

**ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**Time:** 10.00 a.m. to 11.29 a.m.

**Present:** Councillors: I Bates (Chairman), E Cearns (Vice-Chairman), J Clark, B Chapman Councillor Mason), Councillor Harford, R Henson, D Jenkins, N Kavanagh, M McGuire, M Shuter and J Williams

**Apologies:** Councillor J Schumann.

**252 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**253. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September was agreed as a correct record.

The Minutes action log was noted and the following issue raised:

- a. 'Minute 189- Finance and Performance Report November 2015 - Land acquisition and licence agreements to allow construction to commence on Yaxley To Farcet cycleway / walkway' - making reference to the latest information he had been provided with, Councillor McGuire sought assurance that, as the land acquisition issue was close to resolution, building the cycleway/ walkway would be treated as a matter urgency as a consequence of the length of time it had taken to reach the current position. The Executive Director provided assurance that once all the actions were completed, the Scheme would receive the highest priority.
- b. Madingley Park and Ride Site - A Member highlighted that with the amount of building work nearby and the use of it made by builders, it was currently at capacity. In response it was indicated officers were aware of the issue.
- c. Minute 247b) Member Led Review Group being set up to analyse completed cycle schemes – The Vice Chairman reminded Members of the need to get back to either the Executive Director Graham Hughes or Bob Menzies if they wished to volunteer to be part of the Group. Currently no nominations had been received and there was a need for cross party representation. Councillor Henson put his name forward for consideration.
- d. Minute 247c) Floating Bus Stops – with reference to the action carried out to provide the detailed report to Members of the Committee, **it was suggested that the report should be added to the public website and given publicity so that Members of the public could access it. Action Mike Davies**

- e. Minute 251 Busway Defects Report – Councillor Mason confirmed that he had received the e-mail sent to him on 5<sup>th</sup> September included as Appendix 1 to the Minute Action Log which explained that the update report was only going to General Purposes Committee in November in line with standard Council practice that a report should only go to the Committee making a decision.
- f. Minute 251b) Garden Villages – Councillor McGuire as an update asked if a submission had been received from Huntingdonshire District Council and the developer regarding a proposal for a garden village and whether any action had been taken to counter the false impression being created that the County Council supported the proposal. In reply it was indicated that currently without more details being provided on transport / education issues, it was too early to confirm whether the Council supported the proposal or not. In response to a request to clarify the issue, **the Executive Director undertook to write to Huntingdonshire District Council as the planning authority to highlight the issues that required clarification. Action**

## 254. PETITIONS / PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no petitions to be considered.

One Member of the public Wendy Blythe, Chair of the Federation of Cambridge Residents Associations was invited to speak having registered a request in advance under the Council Constitution public speaking rights arrangements.

She highlighted that the Federation of Cambridge Residents Associations (FeCRA) welcomed the action point logged in the last minutes of the Economy & Environment Committee 1<sup>st</sup> September Committee meeting *namely c) reading "To agree to spokes discussing setting up a Member Led Review to assess the success of recent cycleway schemes / floating bus stops and crossings"*.

As part of her presentation the FeCRA Chair highlighted that the budgets for the Hills Road and Huntingdon Road Cycleway Schemes together had been £1.8m and, to date, had overspent by £1.4m. Phase 1 of Hills Road cycleway which had begun on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015 had been scheduled to end 'by end of summer 2015 was still not complete, and as a result, was causing major disruption for residents and road users. She highlighted local concerns about safety, consultation and the quality of the work undertaken, as well as environmental concerns.

As further cycle schemes were being planned under the City Deal and Cycling Cities initiatives, she highlighted that residents across Cambridge were becoming alarmed about the impact on their own areas, and questioned whether they represented value for money. To help inform future schemes she suggested that the Committee should, without delay, undertake a review of recent cycleway schemes, including the first phase of the Hills Road Scheme. She suggested that the review would not be a glossy document but should aim to cover budget, timetable, consultation, safety, design and environmental and maintenance issues. The document should undertake a straightforward assessment and offered to provide a template form which her organisation had prepared.

She highlighted that at the 27th May 2014 Economy and Environment Committee Meeting which approved cycleway schemes for Hills and Huntingdon Roads, Mark Lloyd, the former Chief Executive of Cambridgeshire County Council had recommended a review of the schemes which had been filmed and her question was why had this not been done? (Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?>) She highlighted that residents were well-informed about the issues and were keen to help support the process in a constructive way through participation in a working party.

The Chairman invited the Committee Members to ask any questions of clarification. In response a question was raised on whether the review she was envisaging was to be greater than Cambridge City, making the point and in referring back to a comment that the Chairman had made earlier in the meeting, that not all cycle schemes were undertaken by the County Council Cycling Projects Team with projects outside of the City being delivered by local cycle teams. Another question was whether any suggestions were being made in relation to other proposed cycle way schemes. Wendy Blythe responded that they were suggesting reviewing the Hills Road scheme to learn lessons from, as it was a major route into Cambridge. She made further reference to the template which they had produced which had been passed to the Committee's Chairman and the Vice Chairman and the Leader of Cambridge City Council. She hoped to ensure the highlighted issues would be sufficiently covered in future projects and to this end resident representatives hoped to engage in a constructive way with the County Council on the working group.

The Chairman thanked Wendy Blythe for her questions, highlighting that the membership had been discussed at the Committee's Spokes meeting and that nominations were currently still being sought from Councillors. **A written response to the issues she had raised would be sent no later than 10 working days after the meeting. Action: M Davies**

## **255. SERVICE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE DRAFT REVENUE BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS FOR 2017-18 TO 2021-22**

This report provided an overview of the Draft Business Plan Revenue Proposals for Economy, Transport and Environment (ETE) within the remit of the Committee.

Sections 1 and 2 set out an overview and how the Revenue Budget had been built and included details on inflation forecasts and demographic and cost pressures, and transformation workstream details. Attention was drawn to section 3 the summary of the Draft Revenue Budget including the table in section 3.1 showing the total amount of savings required for each of the following five years with Section 3.2 highlighting that for 2017-18 the majority of the £28.9m saving requirement had been found, but that there was just under £6m still to be identified.

Section 4 provided a narrative overview of the Committee's Draft Revenue Programme with Appendix 1 of the report setting out the full table of proposals, taking account of a series of deleted, amended and new proposals which were also summarised in Appendix 3. Appendix 2 provided the associated Community Impact Assessments.

The main elements contained in Appendix 3 highlighted that:

- the majority of the impacts of demography on services would in future need to be absorbed by those services;
- a small number of the proposals that had been identified and agreed by Members last year were now considered to be unachievable and had been listed;
- a small number of proposals that had been identified last year were not expected to yield the level of savings originally expected and these were listed;
- with the emphasis this year on transformation, the table also contained the items that have been identified within ETE. While this was the current list of proposals, as transformation was a continuous process, it was expected that others would be identified going forward.

Given the level of savings required by the Council as a whole for 2017/18, Appendix 1 contained all current and new proposals that were considered achievable. From the Community Impact Assessments in Appendix 2 and discussions with Members at the initial Budget workshops, it was recognised that a number of the proposals in Appendix 1, although technically achievable, were likely to have very significant impacts and could therefore be considered undesirable. To aid the discussion, a table with the issues considered to be of concern to Members following the workshops was tabled and is included as Appendix 1 to these Minutes.

Through consideration of the report and the additional tabled paper, Members were asked to consider the full list of savings proposals in Appendix 1 to the report and identify any savings that should be removed. In doing so the Committee was reminded that although the Council was not developing its Business Plan through the application of strict cash limits for each service, any savings removed would increase the pressure on the Council as the amounts taken out would still require to be found from other areas. Members were therefore also asked to give some thought / suggestions as to what could replace any recommended removed savings which would go forward to the General Purposes Committee for their consideration.

The Executive Director also highlighted that:

- £30k Street Lighting Team savings had been taken out as they had already been achieved in 2016-17 and therefore couldn't be made again.
- The increased bus lane enforcement income target to be accrued from fines for motorists driving in restricted bus lanes had been taken out, as there had been better than expected compliance by motorists, leading to less fines being imposed.
- Reference (REF) B/R 4.006 Reinstatement of Funding for Non-Statutory Concessionary Fares – this had been an agreed saving in the Budget last year that had later been reversed and paid for from reserves. As a result, it had been added in the papers as set out on page 38 but required a positive affirmation from the Committee to bring it back in the Budget to be shown as a pressure, as otherwise it would disappear.

The Chairman highlighted that Councillor van de Ven the Chairwoman of the Total Transport Steering Group had been due to speak at the Committee but had been taken ill that morning and was therefore unable to attend. As a result, Committee Members'

attention was drawn to the comments she had provided in advance in an e-mail dated 10<sup>th</sup> October reading as follows (Note the letter from Fenland District Council has been included as appendix 2 to these minutes):

*.....at its June 29 meeting, the Total Transport Steering Group was asked to consider the next steps on the Cambridgeshire Future Transport budget for subsidized buses and community transport. It was agreed that all members of the Steering Group should take the very significant option of withdrawing all subsidized bus services back to their groups for discussion.*

*The next meeting took place on October 5, where Members reported back that the item had been considered and was deemed unacceptable due to the profound negative impact this would have on people who depend on these services. These concerns have been strongly articulated by Fenland District Council in a letter that the Group agreed should be circulated to the EE Committee. The South Cambridgeshire District Council representative concurred with the Fenland view. The Fenland paper rightly points out that no credible alternative services to subsidized buses have been worked out. The Steering Group noted that officer resource has been dedicated to the Total Transport pilot in the Ely area.*

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Simon King from Fenland District Council also spoke in support of removing the savings option of reducing Passenger Transport Support of £694k due to the extremely inequitable impact it would have on Fenland residents. Included in his presentation was to highlight that Fenland was not the same as Cambridge with twenty five per cent of Fenland's population living in villages and with many people not having access to a car. As a result they were far more reliant on public transport to go to work / access vital services. In his opinion to take away the community transport subsidy would cost the County Council more in the long run and therefore required more work to be undertaken to identify further options.

In reply to a question asking whether Fenland District Council contributed to their local Community Transport, Councillor King responded indicating that they provided £55k per annum.

Members' comments / questions included:

- Highlighting that the Total Transport Pilot Scheme in Ely had shown how much more complex the issues had been than originally envisaged, with the views of the service operators and users often very entrenched. In addition, unlike Fenland, South Cambridgeshire did not have its own Community Transport organisation. More work was required and therefore it was not considered appropriate to roll out the initiative Countywide in the forthcoming municipal year.
- The present savings proposal did not take account of the Devolution proposals for a combined authority and it would be inappropriate to undertake such a substantial cut at the present time when devolution proposals included taking back public transport locally.

- The need for a proper integrated transport system was a Council-wide issue and should be treated as a corporate pressure.
- The Vice Chairman highlighted the need for a more outcome focused approach making the point that cuts made the previous year had already had an adverse effect on service provision and it would be counter-intuitive to proceed with the savings proposal for the forthcoming municipal year. He suggested the saving proposals in the tabled paper were unviable or would take away the ability to provide services going forward. A more holistic approach was needed which incorporated health implications. He also repeated his request that he had made at General Purposes Committee that there should not be the presumption that the General Council Tax should not rise and that the papers should set out all potential scenarios. Another Member made the point that by not increasing General Council Tax and if in addition the Adult Social Care precept 2% was also not taken, this could lead to a loss over 5 years of approximately a £100m of revenue resources.
- One Member suggested that the text included under section 6 'Alignment with Corporate Priorities' should be making specific reference to the needs of Fenland. Other Members also supported that Fenland was a special case due to its high levels of deprivation and that withdrawing bus subsidy could have a profoundly detrimental effect on mental and physical health in isolated communities. There was a need to build on the Community Transport work currently being undertaken.
- Councillor Mason making reference to ongoing investigations into the Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT) Company stated that reducing subsidies at the same time would be completely inappropriate.

The Committee in discussion fully supported reinstating the £125,000 funding within the ETE budget of B/R 4.006 Funding of Non-Statutory Concessionary Fares.

Councillor McGuire moved the following additional recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Harford.

*“To recommend to General Purposes Committee that the following saving proposals on page 39 of the report should not be taken as savings and for alternative funding proposals to be considered corporately in their place:*

- *B/R 6.104 Reduction in Passenger Transport Support -£694,000*
- *B/R 105 Reduce staff following reduction in provision of Passenger Transport Services -£90,000*
- *B/R 106 Remove Transport and Infrastructure Policy and Funding Services that are not Self-Funding -£20,000*
- *B/R 6.107 Remove Transport and Infrastructure Policy and Funding Services that are not self-funding -£30,000”*

Having commented on the draft revenue saving proposals that are within the remit of

the Economy and Environment Committee for 2017/18 to 2021/22,

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the overview and context provided for the 2017-18 to 2021-22 Business Plan Revenue Proposals for the Service.
- b) Agree to reinstate funding within the ETE budget B/R 4.006 Funding of Non-Statutory Concessionary Fares (£125,000)
- c) Recommend to General Purposes Committee that the following saving proposals are not progressed and for alternative funding proposals to be considered corporately in their place:
  - B/R 6.104 Reduction in Passenger Transport Support -£694,000
  - B/R 105 Reduce staff following reduction in provision of Passenger Transport Services -£90,000
  - B/R 106 Remove Transport and Infrastructure Policy and Funding Services that are not Self-Funding -£20,000
  - B/R 6.107 Remove Transport and Infrastructure Policy and Funding Services that are not self-funding -£30,000

## 256. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT - AUGUST 2016

This report with the detail included in Appendix 1, provides the financial position for the whole of the ETE Service up to the end of August 2016.

The headlines set out in the covering report were as follows:

**Revenue:** There were no significant variances and ETE was showing a £93k forecast underspend.

**Capital:** The capital programme was forecast to be on target and £4.1m of the estimated £10.5m Capital Programme Variation has been met. King's Dyke had a forecast variance of -£2.6m and Connecting Cambridgeshire was forecasting a -£1.1m variance as the planned expenditure had been re-profiled. It was anticipated that additional variation would start to appear to contribute further to the overall Capital Programme Variation in future months.

Of the fourteen performance indicators, two were currently red, two amber and ten were green. The indicators that were currently red were:

- Local bus journeys originating in the authority area.
- The average journey per mile during the morning peak of the most congested routes.

At year-end, the current forecast was that one performance indicator would be red (local bus journeys originating in the authority area), eight would be amber and five green. Members' comments / questions included:

- In response to a question on whether this reports performance indicators were for this Committee or Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee, it was explained that the finance contents included were for both Committees but that only Economy and Environment Committee performance indicators were shown.
- Councillor Mason made reference to an e-mail he had sent to the Chairman for which he was still awaiting a response regarding whether the Revenue Budget included provision for the repair of the Guided Busway. It was indicated that a reply had been drafted and would be sent shortly. *(Post meeting note: The reply from the officers had in fact been sent to Councillor Mason the day before the Committee meeting).* As an oral update at the meeting it was explained that the day to day management operating costs and routine repair and maintenance were fully covered by the Access Charges, as the Busway was set up to be self-funding as set out in the contractual agreement to ensure there were no revenue implications. This was why there was no line in the Revenue Account. In respect of repair and rectification of defects, these were still subject to the ongoing legal action for recovery from the original contractor.
- Councillor Mason queried whether the Guided Busway Performance Indicator statistics were valid and whether they represented travel along the whole of the Guideway, or included those passengers who hopped on and off for local journeys around Huntingdon, which in his opinion should not be included. In response, it was indicated that the methodology used was consistent in terms of showing whether there had been an increase or decrease in patronage, and the table in paragraph 4.5 demonstrated that there had been a steady increase in patronage, which remained above the original projections. **The Executive Director agreed to clarify the basis on which the figures are calculated. Action: Graham Hughes.**
- There was a query regarding the performance indicator “the average journey time per mile during the morning peak on the most congested routes” on how, as the latest data was from September 2014 to August 2015, officers were confident that the current status which was red, would change to amber as the stated year-end prediction. It was explained that the Indicator did have a time lag with the year-end being at 2016-17 and this would be one that officers would need to liaise with Members on to ascertain whether it was still appropriate to continue with when seeking to agree a new set. **It was suggested that other performance indicators should also be reviewed for relevance including ‘Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area’.** **Action Graham Amis to feed into SMT Review.** There was a further query on whether for this one more up to date information could not be obtained from Stagecoach which, it was suggested, must be available to provide a monthly breakdown. As a response it was indicated that it was likely to be commercially sensitive business information that they might not wish to disclose.
- One Member in noting there was a separate line in the report for ‘Highways Maintenance’ asked whether there was a separate line for ‘Cycleway Maintenance’ as he had concerns whether there was a budget to maintain cycleways once they had been built. It was clarified in response that there was

no separate line for Cycle Maintenance, as expenditure was included within the Highways Maintenance budget.

Having reviewed and commented on the report contents:

It was resolved to note the report.

## **257. COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENT TO THE WISBECH ACCESS STRATEGY STEERING GROUP**

Growth Deal Funding of £1 million has been allocated to the Wisbech Access Strategy with a further £10.5m for scheme delivery on the condition that works result in an acceptable and deliverable package of measures. The Strategy has now reached a stage where Councillors need to be involved to give a steer regarding schemes going forward and views sought on public engagement and consultation.

A report was received to consider the establishment of a Wisbech Access Strategy Steering Group and to appoint two Cambridgeshire County Councillors to the Steering Group. Democratic Services had written in advance to the four local members and had received three requests for consideration from Councillors Clapp, Hoy and Lay to be put forward as nominations to the two positions.

The Chairman proposed in order to have cross party representation that Councillor Hoy and Lay should be appointed which was seconded by the Vice-Chairman.

It was unanimously resolved:

- a) to approve the establishment of a Wisbech Access Strategy Steering Group.
- b) To appoint Councillors Hoy and Lay as the two County Councillors to serve on the Wisbech Access Strategy Steering Group.

## **258. ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND SERVICE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN**

It was resolved:

to note the agenda plan as set out, subject to the changes orally reported as follows:

- Removal of the Corporate Energy Strategy from the November Meeting as this would now be going to General Purposes Committee as the appropriate decision making Committee.
- Abbey Chesterton Bridge Approval to Construct moving from 1<sup>st</sup> December to the 12<sup>th</sup> January meeting

Chairman  
10<sup>th</sup> November 2016