntingdonshire District Council.

151. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – JULY 2018

The Committee received the Finance and Performance report for Place and Economy Services (P&E) in order to comment on the projected financial and performance outturn position, as at the end of July 2018. It was again explained that there had been little change since the previous month's report.

The main issues highlighted were:

Revenue: The Service has started the financial year with two significant pressures for Coroners Services and Waste (both which came under Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee). The P&E service was showing that it was now requiring to make £939K savings by year-end to bring the budget back into balance, and this would be either be through new underspends and additional income, or planned reductions in service if required at the later stages of the year.

Capital: King's Dyke the estimated project costs were being discussed with Kier and options for value engineering were being explored. Work was underway with partners identifying how the funding pressure was to be addressed. A detailed report originally scheduled for the current meeting was now included on the forward plan for the October meeting.

Performance: Of the twelve performance indicators, one was currently red, four were amber, and seven were green. The indicator currently showing as red was 'The average journey time per mile during the morning peak on the most congested routes' At year-end, the current forecast was that the above performance indicator would remain as red, five would be amber and six green.

In discussion, the County Council Cycling Champion commenting on the General

Cycling section, asked whether it was possible to have data from existing traffic counters to monitor the take up on new cycleways as a way of showing their value and as a criteria to measure their success. **Action Andy Preston agreed to look into this**

Having reviewed and commented on the report, it was unanimously resolved to:

note the report.

152. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE TRAINING PLAN,

This report invited the Committee to review its training plan. There had been no updates since the last meeting. The Chairman suggested if there were any additions required, Members should contact Democratic Services directly.

The Committee was informed that all future Friday member seminars would as a matter of course include invitations to District councillors to attend.

It was resolved:

To note the Training Plan.

153. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN

This report invited the Committee to review its agenda plan and training plan, The following updates were orally provided to the agenda plan at the meeting:

Non key decision report addition to the October Committee meeting:

‘Response to the Government Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy Consultation on

- a) Permitted development for shale gas exploration
- b) Inclusion of shale gas production project in the nationally significant Infrastructure Project Regime’.

The report ‘Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Funding’ move from October to December.

Key decision additional report to December Committee: ‘Highways Response to West Cambridge Master Planning Report’.

It was resolved:

To note the agenda Plan as updated.

154. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING 10 A.M. THURSDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2018

**Chairman:
11th October 2018**

