County Council – Minutes

Please note the meeting can be viewed on YouTube at the following link:
Extraordinary Full Council Meeting - 25/01/22

Date: Tuesday 25 January 2022

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

Due to the heightened risk arising from the Omicron variant, the Council's Group Leaders had agreed to increase social distancing at the venue by restricting attendance at this meeting to a quorum of 21. Members who did not attend the meeting in person were invited to attend via Zoom but were not allowed to vote.

Present:

Chaired by Councillor S Kindersley (Vice-Chair)

A Beckett
C Boden
S Count
P Coutts
S Criswell
L Dupré
R Fuller
I Gardener
B Goodliffe
S Hoy
J King
S King
P McDonald
M McGuire
E Meschini
B Milnes
L Nethsingha
K Reynolds
T Sanderson
N Shailer

Present via Zoom:

M Atkins
K Billington
A Bradnam
A Bulat
D Connor
S Corney
A Costello
H Cox Condron
C Daunton
S Ferguson
J French
D Giles
M Goldsack
N Gough
J Gowing
R Hathorn
A Hay
M Howell
R Howitt
C Rae
J Schumann
A Sharp
P Slatter
S Taylor
F Thompson
S van de Ven
A Whelan
G Wilson

Apologies for Absence:

No apologies were received.

It was proposed by the Vice-Chair, and agreed unanimously, to suspend standing orders for Section 19.1 – Standing to Speak, Part 4.1, Council Procedure Rules, Part 4 Rules of Procedure to enable Members to sit while speaking so that their voices could be picked up by the microphone system.

37. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Kindersley, Sanderson and Gardener declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in Agenda Item No. 2(b) as members of the Council's Planning Committee. Councillors Kindersley and Sanderson stated that they would not be taking part in the actual debate or voting on the motion in order to avoid the risk of predetermination. Councillor Gardener stated that he would be taking part in the debate and voting on the motion at Council and therefore would not attend the Planning Committee meeting.

Councillor Goodliffe declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in Agenda Item No. 2(a) as a children and young person's mental health professional.

38. Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure 10

Four motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

a) Motion from Councillor Samantha Hoy

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Hoy and seconded by Councillor Goodliffe.

> To identify and open Young Person's Mental Health Hubs throughout Cambridgeshire
>
> Young person's mental health services are in crisis. Waiting lists for counselling are months long and often rely on referrals that are complex for some families to understand. The situation has been made worse by the pandemic.
>
> In July 2020, data from the NHS suggested that one in six young people now has a probable mental health disorder, up from one in nine in 2017. The Children's Commissioner reported that in 2019/2020 there had been a 35% increase in referrals to children's mental health services, yet only a 4% increase in support.
>
> Mental health charity 'Young Minds' in 2019 surveyed young people about their experiences of early support, two-thirds told it that they could not find support when they first needed it. Three-quarters (78%) of young people in the same survey said that they had had to manage their mental health on their own when they couldn't find help elsewhere, but only 17% felt confident in their ability to manage their mental health by themselves.
>
> It is acknowledged that the earlier a young person gets support for their mental health, the more effective that support will be and so it is important that this Council opens early help hubs for young people's mental health.
>
> An early support hub is a mental health and wellbeing hub that provides open access, flexible, early support for young people under 25 in their communities. The centres bring together various services to support young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing - such as youth services; sexual health, drug and alcohol, health and wellbeing practitioners; and mental health practitioners - before they hit crisis point. The hubs, which would be accessed without referrals from doctors or schools and offer support up to the age of 25, already exist in some areas.

Whilst the Government does need to also recognise this issue and provide funding, the Council must do something in the short term. The performance of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is poor compared to other areas and with just 0.86% of the CCG's budget spent on young people's mental health it is clearly not being made a priority for them. It is very disappointing that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG appears as one of five areas with the worst performance on the table for 'CCGs with the lowest performance on mental health service spending and waiting times for children in England for 2019/20.'

It is acknowledged that there is not a bottomless pit of money, but the Council should see this as an invest to save. The evaluation of the 'Mind the Gap' project in the London Borough of Camden showed that for every £1 invested there was a social return on investment of £3.40 (social and economic benefit).

This Council resolves to:-

1. ask the Chief Executive to write to Young Minds to join its call on Government to #fundthehubs – and press for more Government funding in mental health;

2. ask the Chief Executive to write to the CCG to urge it to urgently increase its proportion of spend on young people's mental health;

3. with decentralisation, work with the CCG to open an Early Help hub in each locality; and

4. produce a guide to mental health and wellbeing support available to young people in their area, mapping the help available across both the statutory and voluntary sectors and providing information on how to access that help.

Following discussion, the motion on being put to the vote was carried unanimously.

b) Motion from Councillor Steve Criswell

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Criswell and seconded by Councillor Fuller.

This Council is in receipt of a planning application to construct a healthcare waste energy recovery facility [incinerator] at the Envar Composting site in Somersham. In light of the Council's motion approved in relation to the incinerator proposed in Wisbech on 21st July 2020, that raised similar concerns to those raised for this proposal, it is vital that we as a Council act now to highlight concerns on the use of incineration at this site and support the issues and objections raised by our local residents.

The Council recognises that its Planning Committee will need to consider this proposal in due course on purely material planning related matters and that members of that committee and their substitutes will need to leave this meeting and take no part in the debate of this motion to demonstrate that they are not pre-determined in that decision.

Incinerators can be wasteful. We should be reducing waste wherever possible. The huge increase in the use of plastic during the pandemic should act as a catalyst to increase efforts to provide reusable, recyclable and sterilisable alternatives. An incinerator's continuous demand for fuel does nothing to incentivise waste reduction.

Incineration is a reaction to a problem rather than a solution. We do not need another one.

Energy from waste is not 'green energy' unless it is derived from renewable rather than finite resources.

Burning waste produces emissions. This is demonstrated by the need for strict controls and monitoring. However, it is impossible to guarantee the removal of all harmful pollutants, such as dioxins from those emissions. The Environment Agency's role is to ensure legal standards are met, not to ensure the elimination of risk. Public Health England guidance states that "While it is not possible to rule out adverse health effects from these incinerators completely, any potential effect for people living close by is likely to be very small". 'Very small' is too big if it is avoidable. Constructing an additional incinerator is avoidable.

Transporting waste further than necessary is harmful. The need to keep fuelling a new incinerator will create pressure to transport waste from far and wide. This uses fuel, increases road congestion and creates air pollution, which is contrary to this Council's climate change and Net Zero aspirations for the County. Climate Change and Environment Strategy

It is important that local people see that the elected councillors of Cambridgeshire County Council understand the strength of public opinion against the incineration proposed at this site.

In doing so, Council notes the motion proposed by Councillor Count and passed by Council in December 2019 acknowledging the part the Council can play in improving air quality throughout the county.

It also notes the motion proposed by Councillor Tierney and passed by Council in July 2020 objecting to the building of a waste incinerator in Wisbech.

This Council supports the concerns raised by numerous local residents against the construction of a healthcare waste energy recovery facility [incinerator] at Envar Composting in Somersham.

In supporting the above this Council states that:

1. This Council will send a letter to the Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to raise the concerns being made by local residents on these proposals and to lobby Government to move away from incineration and instead, focus on the circular economy and using green solutions for energy generation.

2. This Council encourages the healthcare industry to move away from the use of plastics in favour of more sustainable alternatives.

3. Furthermore, in the meantime, the Council encourages those giving rise to clinical waste in this county to fully utilise existing facilities including the incinerator located at the Addenbrooke's Hospital site.

Following discussion under Part 4 Rules of Procedure, Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 15.5 of the Constitution, more than 14 Members requested a recorded vote on this matter.

After further discussion, the motion on being put to the vote was carried, as set out in the recorded vote in Appendix A.

c) Motion from Councillor Simon King

The following motion was proposed by Councillor S King and seconded by Councillor McGuire.

> Motion to safeguard the enhanced budget put forward by the previous Conservative administration with regards to the improved maintenance of roads, footpaths and cycleways and the additional funding allocated for flood prevention measures.
>
> This Council requests that the Joint Administration undertake to continue the commitments made by the previous Conservative administration's budget amendments, and that the increased investment in our roads, footpaths, cycleways and flood prevention will be honoured in full and that any underspends within the Highways maintenance budget will be ring-fenced for roads, footpaths, cycleways and flood prevention.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Councillor Count and seconded by Councillor McGuire to suspend Part 4 Rules of Procedure, Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 15.5 of the Constitution to allow the number of Members required to request a recorded vote to be proportionate to the quorum of Members in attendance at the Council meeting.

On being put to the vote the motion to suspend standing orders was lost.

[Voting pattern: 10 Conservatives in favour; 7 Liberal Democrats, 3 Labour and 1 Independent against.]

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

[Voting pattern: 10 Conservatives in favour; 7 Liberal Democrats, 3 Labour and 1 Independent against.]

d) Motion from Councillor Kevin Reynolds

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Reynolds and seconded by Councillor Boden.

> Motion to safeguard against the effects of the de-prioritisation of health as a consequence of the Joint Administration's reorganisation of committees
>
> This Council notes that the merger of the Adults and Health Committees presents a potential danger that neither adult social care or the health of the wider community will be best served.
>
> Therefore, this Council requests that the Joint Administration agree with this Conservative proposal that, as part of the return of the corporate peer review team, they are asked to prioritise and pay particular attention to examining how the new arrangements are working with regard to the safe and equitable delivery of these vital services across the County.

Following discussion under Part 4 Rules of Procedure, Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 15.5 of the Constitution, a recorded vote on this matter was requested and received no objections from other Members.

Following further discussion, on being put to the vote the motion was lost, as set out in the recorded vote in Appendix A.

Chair
8th February 2022

Appendix A

Agenda Item No. 2 - Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure 10

b) Motion from Councillor Steve Criswell

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COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote	COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote
BECKETT A	Lib Dem				X	KING J	Con	X			
BODEN C	Con	X				KING S	Con	X			
COUNT S	Con	X				MCDONALD P	Lib Dem				X
COUTTS P	Lib Dem				X	MCGUIRE M	Con	X			
CRISWELL S	Con	X				MESCHINI E	Lab				X
DUPRE L	Lib Dem				X	MILNES B	Lib Dem				X
FULLER R	Con	X				NETHSINGHA L	Lib Dem				X
GARDENER I	Con	X				REYNOLDS K	Con	X			
GOODLIFFE B	Lab				X	SANDERSON T	Ind			X	
HOY S	Con	X				SHAILER N	Lib Dem				X
KINDERSLEY S	Lib Dem			X		Total		10	0	2	9

d) Motion from Councillor Kevin Reynolds

COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote	COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote
BECKETT A	Lib Dem		X			KING J	Con	X			
BODEN C	Con	X				KING S	Con	X			
COUNT S	Con	X				MCDONALD P	Lib Dem		X		
COUTTS P	Lib Dem		X			MCGUIRE M	Con	X			
CRISWELL S	Con	X				MESCHINI E	Lab		X		
DUPRE L	Lib Dem		X			MILNES B	Lib Dem		X		
FULLER R	Con	X				NETHSINGHA L	Lib Dem		X		
GARDENER I	Con	X				REYNOLDS K	Con	X			
GOODLIFFE B	Lab		X			SANDERSON T	Ind		X		
HOY S	Con	X				SHAILER N	Lib Dem		X		
KINDERSLEY S	Lib Dem		X			Total		10	11	0	0