



SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2004

REPORTS AND MINUTES

South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne, Cambridge
CB3 6ES

If the press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that exempt information is to be considered, it will be necessary to pass the following resolution: "That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph (quoting relevant paragraph) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act."

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: The Chairman and Members of the
South Cambridgeshire District Council

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the next meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **2.00 P.M.** on

THURSDAY THE 26TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2004

and I am, therefore to summon you to attend accordingly for the transaction of the business specified below.

DATED this 18TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2004

GJ HARLOCK

Finance and Resources Director

AGENDA

1. MINUTES

To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2003 as a correct record.

(Pages 1 - 12)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest from Members on matters arising in this agenda.

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received to date.

5. To Consider the Following Recommendations:

5 (a) Cabinet on 8th January 2004

Minute 4: Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05-2006/07

Cabinet recommend Council

(a) That the following be adopted as a three year programme of annual priorities from 2004/05:

- i. ESD and customer service
- ii. Affordable homes
- iii. Decent homes
- iv. Reducing the fear of crime
- v. Youth provision
- vi. Cleaner villages
- vii. The new settlements at Northstowe and Cambridge fringes
- viii. Rural Transport
- ix. Recycling and waste minimisation

- (b) Approval of the three year strategy to address annual priorities set out in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report and to request Management Team to prepare a more detailed three year programme to enable Members to plan for 2005/06 onwards;
- (c) That the Council will address priorities emerging from public consultation (fear of crime; youth provision; rural transport and cleaner villages) in 2005/06 and 2006/07.

5 (b) Cabinet 22nd January 2004
Minute 4: Management Team – Terms of Reference

Cabinet recommends Council that Management Team terms of reference as amended by Cabinet be included in the Constitution.

5 (c) Cabinet 29th January 2004
Minute 2: Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05-2006/07

Cabinet recommends to Council that the draft budget be produced incorporating:

- (a) a Band D Council Tax of £70 for 2004/05;
- (b) £503,000 additional spend for 2004/05 with recurring costs of £457,000 in subsequent years (both figures gross of the identified savings of £146,000), reflecting:
 - i. only the inescapable bids of £94,000;
 - ii. the CASCADE bid of £224,000, Land and Property Gazetteer bid of £20,000;
 - iii. the senior Strategic Housing Officer bid of £43,000; and
 - iv. the plastics recycling banks bid of £50,000, the latter of which being subject to:
 - £50,000 costs in 2004/05 being funded by the DEFRA grant; and
 - the ongoing revenue costs of £42,000 being funded from 'savings' within the Environmental Health portfolio;
- (c) the additional expenditure on refuse collection and street cleansing service estimated at £76,000.

5 (d) Cabinet 16th February 2004
Minute 3: Capital and Revenue Estimates and Council Tax

Cabinet recommends to Council

- (a) that the capital programme up to the year ending 31st March 2007 be approved as submitted, including the sum of £34.189 million to be spent on affordable housing for the years from 2004-05 to 2006-07;
- (b) that the revised revenue estimates for the year 2003-04 and the revenue estimates for 2004-05 be approved as submitted;
- (c) that the District Council demand for general expenses for 2004-05 be £3.821 millions;
- (d) that the Council sets the amount of Council Tax for each of the relevant categories of dwelling in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local

Government Finance Act 1992 on the basis of a District Council Tax for general expenses on a Band D property of £70 plus the relevant amounts required by the precepts of Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire County Council and the Cambridgeshire Police and Fire Authorities, details of those precepts and their effect to be circulated with the formal resolution required at the Council meeting; and

- (e) that the prudential indicators from the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities be approved.

5 (e) Cabinet 16th February 2004

Minute 4: Housing Revenue Account, Rents and Charges

Cabinet recommends to Council

- (a) that the Housing Revenue Account revised revenue estimates for 2003/04 and estimates 2004/05 be approved;
- (b) that the HRA rents for 2004/05 be increased by £1.25 per week (i.e. this means a maximum plus or minus variation of £1.25 per week)
- (c) that the following proposed charges be adopted:

Services and Facilities – Charges to Tenants

Service or Facility	Current charge per week £.p	Proposed charge per week £.p
Sheltered Housing Service Charge for Tenants		
• support element		
those in residence prior to 01/04/03	7.92	8.12
other tenants	14.42	14.78
• other (communal facilities etc)	5.50	5.64
Garage Rents		
• up to two garages rented to a Council house tenant	5.50	5.64
• other garages rented to a Council house tenant	5.50 +VAT	5.64 +VAT
• garages not rented to a Council house tenant	6.50 +VAT	6.66 +VAT
Rent reduction for tied accommodation occupied by wardens, deputy wardens or rangers	(12.13)	(12.43)

Services and Facilities – Sheltered Housing Service Charges to Equity Shareholders

Service or Facility	Current charge per week £.p	Proposed charge per week £.p
Sheltered Housing Service Charge for Shareholders		
schemes with all facilities		
those in residence prior to 1/04/03	16.20	16.61
other shareholders	22.70	23.27
schemes without a common room		
those in residence prior to 1/04/03	10.70	10.97
other shareholders	17.20	17.63

- (d) that the Portfolio Holder for Housing be given delegated authority to vary any charges that qualify for aid from the Supporting People Pot in order to bring such charges in line with the level of financial assistance available in 2004-05.

5 (f) Cabinet 16th February 2004

Minute 5: Investment Strategy (Treasury Management)

Cabinet recommends to Council that the investment strategy be approved as presented at that meeting.

5 (g) Development and Conservation Control Committee 4th February 2004

In its capacity as consultee, the Development and Conservation Control Committee recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development

commends the Refuse Design Guide to full Council, and invite full Council to adopt it as Council policy and, in due course, as a Supplementary Planning Document, subject to the amendment about flexibility of capacity suggested by the Head of Legal Services; and

The Portfolio Holder commends the Design Guide to Council.

6. SWAVESEY BYEWAYS RATE

To consider the recommendation of the Swavesey Byways Advisory Committee that the current level of byway maintenance be maintained and a rate of £0.90 be levied for 2004/05.

An explanatory report from the Chief Environmental Health Officer is attached.

(Pages 13 - 16)

7. CAMBOURNE OFFICE - RECORDED VOTING SYSTEM

To consider the recommendation of the Constitution Review Working Party that a recorded voting system should be purchased for the Cambourne office and the NOW Group given authority to incur the additional expenditure of £15,400 for the smart card readers and £5,154 for the software.

An extract from the Working Party minutes of the 13th January 2004 is attached.

(Pages 17 - 18)

8. PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2004/05

To consider the attached report of the Constitution Review Working Party recommendations on the frequency, programming and timing of Council meetings.

(Pages 19 - 22)

9. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

To consider other changes to the constitution recommended by the Constitution Working Party, as attached.

The Working Party is still considering changes and will report further to the next meeting of Council.

(Pages 23 - 24)

10. DESIGNATION OF LOCAL NATURE RESERVES

To consider the attached report from the Head of Legal Services.

(Pages 25 - 26)

11. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

To receive the Annual Audit Letter from the Council's external auditors, enclosed separately with this agenda for members.

The Audit Panel considered the Annual Audit Letter on 17th December 2003 and its minutes are attached in this agenda. Since that meeting, the external auditors have expressed a preference that the Letter be put in front of the whole Council.

12. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

None received to date.

13. NOTICES OF MOTION

To consider the following Notices of Motion standing in the name of Councillor R
Page:

13 (a) Recording of Meetings

In view of recent lapses of memory and misleading information, that all the meetings of this council and its various committees are recorded on mini-discs and saved for at least five years. Then for the sake of accuracy, and for the benefit of the electors and councillors, a complete and accurate record of the Council's business can be retained cheaply for use, if and when required.

13 (b) Stansted Airport Expansion

That this Council is totally opposed to the current unsustainable plan for the expansion of Stansted Airport. That the Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister for Transport, and the Australian Stansted apologist, Germaine Greer, be informed that this Council considers the new runway to be environmentally and socially unacceptable.

14. TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS

(* indicates that the Minutes have already been confirmed as a correct record)

14 (a) Cabinet 18th December 2003* (Pages 27 - 36)

14 (b) Cabinet 8th January 2004*

Amendments to Minute 4 (Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05-2006/07) agreed on 22nd January 2004 have been incorporated.

(Pages 37 - 42)

14 (c) Cabinet 22nd January 2004*

Amendments to Minute 3 (Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05-2006/07) agreed on 16th February 2004 have been incorporated.

(Pages 43 - 50)

14 (d) Cabinet 29th January 2004*

Amendments to Minute 2 (Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05-2006/07) agreed on 16th February 2004 have been incorporated.

(Pages 51 - 56)

14 (e) Cabinet 16th February 2004 (Pages 57 - 66)

14 (f) New Offices Working Group 15th December 2003* (Pages 67 - 74)

14 (g) New Offices Working Group 13th January 2004 (Pages 75 - 80)

- 14 (h) Development and Conservation Control Committee 3rd December 2003*** (Pages 81 - 88)
- 14 (i) Development and Conservation Control Committee 7th January 2004***
Amendments to Minute 3(8) Gamlingay, agreed on 4th December 2003 have been incorporated.
(Pages 89 - 96)
- 14 (j) Development and Conservation Control Committee 4th February 2004** (Pages 97 - 106)
- 14 (k) Electoral Arrangements Committee 11th December 2003** (Pages 107 - 108)
- 14 (l) Employment Committee 22nd January 2004** (Pages 109 - 110)
- 14 (m) Scrutiny Committee 27th November 2003***
Amendments to Minute 1 (Apologies) agreed on 18th December 2003 have been incorporated.
(Pages 111 - 124)
- 14 (n) Scrutiny Committee 18th December 2003*** (Pages 125 - 130)
- 14 (o) Scrutiny Committee 22nd January 2004*** (Pages 131 - 140)
- 14 (p) Scrutiny Committee 12th February 2004**
N.B. These Minutes have not yet been checked by the Chairman
(Pages 141 - 150)
- 14 (q) Audit Panel 17th December 2003** (Pages 151 - 154)
- 14 (r) Crime and Disorder Partnership Group 26th January 2004** (Pages 155 - 162)
- 15. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS ON JOINT MEETINGS**
South Cambridgeshire Area Joint Committee – 8th December 2003 (see Bulletin 14th January 2004)
South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership – 2nd December 2003 (see Bulletin 21st January 2004)
- 16. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS**
To note the Chairman's engagements since the last Council meeting
(Pages 163 - 164)

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 11 December 2003 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor RF Bryant – Chairman
Councillor Mrs MP Course – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: SJ Agnew, Dr DR Bard, CC Barker, RE Barrett, JD Batchelor, EW Bullman, NN Cathcart, JP Chatfield, RF Collinson, NS Davies, G Elsbury, TJ Flanagan, CJ Gravatt, R Hall, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs JM Healey, Dr JA Heap, Mrs EM Heazell, Mrs J Hughes, SGM Kindersley, RM Matthews, EL Monks, Mrs CAED Murfitt, JA Nicholas, CR Nightingale, Dr JPR Orme, DL Porter, JA Quinlan, Mrs DP Roberts, WH Saberton, NJ Scarr, J Shepperson, Mrs GJ Smith, JH Stewart, PL Stroude, RT Summerfield, Mrs LM Sutherland, Mrs VM Trueman, RJ Turner, Mrs BE Waters, DALG Wherrell, LJ Wilson and AW Wyatt MBE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor MP Howell, Mrs JE Lockwood, LCA Manning JP, Mrs JA Muncey, DJ Regan, RGR Smith and Mrs DSK Spink MBE.

Before the start of the meeting the Chairman made the following presentations:

Long service awards to

Daphne Foggin, Celia Macehiter, Andrew Dearlove and Peter Duncan

National Sheltered Housing Certificates to:

Eileen Price, Scheme Manager The Limes Bassingbourn,

Linda Hayden-Fish, Scheme Manager, Vicarage Close Melbourn,

Joy Hyde, Asst Scheme Manager Area 2

Sandra Peck Asst Scheme Manager Area 2,

Stella Mills, Asst Scheme Manager Area 3,

Barbara Harben, Scheme Manager Coolidge Gardens Cottenham,

Helen Harlow Asst Scheme Manager Area 1

NVQ Level 2 in customer services to

Jane Poole, Sandra Greenham and Lesley Thurley

HNC in Managing supported and sheltered housing to

Ann Pears, Area Manager, Area 2

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of Council held on 22nd and 25th September 2003 were confirmed as correct records.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following interests in items before Council were declared:

Councillor JA Quinlan	as a Chartered Town Planner in practice, in relation to agenda item 5.4, when he would leave the meeting as the Chairman of the Cambridge Cottage Housing Association
Councillor RT Summerfield	as the owner of a second home, in relation to agenda item 5.3
Councillor CC Barker	as the owner of a second home, in relation to agenda item 5.3

Councillor PL Stroude had no interest in planning application S/1762/03/RM, Longstanton (Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th November 2003) but, for the avoidance of later accusations, would leave the meeting at that point (which he did, although there was no debate)

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A message from Councillor Mrs Spink was read
- Councillor Mrs Muncey's cake had raised £100 for Children in Need
- Members were invited for seasonal refreshments at the end of the meeting

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to Council were considered:

5 (a) Northern Fringe - Delivery of Affordable Housing - Proposed Partnership Projects Manager - Joint Post (Minute 3, Cabinet 2nd October 2003)

RESOLVED

- (a) to approve the establishment of a jointly (with Cambridge City Council) funded post of Partnerships Project Manager with effect from 1st January 2004 to deliver affordable housing in partnership with registered Social Landlords and developers on the large strategic sites around the edge of Cambridge City including the Cambridge Northern Fringe (West);
- (b) that £4,000 be provided from the Cabinet contingency for 2003/04 and that £16,000 be included in the draft estimates for 2004/05 for this post.

5 (b) Best Value Strategy for Service Procurement (Minute 3, Cabinet 16th October 2003)

RESOLVED that the Best Value Strategy for Service Procurement be adopted as amended in the Cabinet minutes.

5 (c) Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions (Minute 3, Cabinet 27th November 2003)

Councillor NJ Scarr stated that, although he owned a property in Norfolk, it was not a second home. He then argued that a reduction in the Council Tax discount on second homes had no justification, would not produce much income and would not provide homes.

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder reported that the discount on second homes could not be reduced beyond 10% and that the reason for the recommendation on empty properties was that the Council would not gain financially, but would lose Council Tax from the HRA.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the discount on second homes be reduced to 10% of the full council tax charge effective from 1st April 2004;
- (b) that the current discount of 50% of the full council tax charge on long term empty

- properties remain;
- (c) that no new classes of discount be introduced, but that delegated powers be given to the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder to determine the individual cases referred to him, for consideration, by officers.

5 (d) Local Plan No. 2: Consideration of Representations to Further Proposed Modifications and Adoption (Minute 4, Cabinet 27th November 2003)

Councillor Quinlan left the meeting and Council

RESOLVED that

- (a) the proposed response to representations to the Further Proposed Modifications be agreed;
- (b) the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan No. 2, incorporating the Proposed Modifications (October 2002) and the Further Proposed Modifications (September 2003), be adopted;
- (c) a notice of the Council's intention to adopt Local Plan No. 2 be published;
- (d) subject to the Local Plan not being called-in by the Secretary of State, a notice of adoption of the Local Plan be published and consultees and representors be notified;
- (e) delegated authority be granted to the Development Services Director to make necessary technical changes to the Plan to ensure that the Plan is consistent and up to date;
- (f) a final version of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan be published; and
- (g) the "Affordable Housing for Local People" Supplementary Planning Guidance (June 1993) be rescinded.

5 (e) Community Strategy for South Cambridgeshire (Minute 5, Cabinet on 27th October 2003)

Noting that the Local Strategic Partnership Board had approved it, subject to comments on detail, Council

RESOLVED to endorse the Community Strategy for South Cambridgeshire, subject to the amendments approved by the Strategic Partnership Board on 2nd December 2003.

5 (f) Members' Allowances (Minute 6, Cabinet 27th November 2003)

Cabinet's recommendations arising from the report of the independent Members' remuneration panel were considered and the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder highlighted those items which were changes from the present scheme.

Councillor SGM Kindersley expressed his discomfort at the panel charged with recommending councillors' allowances being offered an allowance (other than travelling expenses) since this might be seen as an inducement. The counter argument was that this was a modest recognition of the work the panel did for the Council – equivalent to the smallest co-optees' allowance. Councillor Kindersley's amendment, seconded by Councillor PL Stroude, was put to a vote and **LOST**.

In connection with travel allowances, Councillor NN Cathcart asked that encouragement of more sustainable forms of transport should be kept under review.

Council **RESOLVED** that

- (a) the present level of basic allowance, and the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances be held until 31st March 2004 and increased by 3% from 1st April 2004, other than those listed below;
- (b) the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Licensing Committee Chairman be raised to £1,000 per annum from 1st April 2004 and to £2,000 per annum from January 2005, subject to discussions with the Chairman in the autumn of 2004 on the level of responsibilities;
- (c) the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Standards Committee Chairman be raised to £400 per annum from 1st April 2004;
- (d) a Special Responsibility Allowance of £400 per annum be paid to the Employment Committee Chairman from 1st April 2004;
- (e) the Carer's Allowance be increased to a reimbursement of actual cost up to a maximum hourly rate of £13.75 from 1st April 2004;
- (f) the co-optees' allowance for independent members of the Standards Committee be £250 per annum from 1st April 2004;
- (g) the co-optees' allowance for parish members of the Standards Committee be £200 per annum from 1st April 2004;
- (h) the current level of travelling and subsistence rates be maintained until 31st March 2004, after which they be made equivalent to the prevailing National Joint Council local government employee rates;
- (i) from 1st April 2004, actual expenses for bed and breakfast be payable, up to a maximum of £130, £150 for London, with an out-of-pocket allowance of £4 per night, with subsistence for meals to be claimed in addition;
- (j) the list of approved duties, as circulated, for which members could receive payment of travelling and subsistence be adopted; [copy attached to the Minutes]
- (k) the allowances scheme should specifically permit members to nominate a charity to which their allowances may be paid;
- (l) there be no backdating of any of the above revised allowances;
- (m) annual adjustments be indexed for up to four years, subject to an annual review so that any changes in responsibilities could be reflected and anomalies minimised;
- (n) from 1st April 2004, all councillors should be eligible for pensions and that it be up to the individual to decide whether they wish to join the pension scheme;
- (o) both the basic and any Special Responsibility Allowance be counted for pension purposes;
- (p) the time limit for making allowance claims be by one month of the end of the relevant financial year to which the claim applies;
- (q) the terms and conditions of the panel be approved as recommended by the panel;
- (r) each member of the Independent Remuneration Panel be offered an allowance of £200 per annum; and
- (s) the existing Members' Allowances Scheme be revoked from 30th December 2003 and that new schemes be made under the 2003 Regulations to operate from 31st December 2003 and 1st April 2004 respectively.

5 (g) Development and Conservation Control Committee (Procedure and Protocol) Working Party (Minute 3, Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th November 2003)

With the amendment of recommendation (j) to clarify that it applied only to the Development and Conservation Control Committee, Council

RESOLVED that

- (a) membership of a single Development and Conservation Control Committee be open to any Member giving notice to the proper officer prior to the annual meeting of Council each year of that Member's wish to serve on it, subject to the recognition

- of the rights and responsibilities associated with such status;
- (b) Council may appoint such members accordingly at the annual meeting of Council and may appoint additional or substituted members at any time thereafter whether to fill a vacancy or otherwise;
 - (c) the reference in the Constitution to specific numbers of Members on the Committee be deleted;
 - (d) a new Member of Council, having previously signified his or her wish to the proper officer and until the Council has formally considered confirming the membership of the committee or otherwise, may automatically replace a former committee member for the same ward who has ceased to be a member of the Council;
 - (e) paragraph 37 of the Procedural Guidance for Members and Officers in Development and Conservation Control and Licensing be amended so as to be less prescriptive, and instead to embrace the idea that training should be sufficient and appropriate with, in particular, the final sentence being deleted;
 - (f) the Procedural Guidance for Members and Officers in Development and Conservation Control and Licensing be amended so as to include a provision that Members of the Development and Conservation Control Committee should consider, before deciding whether or not to vote on an application that had been the subject of a site visit, whether or not they were sufficiently informed about all relevant issues, if they had not attended that site visit;
 - (g) the Procedural Guidance for Members and Officers in Development and Conservation Control and Licensing be amended to reflect the protocol that, unless allowed by the Chairman, Members who are neither members of the Committee nor the local Member should not contribute to the debate on applications in other Wards unless they have information to impart that will assist the Committee in making a decision;
 - (h) the Procedural Guidance for Members and Officers in Development and Conservation Control and Licensing be amended to reflect the protocol that any local member attending is identified and may be asked to speak before any other member makes a contribution to the debate.
 - (i) the Procedural Guidance for Members and Officers in Development and Conservation Control and Licensing be amended so as to make it the responsibility of Members:
 - (i) clearly to announce to those present in the Chamber that a personal or prejudicial interest is being declared, and why; and
 - (ii) where a Member leaves the meeting, or intends to do so some time before an interest would otherwise be declarable at a later stage of that meeting, to announce or otherwise to inform the Democratic Services Officer, before he or she leaves the meeting, the existence and nature of that interest, which should then be recorded in the Minutes.
 - (j) the following text be inserted into the Procedural Guidance for Members and Officers in Development and Conservation Control and Licensing, namely "*Where Development and Conservation Control Committee is minded to make a decision contrary to technical advice, its final decision should not be made until it has received, and taken into account, credible second opinion which will be obtained for their consideration by the Director of Development Services*".

6. COUNCIL TAX BASE AND PARISH PRECEPTS

On considering the report of the Finance and Resources Director, Council

RESOLVED that

- (a) the Constitution be amended to allow the approval of the Council Tax base calculation to be delegated to the Finance and Resources Director, in accordance

with section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act, as amended by section 84 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003;

- (b) subject to no major objections by parishes following consultation, parish precepts for 2004/05 be paid: the first instalment (of the greater of £1,000 or 50% of the precept) or full precept where this is £1,000 or less, by 16th April 2004 and any balance by 20th September 2004.

7. VIREMENT RULES

Council considered the proposed amendments to the virement rules to make them less restrictive, endorsed by Cabinet on 13th November 2003, and

RESOLVED that amended virement rules be adopted as attached to these Minutes and the Constitution amended accordingly.

8. ICT REQUIREMENTS FOR CAMBOURNE AND CAMBRIDGE OFFICE

In view of the decision at Minute 7 above, the recommendations from the New Offices Working Group meeting held on 11th November 2003 on the funding of the replacement of the current ICT infrastructure were no longer required.

9. DOCUMENT IMAGE PROCESSING

The Chairman agreed to take this report as an urgent late item as there would otherwise be no opportunity to agree the proposed DIP backscanning in time for the move of the Council offices to Cambourne.

The report of Management Team requesting approval of expenditure from reserves of approximately £300,000 in 2003/04 to complete backscanning of files before the move to Cambourne was considered. The Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder apologised for the lateness of the report and advised that it had his endorsement with the reservation that no expenditure should be committed until he and the Finance and Resources Director were satisfied that it represented best value, since he had not yet seen a business case.

Councillor SGM Kindersley commented that the views attributed to the Scrutiny Committee were not quite correct. The Committee had been considering rejections of a number of CIP bids when the Finance and Resources Director had said that more information was needed. In view of the timing, it was felt that the decision should be made by Cabinet.

The existence of a document retention policy was confirmed.

Members speaking criticised the lack of information, which would not be acceptable in, for example, an application for grant of the same size, and queried whether a full assessment had been carried out of the amount of paper that actually required scanning. It was also suggested that the new building ought to be able to accommodate the filing cabinets in the short term.

The recommendation, with Councillor Batchelor's proviso, was put to the vote and **LOST**.

It was then **AGREED** that the request be referred to Cabinet with all relevant information and then to Scrutiny Committee.

10. DATE OF ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING 2004

RESOLVED that the annual meeting of the Council in 2004 be held on Thursday, 24th June.

11. URGENT DECISIONS

Council **RECEIVED** information on decisions taken under the urgency provisions on the Animal By-Products Regulations 2003 and the Members' Allowances Panel membership.

12. THIRD SIX MONTHLY SCRUTINY REPORT TO COUNCIL

The third six monthly report from the Scrutiny Committee was **ACCEPTED** without comment.

13. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

Councillor NJ Scarr asked the following questions, notice of which had been given in the agenda, of the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health:

- 1) What powers this Council has under existing legislation to limit the sales of fireworks as to:
 - (a) the period of time in each year when fireworks may be sold to the public;
 - (b) the type of establishment at which fireworks may be sold;
 - (c) the classes of person to whom fireworks may be sold and upon what conditions;
 - (d) the type of fireworks which may be sold.
- 2) What powers it is proposed to grant to English District Councils over the sale of fireworks under proposed licensing or any other legislation at present being confirmed by Parliament.

Councillor Barker had provided Councillor Scarr with a written answer, which Councillor Scarr accepted.

At the request of other Members, Councillor Barker agreed to circulate the answer to all councillors and the press and generally make it as widely available as possible.

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

To consider the following Notices of Motion:

14 (a) Standing in the name of Councillor NJ Scarr

Councillor Scarr outlined his concern that the Deputy Prime Minister had completely overridden the Council's decision on the 307 Huntingdon Road planning application and the Planning Inspector's support of that decision in a way that questioned the Government's attitude to the planning process. He also felt that the decision put the policing of other villages at risk.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, who asked that in any future applications of this significance and contention, the Council allow both applicants and objectors to make a presentation.

Further support was given for the motion, including comments by the Chairman of the Development and Conservation Control Committee. She reported, however, that the

District's Members of Parliament had already been asked, at the recent meeting, to raise the Council's concerns and that she had been in touch with the local MP throughout. Advice had been sought on possible grounds for challenging the decision. The Planning Director stated that the Head of Legal Services was considering how best to present counsel's advice.

Councillor Dr DR Bard suggested that a motion might be sent to the LGA as this issue affected the whole of planning law, but that he would make the suggestion again in the context of the next motion.

Councillor Scarr was happy to include an addition requested by Councillor SGM Kindersley, that the Deputy Prime Minister be asked to define the "national interest" generally and in the context of Huntingdon Road.

Council, with no votes in opposition,

RESOLVED:

that South Cambridgeshire District Council notes the decision of the Deputy Prime Minister to uphold the appeal of the University of Cambridge against the decision of this Council to refuse planning permission for a primate research centre at 307 Huntingdon Road.

Council also notes that the planning inspector who heard the appeal upheld the position taken by the District. He also stated that he found the medical/scientific evidence inconclusive and did not find objective evidence that this development would be in the "national interest".

This being so. Council is extremely disturbed at the granting of approval by the DPM, as it undermines local accountability in the planning process. Council is also seriously concerned that a significant proportion of the costs of additional policing will be borne by the taxpayers of Cambridgeshire, to the detriment of effective local policing.

Council therefore:

- Calls upon our local MPs to raise these concerns with the government
- Resolves to examine what legal recourse we have to obtain a review of this decision in the light of the DPM's use of the argument that alternative sites could not come forward in a reasonable time frame/timescale, whilst the University is widely reported as saying that funding is not yet in place to implement any permission granted, which argues against great urgency
- calls on the Deputy Prime Minister to define his interpretation of the "national interest" generally and in the context of Huntingdon Road
- send copies of the Council's letter to the Deputy Prime Minister to the local and national press.

14 (b) Standing in the names of Councillors RF Collinson and JA Nicholas

Councillors Collinson and Nicholas outlined the problems experienced recently at Cottenham and explained that their aim was to try to give the villagers confidence that the Council was taking the issue seriously and would continue to take all the action it could. Attention was also drawn to relevant contradictory appeal decisions by Planning Inspectors, which raised questions about the planning framework.

Councillor Dr DR Bard drew attention to the conflict between the Human Rights Act 1998 and some aspects of domestic law, and called on the Government to clarify how the

Human Rights Act and the planning system interacted and not leave the matter to be settled by precedent. He suggested that the Council should seek support in this from the Local Government Association through a motion to the General Assembly, and should employ Human Rights lawyers in cases of potential conflict.

Members were supportive of the motion, with additional comments about the anti-social behaviour, but there was a feeling that any motion to the LGA should be dealt with separately at another time. Requests were made that Members should be kept up to date with what was happening.

With amendments requested by the Chairman of Development and Conservation Control Committee and Councillor DALG Wherrell and an addition from Councillor Collinson to take account of Councillor Dr Bard's initial point,

Council with no votes in opposition,

RESOLVED that

as the local planning authority this Council re-affirms its commitment to effective development control throughout the District.

As part of that duty it will make every effort to deal effectively with breaches of planning control in the area of land between Setchell Drove and Water Lane, Cottenham and its environs. It will also co-operate with and calls on other appropriate agencies to address associated problems of anti-social behaviour so that local residents can once again enjoy an orderly and peaceful life.;

This Council also urges the Government to review planning legislation and the relationship of the Human Rights Act to it so that planning inspectors can operate within a coherent framework.

14 (c) Standing in the names of Councillors Mrs EM Heazell and SGM Kindersley

Councillor Mrs Heazell proposed the following motion:

“Recent bids to provide social housing in our traditional villages, to house local people, have failed to attract funding from Transitional LASHG. In view of this, and in view of the Cabinet decision not to reserve £960,000 negative housing subsidy for housing provision, Council resolves to use three annual sums of £1 million, starting in 2004/05, to pump prime housing association schemes in order to provide affordable housing for local people. These sums to be used from reserves, as an investment in local people, and in the fulfilment of our corporate objective to provide affordable homes.”

She explained that the motion was prompted by the urgent need for 2,500 permanent homes and the lack of funding for projects in the villages, other than Cambourne and the Cambridge Northern Fringe. She urged Council to be prepared to fund some schemes, in case no other funding was forthcoming by March, and advised that that, for example, £1m would pay for the projects at Steeple Morden and Fowlmere. If the projects were for mixed tenure, £3m would provide around 75 units.

Councillor Mrs Heazell argued that the provision of homes for sons and daughters of village families was a good use of the Council's reserves, reminded Members that housing was a major corporate objective and advised that recent housing conferences suggested that authorities helping themselves fared better than those who just complained.

Councillor Kindersley seconded the motion and drew attention to the informal Council meeting of 22nd September, when all Members present selected affordable housing as their top priority. He also commented on the effect on communities of a lack of younger people.

Councillor CC Barker, seconded by Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, proposed the following amendment, arguing that, although the motion had much merit, policy should not be made in this way without full information:

“this scheme should not be enacted until

- 1) the newly appointed Housing and Environmental Services Director has had an opportunity to advise on the proposed scheme.
- 2) The Management Team has had an opportunity to scrutinise and advise on the proposed scheme, with particular reference to future council tax levels, and medium to long term financial implications
- 3) Clarification is obtained re: the planning inspector's decision about affordable homes in “infill only” villages (the Rampton decision)
- 4) The outcome of the Stock Options appraisal is known
- 5) The public have been consulted about all the relevant issues concerning the implementation of this motion.”

Debate centred around

- The proper use of tax payers' money
- The extent of reserves and the level of underspending still applying
- Public consultations which had already been carried out and showed a large degree of support for affordable housing
- The need for an officer report with details of the various possible schemes, costings and what the funding would achieve
- The Stock Options appraisal and its application only to the Council's own housing
- Parish council support for the projects
- Support of senior officers

The amendment was put to a vote and **LOST**.

Before the original motion was put before Members, the Finance and Resources Director was asked to advise which reserves should be used if the motion were approved. His view was that a decision today would be on incomplete information and that the effect of the CIPs bids on the estimates should be seen first. If, however, a decision were made, the funding should be taken from capital receipts for maximum flexibility, although there would be problems later.

In the light of these comments, Councillor Mrs Hezell suggested that the vote should be in principle, with the financing investigated later.

The motion was put to a vote and **LOST**.

15. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

The Minutes of the following meetings were **RECEIVED**, subject to the comments recorded in Minutes 16 to 19 below:

Cabinet
Cabinet

19th September 2003
2nd October 2003

Cabinet	16th October 2003
Cabinet	30th October 2003
Cabinet	13th November 2003
Cabinet	27th November 2003
New Offices Working Group	23rd September 2003
New Offices Working Group	11th November 2003
Development and Conservation Control Committee	3rd September 2003
Development and Conservation Control Committee	1st October 2003
Development and Conservation Control Committee	5th November 2003
Development and Conservation Control Committee and Planning Policy Advisory Group	30th September 2003
Development and Conservation Control Committee and Planning Policy Advisory Group	14th October 2003
Standards Committee	18th November 2003
Scrutiny Committee	17th September 2003
Scrutiny Committee	23rd October 2003
Scrutiny Committee	20th November 2003
Crime and Disorder Partnership Group	27th October 2003

16. CABINET 2ND OCTOBER 2003

Supporting People Update (Minute 8)

In response to Councillor NN Cathcart's concerns, the Housing Portfolio Holder stated that the Council would continue to fund sheltered housing "as well as we can".

17. CABINET 27TH NOVEMBER 2003

Local Government Finance Settlement 2004/05 (Minute 10)

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder reported that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced the previous day £340m extra funding in 2004/05 for English local authorities. On this revised provisional settlement, the Council would receive £78,000 more than the figure reported to Cabinet, a total increase over 2003/04 on a like for like basis of £215,000, or 3.7%.

18. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 23RD OCTOBER 2003

Call-In Cabinet Decision on Feasibility Study for a Swimming Pool at Linton (Minute 7)

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith queried the comment recorded in the 5th bullet point, that a small award towards a feasibility study would be appropriate, but it was noted that these were comments made by members of the Committee, not necessarily the view of the whole Committee.

19. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 20TH NOVEMBER 2003

The Chairman of the Committee stated that he had now checked the Minutes, but had nothing he wished to draw to the Council's attention.

20. QUESTIONS ON JOINT MEETINGS

No questions were asked.

21. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS

The Chairman's engagements since the last meeting were **NOTED**. The Chairman reported that the Vice-Chairman had also attended former councillor Donald Allen's funeral, as had many Members in acknowledgement of the considerable service he had given to this Council.

The Meeting ended at 5.40 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council 26th February 2004
AUTHOR: Chief Environmental Health Officer

SWAVESEY BYEWAYSPurpose

1. To report on the annual meeting of the Swavesey Byeways Advisory Committee and to set the level of the Swavesey Byeways' rate.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The approach adopted for maintenance on the Swavesey Byeways is in line with the Council's corporate objective on high quality and value for money service. The local chargepayers work in partnership with the Council by providing plant and labour to undertake regrading and spreading of materials, while the Council manages the maintenance programme and budget. Finally, the approach taken on recycling and spreading existing roadway materials takes account of the Council's objective on a sustainable future for South Cambridgeshire.

Background

3. The Swavesey Byeways' Act 1984 governs the financial provision for maintenance of the Swavesey Byeways. Under the Act the District Council is required to determine the amount of money necessary for maintenance in each financial year. It can then recover 50% of this amount from the Byeways Chargepayers at a uniform amount per hectare of land within the chargepaying area.
4. The Swavesey Byeways Advisory Committee is an informal group comprising representatives of chargepayers, parishioners, the Parish and District Councils. The Advisory Committee advises the District Council on all matters relating to the discharge of its byeways responsibilities including the level of maintenance and the level of the Byeways rate.

Considerations

5. The advisory Committee met on 13 January 2004 to consider the level of maintenance required in the coming year and the level of rate required. Notes from the Finance and Resources Director presented to the meeting, are attached as **Appendix A**.

Advice of the Advisory Committee

6. The Advisory Committee agreed that the District Council should be advised as follows:
 - (a) to maintain the current level of byeway maintenance for 2004/05;

(b) to levy a rate at 90 pence to fund the required maintenance for 2004/05.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that the advice of the Advisory Committee, as detailed in paragraph 6 above is accepted and agreed.

Background Papers: The following background papers were used in connection with this report: Swavesey Byeways Advisory Committee Agenda Reports – 13 January 2004.

Contact Officer: Patrick Matthews, Drainage Manager, Tel: (01223) 443472

REPORT OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES DIRECTOR

To: The Chairman and Members of the
Swavesey Byeways Advisory Committee

13th January 2004

1. The following background notes are provided as a reminder of the present position and as assistance in determining the amount to provide for maintenance.
 - 1.1 The Act provides for an annual charge to be made to chargepayers expressed as a rate per hectare. The charge for 2003-2004 was set at 90 pence. A similar charge for 2004-2005 is estimated to produce an amount of £1,235.
 - 1.2 The cost of collecting the charge in 2004-2005 is £357. The cost can be minimised only if all chargepayers pay promptly and without the need for costly reminders.
 - 1.3 There was a credit of £963 in the chargepayers' account at 31st March 2003. An estimated balance of £497 was taken into account when setting this year's charge – this leaves £466 to set against the 2004-2005 charge.
 - 1.4 There will be an estimated balance of £3,393 in the contingency account at the end of 2003-2004 which is available for any emergency/special works, and it is suggested that £645 be added to the contingency account in 2004-2005.
 - 1.5 It is recommended to provide an amount of £2,400 for maintenance in 2004-2005.
 - 1.6 The budget for 2004-05 would then be:

	£	£
Expenditure		
Maintenance	2,400	
Collection costs	357	
Contingency	<u>645</u>	
		<u>3,402</u>
Income		
Chargepayers		
90 pence per hectare	(1,235)	
Balance in Chargepayers' account	<u>(466)</u>	
		(1,701) 50%
South Cambridgeshire District Council		(1,157) 34%
Swavesey Parish Council		<u>(544) 16%</u>
		<u>(3,402)</u>

- 1.7 The balance on the contingency account has increased in recent years as the maintenance budget has not always needed to be fully utilised and the deferred costs of the Local Act have now been paid. In the event of inclement weather, Members may prefer to keep the rate at 90 pence so that the contingency is available for any emergency/special works.

G. J. Harlock
Finance and Resources Director

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**CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING PARTY
13TH JANUARY 2004**

MINUTE EXTRACT

5. RECORDED VOTING SYSTEM

At a meeting of the NOW Group held on 15th December 2003, a report to recommend the purchase of individually recorded voting systems was discussed. The Group decided not to endorse the proposal but to pass the issue to the Constitution Working Party. The following points were raised in discussion:

- A recorded voting system would mean that constituents could see how their local member voted on any one issue and could encourage constituent interest in the democratic process.
- Cabinet meetings already have the number of votes recorded.
- Concern was expressed that recorded votes should not take place relating to appointments. This is already covered within the existing constitution, voting on appointments cannot be recorded.
- Recorded voting encourages openness, transparency and accountability within the democratic process.
- Any decision that could result in crime or disorder, for example outcomes of planning decisions, would not be subject to a recorded vote to safeguard the Members from illegal acts.
- If Council agree the system can be implemented during the build phase, this will yield significant savings (approximately 50%) compared to the Council agreeing the system after the move to Cambourne.
- The intention was not that names should be recorded in the minutes by default unless a recorded vote was agreed but that they should be available on request.

The Working Party, with six in favour and one abstention,

AGREED to **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** that a recorded voting system is desirable and should be purchased in advance for the Cambourne office. The NOW group should be given the authority to incur the additional expenditure of £15,400 for the smart card readers and £5,154 for the software.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO

Council

26th February 2004

AUTHOR/S:

Finance and Resources Director

PROGRAMME OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2004/05Purpose

1. To put the recommendations of the Constitution Review Working Party on the frequency, programme and timing of Council meetings to council for consideration.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. Although the proposals do not have a direct effect on the Corporate Objectives, they aim to assist members of the Council in taking a full part in the business of the Council and providing a good service to their constituents.

Background

3. At the last meeting, Council decided that, in view of the timing of the local elections, the annual meeting of the Council in 2004 would be held on Thursday, 24th June. A programme needs to be agreed for the rest of the municipal year.
4. The Constitution Review Working Party has, meanwhile, been looking at the role of the Council meeting as part of its remit.
5. The Working Party was asked by Council to look at ways in which the Statement of Accounts can be approved since this is not something the executive can do and the last approval date is moving earlier to 30th June over three years.

Considerations

6. Views put forward to the Working Party include that non-executive members perceive that there is no role for them at Council as decisions have already been taken. It was suggested that there are insufficient Council meetings, leaving them congested with agreeing minutes with no time for policy and strategy debate, while at the same time there are too many additional briefings and special meetings. Ways of addressing these issues were considered.

Frequency and Programme of Meetings

7. The number of meetings to which all councillors have been invited was reviewed and it was noted that there had been 17 such meetings or presentations during the past year. It was felt that it would be more helpful for members to have meetings programmed in advance to which most of additional matters could be brought. The Working Party generally agreed that more programmed Council meetings are required; the question was how many? Two main alternatives were put forward:

- that a date be earmarked each month for a meeting on council business, letting the business to be conducted determine the nature of the meeting, i.e. normal Council business, policy discussion or presentation
 - that normal Council business should be conducted each month and other matters to be debated added to the agenda
8. The Working Party took into account the impact of monthly meetings on Chief Officers and the suggestion that certain dates should be set as “ordinary meetings of Council”, but recommended the first option.
9. The Working Party recommend that meetings be programmed for the same Thursday in each month and, bearing in mind the wish of Cabinet to meet on the 2nd Thursday and Scrutiny Committee on the 3rd, recommend that Council normally meet on the 4th Thursday in the month. The dates this produces are:
- 2004 22nd July
23rd September
28th October
25th November
- 2005 27th January
24th February
24th March (Maundy Thursday)
28th April
26th May (Annual Meeting)

Statement of Accounts

10. Approval of the Statement of Accounts must be agreed by 31st August in 2004, 31st July in 2005 and 30th June in 2006. The Working Party considered inviting Council to delegate the function to the members of the Audit Panel, but concluded that this is a matter which should be dealt with by Council itself. For 2004 only this will require a meeting of Council in August. The 4th Thursday would be the 26th.

Timing of Meetings

11. The Working Party discussed the starting times of meetings, largely to try to assist those councillors who work full time or have children, and a survey of staff views on issues which would have to be taken into account in supporting later meetings was undertaken. The results were reported back and points made in discussion included:
- Approximate end times on agendas may encourage more councillors to attend
 - Later meetings will tend to clash with councillors’ other public duties, for example at Parish Council meetings
 - Individual contracts of employment varied and would need to be checked; flexi time could not be implemented overall to cover extra hours
 - Once the Council has moved to Cambourne, it will be more difficult for officers and members alike to use public transport to get home after a late meeting

- There is an associated cost with late meetings, security and house keeping costs for example
- Evening meetings had been tried at South Cambridgeshire District Council several years ago and it was found that 7pm seemed to be a trigger point for people having to leave evening meetings.

12. Ultimately, by 5 votes to 1, the Working Party recommended no change at this time, but that times be reviewed after a year in the new offices. This does not prevent any constituent part of the Council from changing its own starting time.

Procedures at Council Meetings

13. In further consideration of ensuring the relevance of Council meetings, the Working Party recommends that the agenda should contain a slot for questions to each portfolio holder.
14. In addition, the Working Party recommends that, to speed the process without denying any opportunity for members to raise issues, the minutes of meetings of Cabinet and committees should be presented by title and date only, rather than page by page. Members would be asked to state the page and item number of any matter they wish to raise.

Financial Implications

15. No significant implications since the number of meetings should not exceed the number now, in practice, called.

Legal Implications

16. None

Staffing Implications

17. If monthly meetings all require the attendance of the whole of Management Team this will be an additional time constraint on them.

Consultations

18. Officers affected have been consulted about the timing of meetings and their frequency.

Recommendations

19. The recommendations of the Working Party are:
- (a) that meetings for the conduct of business for the whole Council should be programmed for once each month other than (normally) August and December

- (b) that for 2004 only, an extraordinary meeting of Council be held in August to approve the Statement of Accounts; in other years approval should be taken to a regular meeting
- (c) that meetings should be programmed for the 4th Thursday in each month, as indicated in paragraph.. above
- (d) that timings of meetings be reviewed one year after the office move to Cambourne
- (e) that the Council agenda should contain a slot for questions to each portfolio holder.
- (f) that the minutes of meetings of Cabinet and committees should be presented at Council by title and date only, rather than page by page

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Reports to and minutes of the Constitution Review Working Party

Contact Officer: Susan May- Democratic Services Manager
Telephone: 01223 443016

To Council

26th February 2004

**TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM
CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING PARTY**

Policy Framework

To amend section B-6:

- (a) **Policy Framework.** The policy framework means the following plans and strategies and such others as the Council shall determine to be included in the policy framework: -
- Best Value Performance Plan;
 - Financial Strategy
 - Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy;
 - Plans and strategies which together comprise the Development Plan;
 - Council's Corporate Strategy
 - Food Law Enforcement Service Plan;
 - The plan and strategy which comprise the Housing Investment Programme; including the HRA Strategy and Business Plan
 - Community Strategy

This adds the Community Strategy but deletes the LA21 Strategy which is not now a separate strategy

Role of Scrutiny

That the title of the Scrutiny Committee be changed to "Scrutiny and Overview Committee" and any consequential amendments be made.

The Scrutiny Committee has raised no objections to this.

Position of the Conservation Portfolio Holder

That the position of Conservation Portfolio Holder be amalgamated into the Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder remit and any consequential amendments be made.

The Working Party considered that the workload could be amalgamated without problem because of its size and that the Leader has a workload heavy enough without this addition. It was felt that the portfolio was best distanced from planning issues and that amalgamation with Sustainability and Community Planning would enhance that portfolio's cross-cutting role.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO

Full Council

26th February 2004

AUTHOR/S:

Head of Legal Services

**DELEGATION OF POWERS TO CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
IN CONNECTION WITH THE DESIGNATION OF LOCAL NATURE
RESERVES AT NINE WELLS AND BYRON'S POOL**Purpose

1. To confirm delegation of South Cambridgeshire District Council's functions under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1972, as amended, to Cambridge City Council to enable designation as Local Nature Reserves of the areas known as Nine Wells and Byron's Pool.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. The designation of the Local Nature Reserves will support the Corporate Objectives of providing Quality Village Life and a sustainable future for South Cambridgeshire. Designation of both sites will increase the amount of land in the District presently designated as Local Nature Reserves from 9.62 hectares to 15.1 hectares and is in line with Local Plan policies and Best Value Performance Indicators for Conservation.

Background

3. Nine Wells, Granhams Road, Great Shelford, which lies entirely within South Cambridgeshire is owned jointly by the City Council and Cambridge University. Part of Byron's Pool, Grantchester Road, Trumpington and Haslingfield lies within the South Cambridgeshire District and the whole site is owned by the City Council. Cabinet resolved to support the delegation last year following consultation with the appropriate Parish Councils. By virtue of Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, a local authority may arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by any other local authority. As this Council operates under executive arrangements procedures set out in the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000 must be followed. A Deed of Delegation has been prepared in accordance with these Regulations. The Constitution of this Council allows for delegation to and from other local authorities by Full Council, at Paragraph 11.04.

Considerations

4. Funding is available to the City Council to designate and manage these sites. Both sites have value for local bio-diversity. There is public access to both sites, which are popular areas for recreation. Although there will be no financial or staffing implications for this Council, officers will ensure representation on any management body or consultation group which may be set up by the City Council.

Options

5. Refuse to grant delegated powers to Cambridge City Council – this would mean an uncertain future for these sites.
6. Grant the delegation sought – this will secure the future protection of these sites for the benefit of the residents of South Cambridgeshire and the environment.

Financial Implications

7. None. Management of the sites will be the responsibility of the City Council in respect of Byron's Pool and Cambridge University with respect to Nine Wells.

Legal Implications

8. None

Staffing Implications

9. None

Consultations

10. Cambridge City Council have been fully consulted and have resolved to accept any Delegation. Their legal team have approved a draft Deed of Delegation in accordance with the legislation.

Conclusions/Summary

11. Delegation of the functions described will have no financial implications for this Council but will provide for the future protection of these ecologically valuable sites.

Recommendations

12. That the Delegation be confirmed and instructions be given to the Head of Legal Services to complete the Deed of Delegation of Functions to enable the designations to be made.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Cambridge City Council report to Environment Scrutiny Committee and Executive Councillor, and Report to The Leader and Cabinet of South Cambridgeshire District Council by Rob Mungovan, Ecology Officer

Contact Officer: Catriona Dunnett – Assistant Solicitor
Telephone: (01223) 443027

CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Thursday, 18 December 2003

PRESENT: Councillor RT Summerfield, Deputy Leader in the Chair

Councillors:	Dr DR Bard	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	CC Barker	Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
	JD Batchelor	Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	RF Collinson	Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell	Housing Portfolio Holder and Liberal Democrat Group Leader
	Mrs DP Roberts	Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant, R Hall, SGM Kindersley and Mrs GJ Smith were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs DSK Spink, Leader and Conservation Portfolio Holder.

Procedural Items

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2003 subject to the following amendments:

Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions (Minute 3)

Paragraph 4.

“A vote was therefore taken on recommendation a) and Cabinet, with four in favour, one against and two abstentions recommended to Council...”

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dr DR Bard declared a personal interest in item 12 (Sawston Arts Capital Grant 03/04) as a governor of Sawston College.

Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information

3. CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION INFRASTRUCTURE PARTNERSHIP

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder explained that growth in the Cambridge Sub-Region and the District in particular was one of the most important issues likely to face the Council in the forthcoming years. Central government required a cross cutting vehicle to deliver this growth, and there was a choice between agreement among the local authorities or an imposed solution. The proposed solution was a Limited Liability Partnership with a Board including local authority representatives. This was a development of existing informal structures and the Board would not be making new policy, although it would have some compulsory purchase powers in order to bring

forward development sites. Councillor Dr Bard advised that the Board would proceed and that the Council would therefore be excluded if it did not join.

Key points made in discussion were:

- £20.4 million of government money had already been agreed to be passed to the partnership
- The Council had been involved from the start of the infrastructure partnership
- This Council should ask for two representatives on the Board given that it was the infrastructure of this District that was most affected
- Concern over the high salary to be paid to the CEO of the partnership
- Concern regarding Compulsory Purchase powers
- The Council would lose some control over the planning process
- Concern over water supplies
- Concern that Developers were excluded from the board membership
- There would be significant impact on additional levels of staffing required within planning if this Council was to meet rapid development targets. (56% increase)
- It was pointless for Fenland District Council to have a seat on the board when all the development targets fell outside of the Fenland District
- The board member should produce reports for Cabinet on key issues and minutes of Board meetings should be presented

Kevin Scobell from Cambridgeshire County Council and Keith Miles, Planning Policy Manager commented that:

- The partnership was a good device to attract government funding and the most representative model, giving local authorities in Cambridgeshire a 40% share of representation instead of the normal 20%. The Government would not agree an increase in local authority membership
- The salary to be paid to the CEO would be funded out of the £20.4 million already secured and that the person appointed would need substantial working knowledge of Whitehall to cut through bureaucracy
- Compulsory Purchase Orders were essential to speed up development rates
- Powers over planning applications would not be taken away from planning authorities: the aim of the Partnership Board was to produce overall plans and programmes for service provision. Nevertheless the Board would make decisions the Council would have to accept.
- The Board would have a "Section 106 Negotiator" to ensure more funding was provided not only for peripheral items but for affordable housing
- The Housing Providers forum included Developers and building contractors
- In terms of major infrastructure, it was believed that the Highways Agency and the Water companies for example, would reflect the development work of the partnership within their own internal programmes
- Assurances had been received that water supply and drainage could be managed.
- A deregulated market for the supply of water may encourage other providers into the county
- English Partnerships were a Government appointed organisation responsible for re-generation. A new remit recently added to their portfolio was to help development in growth areas. They had significant funding to distribute within these areas.
- The SCDC contribution of £30,000 per year was a voluntary contribution that was proportional to the amount of housing required in each district. All partners would contribute.

Infrastructure Partnership Board membership

Board members would be named directors of a company. This would make direct

substitutes for absent board members legally impossible. It was possible to have substitutes to attend but not vote at meetings but this would need to be verified at the inaugural meeting of the infrastructure partnership. It was noted that in some circumstances alternate directors were provided for in constitutions.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** that

- (a) The formal establishment of the Cambridge Sub-Region Infrastructure Partnership be agreed on the basis that the Council is given at least one seat on the Partnership Board.
- (b) The possibility of substitutes be investigated
- (c) Councillor Mrs DSK Spink, as leader of the Council, be the representative on this board.

4. **ACCESS TO SERVICES - BEST VALUE REVIEW**

The review report focussed on ways to improve face-to-face contact with services users, demonstrate that the Council was professional, had a policy in place and was customer focussed. Cabinet was asked to consider issues such as customer care standards and the Council's future strategy for improving access to services and the Policy and Performance Manager outlined the main points of the report.

Cabinet raised the following overall issues with the report:

- Some of the measures of quantity in paragraph 3.1.1 were queried as not giving a true reflection of the extent of public contact and it was requested that the paragraph should refer to examples of the service
- The use of the national average wage figure was not particularly helpful within South Cambridgeshire District due to its economic structure. It was noted that the district was said to have the highest number of people without basic skills in the county

The Policy and Performance Review Manager agreed that he would make amendments to the review document before it went into the public domain notably:

- 3.1.1 "The main examples of services concerned are:"
- The rent collection figure would be verified by the Finance and Resources Director
- 3.3.7 Teversham would be included in the list of villages as the Health Authority presentation showed this to be the district's most deprived village

Cabinet then considered the recommendations regarding core Corporate Customer Service standards (paragraph 8.4.4). Concern was expressed about item b) that "voicemail will not be used during office hours" and calls would be forwarded to ensure they were always answered. There was dissent about this item:

On the one hand it was frustrating and, for some, worrying not to be able to talk to someone; even more so if a message were not returned. On the other, there could be resource implications if offices had to be staffed at all times and some officers were lone specialists where it could be unhelpful for someone else to attempt to answer their calls. It was noted that the purpose of the contact centre was to minimise the number of calls to the back offices.

In response to accusations about the length of time the review had taken and the resources it was seeking, the Chief Executive commented that the review was started in

August 2002 and had been fitted around existing work. Apart from the two new posts recommended, which would be considered in the CIP process, there was no significant cost to taking up the recommendations in this report; it was more about changing the ways of working. It was unrealistic to assume that the use of voicemail could be abandoned entirely but it must be used properly. There was also a need for consistent standards throughout the Council. Management Team supported the general thrust of the report.

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith was invited to comment as a member of the review team and emphasised that the report contained only what the team felt to be realistic.

Cabinet, with five votes in favour and two against,

AGREED

- (a) That the proposed critical success factors be supported in the introduction and monitoring of the Contact Centre, Cambridge Office and Cambourne HQ (Para 4.2.4 and following).
- (b) That the proposed corporate customer service standards (Para 8.4.4) be supported, including the following amendment to 8.4.4 b) proposed by Councillor RF Collinson: "Voicemail will not be used where ever possible or practical. When away from their desk, officers will normally use forwarding or hunt groups to ensure their calls will be answered
- (c) The importance of a co-ordinated approach to customer care across the Council.
- (d) The importance of working with the Local Strategic Partnership in the development of improved access to services in villages through village hubs and support in principle to exploring video conferencing as a means of making the Council more accessible.
- (e) That the Improvement Plan and proposed Performance Indicators (Appendices 1 and 2) be supported, subject to the outcome of the Cabinets CIP's meeting on the 8th of January 2004.
- (f) That the request for priority in paragraph 4.5.2 c) of the report be excluded from the decision pending the Cabinet meeting of the 8th of January.

5. CONSULTATION STRATEGY

It was noted that it was increasingly important for the Council to adopt a more consistent and joined up approach to consultation so that: -

- The results of consultation are shared and used
- The results can be brought together to show common threads and changes over time
- Consistent standards are applied
- Opportunities can be taken to carry out joint consultation to achieve cost savings and avoid duplication.

A draft consultation strategy was presented and Cabinet

RESOLVED that the Consultation Strategy as presented in the Appendix be adopted.

The request to support a CIP bid of £20,000 to support a corporate approach to customer satisfaction surveys and the reporting of the results was deferred to the Cabinet meeting of the 8th January 2004.

6. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2004 - 2007

The proposed communications strategy was presented, the purpose of which was to maximise the contribution that communications makes to achieving Council objectives and in particular to:

- Develop awareness of the Council's objectives and values within the Council and with the Council and stakeholders.
- Build a strong image and identity for the Council to enable it to develop effective partnerships to work in the interests of the district.
- To encourage people to see the Council as relevant to their lives and to be involved in democratic processes.
- To achieve increased levels of satisfaction of the public, organisations, parish councils and staff with the quality, honesty, timing and accessibility of the information they receive from the Council and about its services.
- To be innovative in the use of new technology and means of communication to achieve the Council's communication aims cost-effectively.

Cabinet RESOLVED

that the Communications Strategy 2004 – 2007 be adopted.

7. CAPITAL AND REVENUE ESTIMATES FOR THE STAFFING AND CENTRAL OVERHEAD ACCOUNTS

These estimates were presented for approval, subject to additional adjustments arising from consideration of the Continuous Improvement Plans. The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder reported that he and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee had discussed these in detail with the Finance and Resources Director. He commented that the staffing and central overhead estimates represented 70% of the total budget and that this year expenditure should be within £80,000 of the estimate.

Cabinet raised the following overall issues with the report:

- In paragraph 34 there was inconsistency in the naming of the Depot. For clarity, the Commercial Services Director wished the site to be referred to as the Waterbeach Depot, even though it was located in Landbeach parish.
- Concern that an individually recorded voting system was not part of the new specification at Cambourne: this would be a matter for Council to decide as the contract allowed for replacement like for like

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (a) Approve the inflation figure of 2.5% generally and 3.5% for pay awards, on which all the estimates are being prepared (paragraph 8)
- (b) Approve the revenue estimates and recharges as presented and shown at Appendix A and Appendix B; and
- (c) Approve the capital programme up to 2006/07 as shown at Appendix C.

8. MONITORING OF COUNCIL 03/04 PRIORITIES SECOND QUARTER - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2003

Cabinet considered the position at December 2003 of those priority performance indicators that it appeared were likely to fail to meet their target. Several comments were made:

- Some targets were hard to achieve as many factors which govern them were external to the Council,

- Targets could not be changed this year but the Council could look to build on its' experience when the priorities were set the following year
- The Housing Portfolio Holder noted that the B&B figures were not truly reflective of each year as they could refer to accommodation provided up to two years previously
- BV8 was for undisputed invoices only

The Deputy Leader asked portfolio holders to concentrate their efforts on the PIs where targets would not be met.

9. COLLECTIVE CABINET RESPONSIBILITY

At the inception of Cabinet, it had been agreed that "Cabinet members must not disagree with agreed Cabinet policy outside Cabinet meetings." The CPA peer review team had raised concerns with this policy being applied to matters that were recommendations to Council. They feared that it could deny Council, when making the final decision, access to the most informed opposing. Cabinet was requested by the Constitution Review Working party to review this decision.

Councillor CC Barker proposed on behalf of the Leader Councillor Mrs DSK Spink, seconded by Councillor Bard, that the item be deferred until she could be present.

Deferral to the first possible meeting in the New Year was **AGREED** with four in favour and two against and one abstention.

10. INTEGRATED RECYCLING AND REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE - KITCHEN BIN ARRANGEMENTS

The delivery of kitchen bins had been delayed following publication of the Animal By-Products Order in July, which prohibited the inclusion of kitchen waste in the green bins pending a licence being granted to enable the composting of kitchen waste. The Council had purchased 27,500 kitchen bins already, on which it was currently paying insurance, but had suspended its order for a further 28,500. The Waste Management Advisory Group had considered the options and supported the distribution of the 27,500 bins through collection sites, with a decision on purchasing further bins being made at a later date if the demand necessitated.

The Chief Environmental Health officer explained that:

- The bins would be provided at no cost to householders but could only be distributed after the Veterinary Service had approved the Donarbon site.
- There would be many distribution points
- Any members who know of specific sheltered housing sites or specific families that would benefit from the bins to contact Environmental Health who will deliver them
- The Council would own the two additional lorries that would be purchased with the money not used to fund kitchen bins for every household and Clean away and SCDC would each pay for the maintenance costs of one vehicle.
- The Donarbon decision relating to the Animal By-Products Order was expected in the New Year. If the decision was delayed until after the move to Cambourne, contingency plans were in place for the continued storage of the bins although it was hoped the decision would come before May 2004.

Cabinet **RESOLVED** to:

- (a) Reverse the decision to provide all households with a kitchen bin and

- (b) Once kitchen waste can be included in the green bin, arrange to distribute the existing stock of 27,500 kitchen bins to South Cambridgeshire residents from a suitable number of publicised collection points in the district at no charge, on a first come/first served basis, one kitchen bin per household, until the existing stock is used.
- (c) Postpone a decision on the purchase of the remaining 28,500 bins until the demand for kitchen bins can be assessed.

11. SHIRE HOMES CONTRACTS

Cabinet was advised of the decision to re-let housing service and works contracts and

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holders for Housing and Resources and Staffing to:

- (a) Let housing service and works contracts in accordance with legal requirements, and contractual evaluation terms appropriate to ensure a price/ quality balance when the work is awarded to the successful contractor.
- (b) Decide whether or not, in regard to the gas and oil heating contract to opt for a negotiated contract renewal, in line with OJEC legislative requirements, in place of a traditional competitive process.

12. ARTS CAPITAL GRANT AID 2003-2004 (SAWSTON VILLAGE COLLEGE)

Cabinet was asked to approve capital grant aid to provide:

- A visual arts work exhibition space, to a professional standard, managed and programmed by users of the College.
- New stage curtains, lighting and sound equipment for the Assembly Hall
- A fully sprung dance floor in the new building.
- The building programme will be complete by March 2004.

RESOLVED to award an arts capital grant of £50,000 to Sawston Village College, subject to the submission of an approved business plan in accordance with the terms of the Arts Dual Use Strategy and the commitment of the Village College to a service level agreement.

Councillor Dr DR Bard did not vote.

13. REPRESENTATIVE TO EAST OF ENGLAND TOURISM COUNCIL

Noting that the Cambridgeshire Councils Association had recently appointed Councillor RF Collinson as its representative on the Tourist Board, Cabinet

AGREED that Councillor Collinson, as the portfolio holder with responsibility for tourism, be appointed as the Council's representative on the East of England Regional Tourism Council forthwith.

Information Item

14. BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES - INTERIM POLICY MEASURES - STATUS REPORT

The Building Control Manager gave an update on the Building Control Service following the suspension of the Building Control Policy and the successful implementation of interim measures in January 2003 during an extended period of severe understaffing.

Members commented that the implication in the report was that Building Control was still understaffed and that the volume of work might mean not 100% of plans were checked fully

The Building Control Manager stated that the district was dealing with high growth but that the Building Control service was competitive and that there was an ongoing review of the workload. The role of Building Control in new developments such as Northstowe would depend on the developers, as all work was open to a free market.

Cabinet **NOTED** the report

[N.B. the 8th bullet point in paragraph 6 should read "private sector companies"]

Standing Items

15. **MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

Nothing to report.

16. **RE-LOCATION OF OFFICES TO CAMBOURNE**

Nothing to report.

17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chief Executive reminded Cabinet of the next meeting on the 8th January 2004 that was for consideration of the CIPS bids. The Management Team had placed the options into three broad groups for Cabinet to consider but it was clear that demand would outstrip supply. One of the options for consideration would be to reduce existing areas of lower priority spending to fund essential new spending. Management Team requested that Cabinet members contribute to the process by identifying any areas where they felt existing spending could be challenged and reductions made even if that fell outside of their Portfolio area. Any proposed low priority areas to be notified to the Chief Executive by email before the meeting if possible.

18. **PLAN ACCESS**

A demonstration was given of a system combining the GIS information and the local land and property gazetteer to give property information. This could be put on the Council's web site so that many queries could be self-service.

19. **NEW STAFF MEMBERS**

The Chief Executive reported on two new appointments:

- Housing and Environmental Services Director: Steve Hampson
- Head of Policy and Information: Tim Wetherfield

The Meeting ended at 12.25 p.m.

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CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Thursday, 8 January 2004

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Leader of Council and Conservative Group Leader)
Councillor RT Summerfield (Deputy Leader of Council and Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

Councillors:	Dr DR Bard	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	CC Barker	Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
	JD Batchelor	Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	RF Collinson	Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell	Housing Portfolio Holder and Liberal Democrat Group Leader
	Mrs DP Roberts	Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant and SGM Kindersley were in attendance, by invitation.

Procedural Items

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information

2. CASCADE PROJECT - COMPLETION OF SERVICES

This report demonstrated that the Customer Access to South Cambs Development (CASCADE) project was still within the original indicative figure of £1.8 million capital or one-off revenue expenditure agreed by Council in January 2001, and provided background to the recommendation in the ICT Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) for additional funding to complete the project. The first line of paragraph 26 of the report was amended to read "Work on the initial services is nearing completion, and they will be ready...".

The Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder reminded Members that the project was a key element in the Council's ICT Strategy and for fulfilling its e-government obligations. He recommended that the outline funding for the integration of the remaining services into the contact centre be approved, advising that it would be more costly to defer or cancel the project than to complete it as planned.

The Finance and Resources Director confirmed that the £150,000 additional expenditure on staffing was a worst-case scenario; hopefully the project would become self-financing and, in any event, there was a high level of certainty that the Council would receive the £200,000 IEG funding. When appointed in 2004/05, the Change Team of three business analysts would redesign the Council's current processes so direct telephone handling of most business could be done by staff at the Contact Centre. Processes would continue

to be adapted and improved as changes arose, although the new posts would be for two years only, covering the bulk of the work.

The Chief Executive explained that the majority of South Cambridgeshire residents preferred to contact the Council by telephone and it was sensible to increase the amount of business which could be conducted by telephone and through the website to improve the access to services for residents. Councillor Mrs EM Heazell expressed her hope that the transfer of services to the Contact Centre would ensure residents spoke to a person and not voicemail. Councillor Mrs DSK Spink reported that she had made an anonymous call to the contact centre and had spoken to a helpful and polite member of staff.

Cabinet, with seven in favour and one against,

AGREED to support the completion of the CASCADE project and the associated funding within the original indicative figure of £1.8 million capital or one-off revenue expenditure agreed by Council in January 2001.

3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON BUDGET AND PRIORITIES FOR 2004/05

The Policy and Performance team held four public consultation meetings in November 2003 and Bostock Marketing Group (BMG) had conducted three workshops. One public meeting, at Cottenham, had its focus changed to address a particular local issue about which a large number of residents had attended on the misunderstanding that this was the purpose of the meeting; no consultation on budget and priorities was done at this meeting.

The events had been advertised widely through the local press, Parish Council magazines, South Cambs Magazine and the Council's website, but there had been a disappointingly low turnout, with 22 people attending the public consultation and 35 at the BMG workshops. Councillor Mrs DP Roberts commended the officers for their very interesting presentations, adding that attendees had been very impressed and had said that they were a clear explanation of how the Council conducts its business.

Members reflected on the issues raised through consultation, but noted that it was difficult to determine whether these were representative of the district as a whole or based on an individual's circumstances. The Chief Executive agreed to confirm the costs of the consultation exercise, but advised that public consultation was a statutory requirement.

Other methods of public consultation were considered, such as displays at public libraries, or consultation through meetings of community groups or at a daytime session held in the Council Chamber with Cabinet members available to answer public questions. South Cambs Magazine could be used for both an educative exercise, emphasising the low level of Council Tax charged and services this Council provided, and for consultation. Councillor CC Barker commended South Cambs Magazine, but noted that, despite a high readership compared to other local publications, not all residents read it, as demonstrated by the number of calls received from residents unaware of the change in refuse collection dates over the Christmas period.

Cabinet **NOTED** the summary of the main findings from the public consultation exercises.

4. PRIORITIES AND SPENDING PLANS 2004/5 - 2006/7

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder introduced the report on the selection of annual priorities and the resource strategy to support them, in particular the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) bids to be accepted. He emphasised the importance of Cabinet addressing the Council's priorities, stating that, for this reason, he favoured Option 3, which would direct funding away from some existing services towards the priorities for the year, together with the funding of a sum equivalent to the £1.8 million one-off additional expenditure from capital receipts. The Chief Executive then outlined the background, including the Council's history of low spending and the projected growth in population. Management Team considered that Option 1, restricting the budget for improvements to £300,000, was unrealistic given unavoidable spending needs and growing public expectations, but did not want to see an increase in spending unsustainable for the future. Consequently they supported Option 3, but recognised that this would entail hard choices in deciding where savings could be made. Portfolio Holders had been invited at the last meeting to make suggestions for reductions: Councillor Barker had suggested a sequential approach which had been largely supported by two other Members of the Cabinet. Management Team also recommended funding a sum equivalent to the £1.8 million additional one-off expenditure from capital receipts in 2004/05, although it would inevitably reduce the capital receipts available for the future.

Two corrections were made to the report:

- Page 25, line 13 – delete, Housing partnership officer post already approved by Council
- Page 25, line 21 – delete cost in 2004/05 as this would be covered by grant

The Finance and Resources Director then advised that:

- The options were based on the assumption that the £300,000 was for CIPs bids only, not additional expenditure already agreed;
- An underspend should not be assumed for the current year;
- The actual Council Tax base was 54,581 rather than the 54,721 projected, with a consequent loss of approximately £10,000 a year;
- The proposal for additional Building Control staff would have to be the subject of a separate report giving more information;
- The County Council was willing, for a fee of £18,000 a year, to provide switchboard cover at the contact centre from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 6 days a week instead of for traditional office hours only – this would cancel out the deletion of line 13 above;
- Funding a further £986,000 one-off expenditure from capital receipts would reduce the underlying Council Tax in aggregate by £20 over the next two years, but would include a change of Council policy;
- The figures in paragraph 37 included internal recharges; revised figures were given, showing that direct expenditure (excluding capital charges) totalled £1,639,000;

and asked that Cabinet give a view on how they saw increases in Council Tax being phased in. They would be free to review the phasing each year.

Discussion began on the areas suggested for savings and how these might relate to priorities, but the Leader advised the need to decide first which option was favoured. She urged that, if Option 3 were agreed, Portfolio Holders should not have an insular approach to savings.

The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee argued that the suggested savings would redirect spending away from front line services which the public could see, towards processes. He also queried the point of Scrutiny Committee considering the bids when some appeared in this report which had not been before the Committee; nothing appeared

about the costs the Committee thought acceptable, and the on-line air quality information bid had been withdrawn.

The Finance and Resources Director shared the concerns about the late CIP bids not referred to Scrutiny Committee.

Clarifications were sought and given:

- The negative housing subsidy was to be retained in the General Fund reserves as agreed by Council;
- The tourism initiatives bid was not being recommended for acceptance;
- Part of the Building Control function was charged to a fee earning account; part was regulatory and formed a direct charge to the General Fund;
- Only capital expenditure could be funded from capital receipts with the effect of reducing the underlying Council Tax requirement and reductions in those budgets offering no direct benefit for the revenue budget and the Council Tax. Some £835,000 of the one-off bids were pure capital expenditure, the rest were not; however other capital expenditure currently planned to be financed from revenue could be financed from capital receipts to the equivalent of the value of the one-off bids recommended for acceptance;
- Options 1 and 3 resulted in the same level of spending; but Option 3 re-directed it;
- Budgets did not have to be cut in their entirety;
- The list at paragraph 37 was not exclusive and sought to avoid debates about the underlying levels of statutory services; and
- The HRA bid for an Occupational Therapist was to deal with applications from tenants; if there were spare capacity, the postholder could act as a consultant to the Home Improvement Agency in its work on private houses.

It was further argued that the areas listed in paragraph 37 were not necessarily the most appropriate to be reduced particularly as they related largely to the objective of quality village life, and that it was not possible to reach reasoned decisions at this meeting. The Finance and Resources Director warned that there was a limited time for reaching decisions as estimates were already being prepared.

Cabinet, by 6 votes to 2,

AGREED to support Option 3 for approving CIP bids with recurring costs, by increasing additional spending to approximately £800,000, but with savings of approximately £500,000 in order to adhere to the agreed limit of £300,000; Portfolio Holders to examine their budgets for savings within 10 days with a view to a further report to the next meeting.

Cabinet further

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- (a) That the following be adopted as a three year programme of annual priorities from 2004/05:
- i. ESD and customer service
 - ii. Affordable homes
 - iii. Decent homes
 - iv. Reducing the fear of crime
 - v. Youth provision
 - vi. Cleaner villages

- vii. The new settlements at Northstowe and Cambridge fringes
 - viii. Rural Transport
 - ix. Recycling and waste minimisation
- (b) Approval of the three year strategy to address annual priorities set out in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report and to request Management Team to prepare a more detailed three year programme to enable Members to plan for 2005/06 onwards;
- (c) That the Council will address priorities emerging from public consultation (fear of crime; youth provision; rural transport and cleaner villages) in 2005/06 and 2006/07.

AGREED

- (a) That non-recurring CIP bids of £1,839,000, to be financed for one year only from capital receipts, be included in the estimates to be presented to Cabinet on 16th February 2004 for recommendation to Council;
- (b) That the proposed enhanced switchboard service via the contact centre be included in Table C, bids clearly directed towards the achievement of 2004/05 priorities, with an annual recurring cost of £18,000;
- (c) To invite the Housing Portfolio Holder to take into account the HRA bids given in Appendix 1 to the report in preparing recommendations for the Housing Revenue Account for 2004/05;
- (d) To note the outcome of public consultation, thank and congratulate the officers making presentations and thank councillors who attended; while requesting that other, more representative, means of consultation be sought;
- (e) In response to the request that the Council should demonstrate benefits for any additional spending, to request that the BVPP shows the links between additional resources and performance indicator targets;
- (f) To approve the Continuous Improvement Plans prepared for all services in consultation with portfolio holders as the basis of the draft Best Value Performance Plan for 2004/05 – 2006/7.

It was noted that the one-off bid for printing, consultation and various assessments for the Local Development Framework was for inescapable expenditure not now thought appropriate for inclusion in the CIP process.

Council Tax Increases

Prior to the decision to support Option 3, a revised General Fund projection summary was circulated, showing the underlying effect on Council Tax levels of financing the whole of the £1.8 million non-recurring CIP bids from capital receipts. Cabinet discussed the approach to Council Tax increases in the future: the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder reported that, despite his earlier support of a gradual approach, it was now too late for this and that projections required a Council Tax of at least £140 in 2005/06. The question was whether there should be a bigger increase in that year to permit smaller increases later. It was recognised that, although the District Council's Council Tax was small in comparison with other authorities, there were residents for whom any increase caused problems. Members discussed the possibility of a two-tier

Council Tax, with residents on higher levels of income subsidising those on lower incomes. It was noted that public consultation suggested that people preferred regular increases.

For the purposes of the longer-term financial strategy, Cabinet gave an indication of supporting a Band D Council Tax in 2005/06 of £140. The Finance and Resources Director cautioned that this percentage increase could be subject to a call-in by the government, at which the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder would need to explain the artificial situation of previous years whilst the Council ran down its balances.

The Meeting ended at 12.00 p.m.

CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Thursday, 22 January 2004

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Leader of Council)
Councillor RT Summerfield (Deputy Leader of Council and Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

Councillors:	Dr DR Bard	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	CC Barker	Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
	JD Batchelor	Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	RF Collinson	Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell	Housing Portfolio Holder
	Mrs DP Roberts	Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant, Mrs SA Hatton, SGM Kindersley and Mrs LM Sutherland were in attendance, by invitation.

Procedural Items

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 18th December 2003 and 8th January 2004, subject to the following amendment:

Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05 – 2006/07 (Minute 4, 8th January 2004, Page 4, final bullet point)

“...the postholder could act as a consultant to the Home Improvement Agency...”

The Chief Environmental Health Officer agreed to check the accuracy of the statement that, from a health Authority presentation, Teversham was the district's most deprived village (Minute 4, 18th December 2003).

Following the meeting the Chief Environmental Health Officer confirmed that the statement had been made by the Director of Public Health, not the Health Authority, during which Teversham had been identified as one of the most deprived villages under the Multiple Deprivation Index 2000.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

Recommendations to Council

3. PRIORITIES AND SPENDING PLANS 2004/5 - 2006/7

Cabinet, at its meeting on 8th January 2004, had agreed to increase funding of the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) bids with recurring costs to £800,000, of which £300,000 would be new money and £500,000 savings. Portfolio Holders had agreed to

examine their budgets to identify £500,000 savings. The Chief Executive presented the report and apologised for its late publication, a result of the final Portfolio Holder meeting being on 16th January. After reviewing the figures, only £146,000 additional savings had been identified, as had, provisionally, £167,000 additional spend on refuse collection and street cleaning.

Two options were presented: to restrict the increase in spending to £450,000 to adhere to the original agreed limit of £300,000 with the newly-identified savings, resulting in the rejection of all but the inescapable CIP bids; or to maintain the original intention to spend approximately £800,000, resulting in a 2005/06 underlying Band D Council Tax of £183. The Chief Executive noted that recent government reports about capping Council Tax raised the question of whether it was wise to maintain Council Tax at £70 for 2004/05 whilst committing the Council to on-going expenditure: significant problems would arise if the expenditure were already committed and the government then capped the Council Tax.

The Chief Executive recommended that the best course of action, from a business point of view, would be to increase tax to £100 for 2004/05 and see if the tax were capped before embarking on additional expenditure. He stressed the need to bring the currently low level of tax in line with the higher underlying level of Council Tax and the continuing effect on the budget of subsidising the tax level. The Chief Executive drew attention to the huge discrepancy in government support: Audit Commission data demonstrated that the central government grant to South Cambridgeshire was £48.06 per head of population, compared to the average district grant of £84.10 per head of population. This level of grant was causing the Council to struggle with its budget while trying to maintain Council Tax at a sustainable level.

Members discussed the issue at length:

- The late receipt of the report, some members not having received it due to computer problems, made it difficult to have an informed discussion on such a complex and important topic;
- Councillors had publicly stated that there would not be an increase in Council Tax in 2004/05 and it would damage the integrity of the Council, and of members personally, to change position;
- £50,000 in 2004/05 for plastics recycling could be deleted as this would be covered by government grant
- There was a reasonable expectation of a £200,000 grant for e-government delivery
- The Council was now in a difficult position after having not levied a rate for many years, but this would not be easy to explain to residents or to the government, which calculated only a percentage increase;
- If the reasons were presented clearly by all Councillors as a united front, it was hoped that the electorate would understand the need for a possible increase in order to fund desired services such as affordable housing and recycling; and
- Central government funds for Northern Fringe development were not a certainty: the body to decide the funding had yet to be established, but a lack of funding could have serious implications for the cycleways and economic development grants budgets.

Cabinet

AGREED that a special meeting of the political group leaders, with Councillor RT Summerfield as substitute for Councillor MP Howell, be convened on 28th January 2004 at 10.00 am to discuss the results of consultation with members and with parish councils and to determine a recommendation to

Cabinet; and

DEFERRED discussion on this item to a special meeting of the Cabinet at 2.00 p.m. on 29th January 2004, at which all members of Council would be invited to speak; all members to be issued with a paper copy of the report and advised of the potential additional cost per Band D property.

The Finance and Resources Director cautioned that, after Cabinet's decision on 18th December to defer the approval of the estimates, all reports on the budget would inevitably be late as it was necessary for Cabinet to make its decisions before the Accountancy staff could proceed further with the estimates.

4. **MANAGEMENT TEAM - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Chief Executive presented terms of reference for the Management Team, to be included in the Constitution. Item (a) of the Strategic Policy Role was amended to read, "The main focus of the work of Management Team is to ensure the delivery of Council policy and objectives." Management Team did not have any executive function or decision-making powers, but sought to ensure there was a framework of policies, as decided by Cabinet, and to keep Cabinet aware of any need for further policies. It was currently comprised of Directors and the Chief Executive confirmed that second tier officers were invited, and would continue to be invited, as required. He felt that it was necessary to maintain flexibility.

A discussion ensued about whether the Leader could attend Management Team meetings on behalf of the Cabinet or members of Cabinet request to attend; or whether officers should be left free to manage the organisation. The Chief Executive explained that officers had a statutory obligation to give impartial advice to members free of any political overtones: attendance by the Leader or other members could lead to implications of potential political influence over any Management Team recommendations. There had been a joint meeting of Cabinet and Management Team in November 2003 and the Chief Executive acknowledged that further informal joint meetings would be beneficial, although meetings should not be formally scheduled just for the sake of having a meeting.

Councillor RF Collinson proposed, seconded by Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, that the terms of reference be amended to include, "in exceptional circumstances where it is felt to be appropriate, Management Team has the discretion to request the Leader or members of Cabinet to attend meetings, and the Leader or members of Cabinet could request to attend Management Team meetings, for the discussion of specific issues". A vote was taken and with two in favour and five against the proposal was **LOST**.

Cabinet **AGREED** that the terms of reference would be amended to include in the Note: "Management Team normally comprises the Chief Executive and Directors, but may include others as required".

Cabinet

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the amended Management Team terms of reference be included in the Constitution.

Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information

5. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder introduced the report, noting that the Council needed to adopt a Risk Management Strategy as part of its overall Corporate Governance arrangements and as a key element in the identification and management of risks. He commended the Strategy to Cabinet, adding that a Risk Management Group had been established, with the Finance and Resources Director as Chairman.

Cabinet **ENDORSED** the proposed Risk Management Strategy, and

AGREED

- (a) that risk management issues would be identified on all committee reports via a new "Risk Management Implications" section or other appropriate means;
- (b) that risk management be included on the Council's in-house employee training programme and / or Corporate Induction course;
- (c) that there be regular communication on risk management via Team Briefings; and
- (d) that risk management issues be included in the Project Management Toolkit and service planning guidance.

6. STRATEGY FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Cabinet had, at its meeting on 16th October 2003, received a report from the Chief Executive and the Finance and Resources Director on a Best Value Strategy for Service Procurement, which referred to the purchase of goods and services but did not further cover that aspect of procurement, which was addressed by this strategy.

It was noted that Sustainability Implications were now incorporated in the section on the Effect on Corporate Objectives.

Cabinet **APPROVED** the Strategy for the Procurement of Goods and Services.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) STRATEGY

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder explained that the report presented a framework for the preparation of a Human Resources (HR) Strategy and not the strategy itself. It was hoped that that completed strategy would be presented to Cabinet before the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) at the end of March.

Cabinet **APPROVED** the adoption of a Human Resources (HR) Strategy in accordance with the framework document.

8. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Council had commenced work on Local Plan No. 3 when the government introduced the new Local Development Framework. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill, expected in June/July 2004, would establish the new process, but the draft guidance appeared to suggest that no formal stages of the new-style plan-making be undertaken until the Bill was enacted. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder explained that it was necessary to continue with preparations in advance of the enactment in order to complete the process according to schedule. He cautioned that there was a minimal risk that some work could be invalidated by the enactment.

Cabinet

AGREED that the Council continue the preparation of the Local Development Framework without delay and, together with the Infrastructure Partnership, make representations to the government to introduce transitional arrangements to allow the submission to the Secretary of State of Local Development Frameworks which had been subject to consultation consistent with the Draft Regulations before enactment of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill.

9. COLLECTIVE CABINET RESPONSIBILITY

Cabinet, at its meeting of 24th May 2001, had agreed that Cabinet members must not disagree with agreed Cabinet policy outside Cabinet meetings, but there had been queries about whether this collective Cabinet responsibility should apply both to decisions made by the Cabinet and to recommendations to Council. The Constitution Review Working Party recommended that Cabinet review its policy.

Members discussed the issue at length and the following points were made:

- If Cabinet made a democratic decision to recommend an issue to Council, it could demonstrate a lack of cohesive ability if Cabinet members then spoke against the recommendation at full Council;
- Cabinet minutes record the votes for and against recommendations to Council and all Members were invited to attend Cabinet meetings and would thus be aware which members supported or disagreed with a recommendation;
- Cabinet members who spoke against a recommendation at full Council could add a caveat that they were giving their own personal view and not speaking as an executive member;
- Members were elected to represent their wards and must be given the opportunity to speak on behalf of residents at full Council even if the residents' view contradicted the Cabinet recommendation;
- It could appear disorganised and disunited if a member who spoke out strongly against a policy approved by Council was the Cabinet member responsible for the implementation of that policy;
- Although all Councillors are equal and should have the right to speak freely at full Council meetings, collective responsibility should apply only to Cabinet members;
- There was no legal basis for Cabinet to constrain the right to free speech; and
- Members could resign if they were strongly opposed to a democratic decision taken by the Council.

Cabinet

CLARIFIED its decision of 24th May 2001 "that Cabinet members must not disagree with agreed Cabinet policy outside Cabinet meetings" to require collective Cabinet responsibility after a decision has been made by Cabinet, but not before a final decision has been made, i.e. before Council has made its decision on a recommendation; and

DEFERRED, pending legal advice, a decision on whether Cabinet members who could speak freely against a recommendation to Council should abide by collective responsibility after a final decision has been made by Council.

10. MEMBER TRAINING ADVISORY GROUP

Cabinet had the responsibility of appointing members of an Advisory Group, but as a structured approach to member training was a priority and it was hoped to begin meetings of the Member Training Advisory Group as soon as possible, Cabinet

AGREED to give the Portfolio Holder for Information and Customer Services delegated authority to invite members to the Member Training Advisory Group, if possible reflecting the political make-up of the Council.

11. TRAVELLERS CONSULTATIVE GROUP

(Urgent item with permission of the Leader.)

The Travellers Consultative Group, at its meeting on 20th January 2004, had recommended to Cabinet that a letter be written to the Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) requesting a meeting to detail South Cambridgeshire District Council's concerns with the present situation and implications of the amount of possible emigration from Eastern Europe after 1st May. The Community Development Portfolio Holder explained that after 1st May, when ten more countries would be admitted to the European Union, it was possible that up to 100,000 members of the Travelling community could migrate to the UK. Councillor Mrs DP Roberts noted the current influx of Irish Travellers, particularly in Cottenham, and its implications for the indigenous Travellers and the associated planning and law and order issues.

Councillor Mrs Roberts also updated members on the results of police investigations into the origins, activities and likely movement patterns of some of the recently-arrived Travellers. A full report would be presented to a meeting of the South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Partnership Group. The possibility of a joint seminar with other authorities was considered but deferred pending the response of the DPM and the Local Government Association (LGA).

The Head of Community Services explained that there was a pressing need to complete a needs assessment survey. The District Council would be working with the Cambridgeshire County Council and local Travellers' organisations, first to establish trust between the Travellers and the local authorities, and then to conduct the survey work, which was best completed during the winter months when the population was least mobile. The Director of Development Services confirmed that completing the survey would increase the Council's chance of success in any court cases. He also outlined the legal process of the current injunctive exercise at Cottenham and members noted the necessity of having legal representation at planning appeals to assist the appeals officers, which would incur additional cost.

Members discussed the situation and, taking into account the potential cost, acknowledged that it was sensible to proceed with the needs assessment. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder confirmed that the legal expenses could impact on Council Tax and the budget and stated that the Council must be prepared to address the situation and inform residents. He recommended that the Council ask the government for financial assistance as this District was bearing the brunt of what was becoming a national problem.

Councillor Mrs Roberts requested a legal presence at all future meetings of the Travellers Consultative Group and thanked the Assistant Solicitor for her attendance at the last meeting. She also informed members of an e-mail from Mr Bill Forrester at the Office of the DPM (ODPM), stating that an invitation-only seminar to discuss Travellers issues would be held in Cambridge on 30th January, but that, from all Cambridgeshire authorities, only one officer from Fenland District Council had been invited. The Leader

and Chief Executive agreed to contact the ODPM to ask for more representation at the seminar.

Cabinet

AGREED

- (a) to write to the Deputy Prime Minister and request a meeting to discuss the current and possible situation in South Cambridgeshire, the letter to be copied to the Members of Parliament for South Cambridgeshire, South East Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City, GO-East and the Local Government Association.
- (b) to contact Mr Bill Forrester at the ODPM to request that a representative of South Cambridgeshire District Council attend the forthcoming seminar on 30th January 2004;
- (c) that there was a need to conduct a needs assessment survey of the Travelling community; and
- (d) that a joint seminar with other authorities in a similar situation would be considered following the response from the DPM and LGA.

12. CPA SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Chief Executive explained that the self-assessment prepared for the Peer Review Team formed the basis of the CPA self-assessment, revised to address criticisms from the Peer Review. A meeting with all officers involved would be held on 23rd January to review the document, but, as the self-assessment must be provided by 13th February, Cabinet approval could not be obtained before the deadline. Other local authorities had delegated authority to the political group leaders as signatories to approve the self-assessment for submission and Cabinet

AGREED to delegate authority to the Councillors RF Collinson, Mrs EM Heazell, Mrs DSK Spink and RT Summerfield (as substitute for Councillor MP Howell) as group leaders to sign the self-assessment for submission.

13. FUTURE MEETINGS OF CABINET

Cabinet, at its meeting of 27th November 2003, agreed future dates for meetings for the remaining months in the 2003/04 municipal year and that Cabinet should meet on a monthly basis in coming years. Annual Council was scheduled for 24th June 2004 and members considered the best time to schedule the monthly Cabinet meetings, in light of deadlines for reports and call-in, other scheduled meetings and leaving sufficient time for holidays. The Scrutiny Committee would be considering its own meeting dates at its meeting that afternoon.

Issues discussed included:

- Whether having both Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee meetings on the same day could encourage greater attendance at both. Conversely, whether having both meetings on the same day could lead to having to defer or adjourn longer Cabinet meetings, and to create additional pressure on officers writing reports for both meetings;
- Whether it would be possible to have all meetings within the same fortnight each month, leaving time for members and officers to schedule holidays in the remainder of the month. Conversely, whether it was appropriate to organise Council business on the basis of holidays;
- Whether having an earlier start time for Cabinet meetings would result in additional journeys if the briefings had to be scheduled the day before.

Councillors and members of the public could benefit if more than one meeting were held on the same day, limiting the number of trips to Cambourne, although it was noted that there would be fewer traffic problems than at present; and

- Called-in Cabinet decisions needed three weeks between the Cabinet meeting and the Scrutiny Committee meeting for all the processes to be followed.

Cabinet **AGREED** to meet on the second Thursday of each month for the municipal year 2004/05.

Councillor Mrs EM Heazell requested that, if Council meetings were scheduled on the last Thursday of each month, that date be used for member training purposes on months when no Council meeting was required.

Standing Items

14. MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

None.

15. RE-LOCATION OF OFFICES TO CAMBOURNE

Nothing to report.

Confidential Item

16. MANAGEMENT OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES

This item was deferred due to legal reasons.

The Meeting ended at 12.35 p.m.

CABINET

At an extra-ordinary meeting of the Cabinet held on
Thursday, 29 January 2004

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Leader of Council)
Councillor RT Summerfield (Deputy Leader of Council and Finance &
Resources Portfolio Holder)

Councillors:	Dr DR Bard	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	CC Barker	Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
	JD Batchelor	Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	RF Collinson	Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell	Housing Portfolio Holder
	Mrs DP Roberts	Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant, EW Bullman, NN Cathcart, G Elsbury, TJ Flanagan, CJ Gravatt, R Hall, Mrs SA Hatton, SGM Kindersley, Mrs JE Lockwood, Mrs CAED Murfitt, JA Nicholas, R Page, WH Saberton, NJ Scarr, RGR Smith, Mrs LM Sutherland, Mrs VM Trueman, RJ Turner and AW Wyatt MBE were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs MP Course, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs JM Healey, MP Howell and JH Stewart.

Procedural Items

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

Recommendation to Council

2. PRIORITIES AND SPENDING PLANS 2004/5 - 2006/7

This extra-ordinary meeting of the Cabinet had been convened to allow all Members the opportunity to discuss the priorities and spending plans for 2004/05 – 2006/07 and the implications on the level of Council Tax. The Chief Executive highlighted the following changes which had been made to the final version of the report:

- Two tranches of Electronic Service Delivery (ESD) grants of £200,000 each were included in the predictions;
- Additional income from a revenue grant for growth area delivery had been included for the first year only as it was premature to assume it would be available in future years;
- The on-going costs for refuse collection and street cleansing had been reduced from £218,000 to £76,000;
- The figures assumed the previously-agreed commitment to £300,000 new spending and the savings of £146,000 already identified, for a total of £446,000;
- Predictions were based on existing decisions about the use of capital receipts; and
- Restricting new spending to £446,000 would allow only the inescapable bids, the

CASCADE / ESD bids and the bid for the Senior Strategic Housing Officer to be funded, the sum of which was £11,000 above the £446,000 already agreed.

The Chief Executive drew Members' attention to the effect on the General Fund Balance of continuing to subsidise the actual underlying Council Tax, which would be £156 in 2004/05.

Following consultation with their Group Members, the Group Leaders had met and decided to reject the Management Team recommendation to raise Council Tax by £30 in 2004/05. The Leader explained that officers had been acting properly in advising the Cabinet to raise Council Tax, but that the final decision would rest with Council. Cabinet would instead recommend that Council Tax be maintained at £70 and would re-examine the budget in the coming year to see if further savings could be identified.

Council Tax Increases and Capping

Central government had selective capping powers for local government budgets. The recommendation to raise Council Tax by £30 in 2004/05 could result in South Cambridgeshire being capped as it would be an increase of 43%, although, as Members noted, the original level had been low to begin with. Historically, the Council had levied a low level of tax, including a six-year period during which no tax was levied at all, although this went largely unnoticed as the Council was the collection authority for other local taxes.

Councillor RF Collinson reported that the Labour group felt that the Management Team recommendations were realistic, but were not necessarily politically acceptable. Councillor NN Cathcart requested that Cabinet consider a phased introduction of Council Tax rises, noting that the reserves could not sustain continued subsidisation of the underlying Council Tax. He felt that a phased rise was more fair to the electorate than a large increase, and noted that the Leader had made a statement in South Cambs Magazine promising to maintain the Council Tax at £70 for 2003/04 but had at that time indicated that a rise would be necessary in the following year, and thus the electorate had been prepared for a rise.

Councillor R Page stated that, at the Council meeting of 25th September 2003, the Leader had said that there would not be any rise in Council Tax for 2004/05, and that neither officers nor Cabinet Members had spoken against this, although he felt it should have been obvious at the time that it was not possible to maintain the Council Tax level.

There was a need to increase the electorate's awareness of the serious problems arising from continued subsidisation of the underlying Council Tax and a consultation exercise could be run through South Cambs Magazine; however, the effectiveness of consultation was queried, given the disappointingly low turnout at recent consultation exercises.

The Finance and Resources Director advised that it was realistic to assume that the Council would be asked to account for its actions however a phased Council Tax rise was introduced. He asked Members to consider a 5% increase this year as the government may ask next year why the Council did not begin phasing in a higher Council Tax earlier. Members were reminded that the Minister of State for Local Government had already indicated that he would not look favourably on those authorities which did not increase Council Tax during a local election year.

Central Government Support

Central government was placing an increased number of jobs on the Council, without providing any additional funding. The government grant to South Cambridgeshire District Council was nearly half of that paid to other Shire Districts: £48.06 per head of population compared to the average district grant of £84.10 per head of population, placing a greater financial burden upon taxpayers. Members would be raising this issue with the government and the Local Government Association (LGA).

Refuse Collection and Recycling Provision

Councillor CC Barker cautioned that it was necessary to complete the new refuse and recycling collection scheme and funding must be found to finance the on-going revenue costs of the plastics recycling banks beyond the £50,000 DEFRA grant to start the project: the DEFRA grant was unlikely if the Council could not demonstrate a commitment to on-going funding. Councillor RT Summerfield suggested that the Community payment recycling incentive scheme paid to parish councils could be used to fund the on-going revenue commitment. Councillor Barker agreed, saying that it was not an easy decision to make, but that he felt that it was necessary in order to provide plastics recycling, a service often requested by residents.

Councillor Mrs JE Lockwood noted that it appeared to many residents that their refuse collection service had been halved and, as some residents had greater interest in refuse collection than recycling provision, they would not accept a Council Tax increase when they believed that their services had been cut.

Councillor NJ Scarr queried whether the Council could be more lenient in its conditions for the purchase of additional black wheeled bins and whether this could provide additional income for the Environmental Health budget. He agreed to receive a written response to his question.

Community Services

The Head of Community Services explained that the decision not to fund a Community Strategy Projects Officer would cause the Council to struggle to deliver the Community Strategy as this would place an additional workload on the Community Services team.

Housing Department and Provision of Affordable Homes

Councillor Mrs SA Hatton, stating that she believed some Council departments to be overstaffed and citing the Housing Department as an example, queried whether the Council could reduce its affordable housing costs to zero while continuing to provide affordable housing through the use of s106 agreements and planning conditions, transferring the expense to developers. She suggested that the Council, following full consultation with tenants, could give serious consideration to selling its remaining housing stock. Councillor Mrs DSK Spink noted that any resultant capital receipts could be used only on capital, not revenue, expenditure.

The Housing Portfolio Holder felt it would be unwise to take any action which could be seen as prejudicial to the Stock Options Survey. She refuted the comment that the Housing Department was overstaffed, noting that many officers were working overtime without pay. The Head of Shire Homes explained that the nature, focus and emphasis of housing work had changed: although the Council's own development work had reduced dramatically, partnership work with Housing Associations was facilitating more development, especially for Key Worker housing. The Council was using any available sources of funding, primarily through other agencies working in partnership, to continue to provide affordable housing.

Staffing

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts queried whether officers were at the optimum capacity of working, whether the Council was over-staffed in some departments and whether superfluous officers could be transferred to areas in need of resources. Councillor Page blamed officers and fellow Councillors for mismanagement, noting that both groups had received pay rises recently, and agreed with Councillor Mrs Roberts that the Council was over-staffed. He accused officers of not responding to his requests for information and indicated that he would be reporting officers to the Standards Committee. Councillor Mrs Roberts stated that officers of all levels disregarded Members.

Councillor JD Batchelor noted that Cambridge City Council, which provided the same services to fewer residents, had more than twice the number of officers of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Development

Councillor Dr DR Bard explained that it was difficult to reach a consensus between the services the Council wants to provide, the services that residents want to see being provided and the services required by central government. Although the increased development in the District would increase the tax base in the future, it was necessary at present to fund the development infrastructure and, in light of the Northstowe and Cambridge fringe bids being rejected, funds would have to be vired from the cycleways budget.

Access to Services Best Value Review

Councillor Batchelor expressed his disappointment that the recommendations of the Access to Services Best Value Review could not now be implemented.

Cambourne Offices

Councillor Page stated that Members and residents had been assured that the new offices at Cambourne would not be an additional expense to taxpayers and demanded that the figures for the construction and day-to-day running costs of the new offices be provided. The Leader promised that a written response would be forthcoming as officers had not prepared the necessary information to answer the request at this meeting. Councillor Page declared himself dissatisfied with this response and accused Cabinet of holding in contempt the opinions of all other Members. The Leader refuted this suggestion and assured all Members that they would receive a written response regarding the construction and running costs of the new offices.

Cabinet **RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL** that the draft budget be produced incorporating:

- (a) a Band D Council Tax of £70 for 2004/05;
- (b) £503,000 additional spend for 2004/05 with recurring costs of £457,000 in subsequent years (both figures gross of the identified savings of £146,000), reflecting:
 - (i) only the inescapable bids of £94,000;
 - (ii) the CASCADE bid of £224,000, Land and Property Gazetteer bid of £20,000;
 - (iii) the senior Strategic Housing Officer bid of £43,000; and
 - (iv) the plastics recycling banks bid of £50,000, the latter of which being subject to:

- £50,000 costs in 2004/05 being funded by the DEFRA grant; and
 - the ongoing revenue costs of £42,000 being funded from 'savings' within the Environmental Health portfolio;
- (c) the additional expenditure on refuse collection and street cleansing service estimated at £76,000.

The Meeting ended at 3.15 p.m.

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CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Monday, 16 February 2004

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Leader of Council)
Councillor RT Summerfield (Deputy Leader of Council and Finance &
Resources Portfolio Holder)

Councillors:	Dr DR Bard	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	CC Barker	Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
	JD Batchelor	Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	RF Collinson	Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell	Housing Portfolio Holder
	Mrs DP Roberts	Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant, G Elsbury, Mrs J Hughes, CR Nightingale and Mrs BE Waters were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor SGM Kindersley.

Procedural Items

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 22nd and 29th January 2004, subject to the following amendments:

Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05 – 2006/07 (Minute 3, 22nd January 2004):
Deletion of fifth bullet point (“Capital and General Fund reserves could not be used for revenue expenditure”).

Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05 – 2006/07 (Minute 2, 29th January 2004)
Amendment of sixth bullet point to begin: “Restricting the new spend to £446,000 would allow only...”

With regard to **collective Cabinet responsibility** (Minute 9, 22nd January 2004), it was confirmed that legal advice was still pending, but it was hoped that a response would be available before the next Council meeting.

The Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder updated members on the status of the expected **Electronic Services Delivery (ESD) grants** (Minute 2, 29th January 2004): the government had confirmed that the 2004/05 grant would be £350,000 rather than £200,000, with a further £150,000 for 2005/06.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

Recommendations to Council

3. CAPITAL AND REVENUE ESTIMATES AND COUNCIL TAX

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder presented the recommendations, drawing attention to the proposed use of housing capital receipts for affordable housing, the projected spending of the 2003/04 budget, and the new prudential indicators which had to be set even though they were not particularly relevant to this Council as a debt-free authority. He pointed out that the percentages in the first table in paragraph 33 should be in brackets.

The Finance and Resources Director reported that paragraph 11 of the report should read "...to ensure that other housing capital receipts are not subject to pooling."

The Finance and Resources Director asked that the delegated authority given to the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder to approve expenditure on precautionary items for 2003/04 should be extended for future years. He also noted some precautionary items approved in 2003/04 which had not been rolled forward and perhaps should be. The relevant portfolio holders agreed with the assessment and asked that the items should be included for 2004/05 if other provision had not been made. The Chief Executive added a request that provision should also be included at the same level as this year for a contribution to the Infrastructure Partnership as it was not certain whether district councils would still be required to contribute, but it was essential to be involved.

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder asked that the level of precautionary expenditure for the joint waste management PFI bid should be increased to £20,000

The Community Development Portfolio Holder asked how costs in relation to travellers were to be dealt with and suggested that the precautionary item for legal costs should be increased to £100,000. This met with agreement, in the knowledge that the actual costs could not be estimated at this stage. The Development Services Director reported on joint discussions between all those involved.

Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (1) that the precautionary items listed in Appendix C to the report be approved for inclusion in 2004/05, with the addition of:

Planning – Legal costs	£100,000
Planning – Local inquiry	£139,000
Employment Committee	£ 44,000
Car parks	£ 7,000
Implementation of changes in housing legislation	£ 30,000
Contribution to Infrastructure Deficit Project	£ 30,000
Contribution to joint waste management PFI bid	£ 5,000 (total £20,000)

- (2) that delegated authority be given to the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder and the Finance and Resources Director for 2004/05 and future years to approve expenditure on precautionary items (to be met from reserves) up to the level indicated for the relevant year.

In relation to the capital estimates, the Finance and Resources Director confirmed that the 25% residual Right to Buy capital receipts were useable for projects other than affordable housing and that the definition of affordable housing was quite wide, including

expenditure on the Council's own housing stock and improvement grants.

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- (a) that the capital programme up to the year ending 31st March 2007 be approved as submitted, including the sum of £34.189 million to be spent on affordable housing for the years from 2004-05 to 2006-07;
- (b) that the revised revenue estimates for the year 2003-04 and the revenue estimates for 2004-05 be approved as submitted;
- (c) that the District Council demand for general expenses for 2004-05 be £3.821 millions;
- (d) that the Council sets the amount of Council Tax for each of the relevant categories of dwelling in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 on the basis of a District Council Tax for general expenses on a Band D property of £70 plus the relevant amounts required by the precepts of Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire County Council and the Cambridgeshire Police and Fire Authorities, details of those precepts and their effect to be circulated with the formal resolution required at the Council meeting; and
- (e) that the prudential indicators from the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities be approved.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT, RENTS AND CHARGES

An amended page G1 of the estimate book, reflecting additional recharges from the General Fund, was distributed.

Rents

The Housing Portfolio Holder outlined the recommendation for a variation in housing rents of up to £0.50 a week towards the phasing in of rent restructuring. Extensive debate ensued on the reasons for this small (1%) variation and the penalty the Council would pay to the Government on a higher increase.

Following a deferral of consideration to allow figures to be verified, the position was indicated to be:

- the Government sets guideline rent limits and imposes a financial penalty on the HRA if rents are set above the limitation figure
- the Council's rents have for some years been above this level, but while housing benefits were funded from the HRA and the authority was not in receipt of housing subsidy, this was not an issue
- however, as housing benefits will be transferred to the General Fund and subsidised by the Government, the Council will be penalised if it fails to abide by the guideline rent
- the Government has also set target rents for all social housing with the aim of being reached by 2012; most of the targets are above current charges
- in this Council's case the two government policies are in conflict
- in the 6% increase in the guideline level the Government has allowed a 2.46% inflation increase and +/- £2 per week for rent equalisation towards target rents.
- a variation of £0.50 would not attract any rent rebate penalty and is the amount considered to be required to meet expenditure

Cabinet's attention was drawn to Council's opposition to being forced to put up rents to meet the Government's target rent.

To keep rents for 2005/06 at around the Government guideline rent, it was expected that a reduction in operational revenue funded expenditure of about £1m would be required in that year. The Head of Shire Homes was confident that savings could be made to cover that loss, possibly by extending the decent homes standard programme. The Finance and Resources Director emphasised that the £1m reduction in revenue expenditure would need to be on a permanent basis.

Members had the choice of increasing rents further for 2004/05 and paying approximately one half of the additional income generated to the Government as a penalty, but phasing rent increases; or making an increase of £0.50 only in 2004/05 with the likelihood of a higher increase in the following year, in line with the Government's recommendations. The Housing Portfolio Holder warned of a possible underspend if rents were increased too much.

A proposal was made to increase rents in 2004/05 by £1.25 per week and received an equality of votes (3 either way).

Before decided on her casting vote, the Leader proposed an amendment of an increase of £0.75 a week. This was **LOST** by 2 votes to 5 with one abstention.

The Leader then made her casting vote, and Cabinet

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- (a) that the Housing Revenue Account revised revenue estimates for 2003/04 and estimates 2004/05 be approved;
- (b) that the HRA rents for 2004/05 be increased by £1.25 per week (i.e. this means a maximum plus or minus variation of £1.25 per week)

Charges

It was noted that the proposed sheltered housing services and facilities charges to equity shareholders were not in accordance with Council's decision arising from the Equity Share Advisory Group but that further work by the Housing and Environmental Services Department was needed on the practicalities of implementing that decision. The recommended charges were therefore based on the existing formula and Cabinet was asked to endorse these, while recognising that they might have to be revisited during the year.

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- (c) that the following proposed charges be adopted:

Services and Facilities – Charges to Tenants

Service or Facility	Current charge per week £.p	Proposed charge per week £.p
Sheltered Housing Service Charge for Tenants		
• support element		

those in residence prior to 01/04/03	7.92	8.12
other tenants	14.42	14.78
• other (communal facilities etc)	5.50	5.64
Garage Rents		
• up to two garages rented to a Council house tenant	5.50	5.64
• other garages rented to a Council house tenant	5.50 +VAT	5.64 +VAT
• garages not rented to a Council house tenant	6.50 +VAT	6.66 +VAT
Rent reduction for tied accommodation occupied by wardens, deputy wardens or rangers	(12.13)	(12.43)

Services and Facilities – Sheltered Housing Service Charges to Equity Shareholders

Service or Facility	Current charge per week £.p	Proposed charge per week £.p
Sheltered Housing Service Charge for Shareholders		
• schemes with all facilities		
those in residence prior to 1/04/03	16.20	16.61
other shareholders	22.70	23.27
• schemes without a common room		
those in residence prior to 1/04/03	10.70	10.97
other shareholders	17.20	17.63

- (d) that the Portfolio Holder for Housing be given delegated authority to vary any charges that qualify for aid from the Supporting People Pot in order to bring such charges in line with the level of financial assistance available in 2004-05.

5. INVESTMENT STRATEGY (TREASURY MANAGEMENT)

From 1st April 2004 local authorities had the power to invest for the purposes of prudent management of their financial affairs. The Council's Investment Strategy was an update of the previous Treasury Management Policy Statement, taking account of the latest requirements including the prudential indicators for external debt and treasury management. The Strategy continued to restrict investment to the same groups of organisations as before and with the same maximum investment limits with any one organisation.

RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that the investment strategy be approved.

Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information

6. CORPORATE IDENTITY

The Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder explained that the Council's forthcoming move to Cambourne made it an appropriate time to re-address the corporate identity. Consultation with focus groups had demonstrated low public awareness of the Council's crest or logo. 2g Ltd, a local design agency from Fulbourn,

had been selected to create a new corporate identity and the two designs preferred by the corporate identity sub-group were presented to Cabinet. The first was a modern stylised 'S'; the second was a more classic design incorporating the Council's crest. 2g Ltd also displayed a complete stationery suite for each logo, explaining that departments would be identified through use of different colours. Staff would receive a set of style guidelines explaining the use of the preferred logo and colours to ensure consistent usage. A new font, Gill Sans, as used by the BBC, would be adopted as part of the new identity.

Members noted that the overall cost of the exercise was little more than the cost of reprinting all Council stationery with the new office address.

A lengthy discussion ensued as Members considered the two logos:

Modern Logo

- Had greater clarity than the crest;
- The crest was old-fashioned
- Would have greater longevity than the crest;
- Focussed attention on the Council name and address;
- Demonstrated that the Council was a modern authority and reflected the significant changes which had been undertaken in recent years;
- Would be recognised if used consistently.

Crest

- The modern logo was very similar to that used by other companies and did not convey anything about the Council;
- Unlike the modern logo, was clearly linked with the Council;
- Many organisations were returning to traditional crests as modern logos went out of fashion;
- Had gravitas and authority;
- Would be displayed on the new building.

Font

The Gills Sans font was preferred to Times New Roman, but Members asked that the size of the Council's address be increased on the new letterhead.

Members expressed disappointment that more designs had not been presented, but the Chief Executive explained that it was felt a wider range would have made a decision more difficult. He explained that, regardless of the final decision, it would be appropriate to retain the full-colour crest for the Chairman's letterhead.

Councillor RF Collinson proposed that the consultants design a modern logo incorporating the crest, elements of the crest, or the new office and to return to Cabinet. Although there was sympathy for this proposal, Members were conscious of the time constraints to introduce the new corporate identity in time for the move to Cambourne, and the proposal was not seconded.

Cabinet, with three in favour, two against and three abstentions,

AGREED that the modern logo be approved.

7. HOUSING STRATEGY AND BUSINESS PLAN CONSULTATION DRAFT

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the two draft documents for approval for submission to GO-East and others for consultation, drawing attention to the possibility of

an Advisory Group being established to review sheltered accommodation; potential changes to Supporting People; and the consultation event already held.

Housing Strategy 2004-2007

It was agreed that the reference to travellers' sites in Chapter 4 should be corrected to reflect the actual number of authorised sites. The preference list for new housing in the Cambridge sub region was, however, taken from the current Regional Planning Guidance (RPG6) and could not be adjusted.

HRA Business Plan 2004/5-2034/5

In answer to queries, the Head of Shire Homes advised that

- the reference to a failure in management systems (Completion of Works on Time, page 26) should have been to management information systems
- in the planned maintenance table on page 28, the actuals shown under 2003/04 should be under 2002/03
- the timetable for meeting the decent homes standard in the action plan on page 37 should state 2010

Councillor Summerfield asked for the wording of the 2nd paragraph on page 34, relating to the equity share scheme and capital receipts to be clarified. The Housing Portfolio Holder asked that the last sentence on page 14 be rephrased to delete the words after "bathroom" and to indicate that only one of the properties surveyed had failed the kitchen and bathroom element of the decent homes standard.

Discussion then centred on tenant participation and the increase in the budget ascribed to it (page 14). The Housing Portfolio Holder outlined the budgets transferred from elsewhere: internal painting from the planned maintenance budget; and the new budget provision: stock options appraisal (with compulsory independent tenant advisor), annual report to tenants and tenants handbook. Officers added that good practice encouraged the involvement of tenants in decisions affecting them. Repositioning some existing budgets under the heading of tenant participation to give tenants more influence over how money was spent was one way of demonstrating that involvement. The "other" capital schemes budget mainly related to the Meldreth sheltered scheme communal room, which was on hold while tenants considered if proposals were what they wanted. It was thought that the budget for tenant participation groups might need to increase slightly as more villages took part, but not to a great extent. Recharges were largely salary costs.

Concern was expressed about financial information still to be included in both the Strategy and the Business Plan and the Housing Portfolio Holder explained more work would be required following today's meeting. She suggested and it was

AGREED

- (a) to approve the Housing Strategy and Business Plan as consultation drafts;
- (b) that the Housing Portfolio Holder, Leader and Deputy Leader be authorised to approve any missing information, including financial information, and additions to the Action Plan, in conjunction with the Head of Housing Strategic Services and the Head of Shire Homes, so long as those changes did not constitute new policy; and
- (c) that the Housing Strategy and Business Plan be submitted to GO-EAST and

other consultees without further reference to Cabinet.

8. **WATERBEACH - DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR LAND AT BANNOLD ROAD**

The Development Brief had been prepared to help housing developers draw up proposals for land lying north of Bannold Road, Waterbeach. This site was allocated in Local Plan 2004. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder confirmed that the site would have 25 units of affordable housing.

The Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder noted that the development brief included guidance on sustainable homes and expressed his hope that developers would incorporate solar panels and rainwater harvesting as much as possible.

Members queried whether approval for similar schemes could be delegated to the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder. The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) reminded Members of the distinction between local Supplementary Planning Guidance and Supplementary Planning Guidance which affected the District as a whole.

Cabinet

NOTED the results of the consultation as set out in the consultant's report and

AGREED

- (a) to adopt the Bannold Road, Waterbeach Development Brief with the changes recommended as Supplementary Planning Guidance; and
- (b) to delegate authority to approve local Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder.

9. **GREAT SHELFORD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**

Urgent item with permission of the Leader.

Residents of Great Shelford had followed the successful example of Gamlingay in the production of its Village Design Statement, only to be informed upon its submission to GO-EAST that the requirements had been changed. Members were disappointed by the delay caused by GO-EAST in the adoption of the Village Design Statement, which had jeopardised project funding the village had received from Awards For All. Councillor CR Nightingale, local member, commended the project and spoke of the strong local support.

Cabinet

AGREED to adopt the Great Shelford Village Design Statement as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

10. **PUBLIC ART POLICY**

Cabinet, at its meeting of 16th October 2003, had deferred a decision on a Public Art Policy pending the establishment of a Working Party to investigate many of the points raised during discussion. The Community Development Portfolio Holder explained that it had been a worthwhile exercise to delay the decision and commended the efforts of the Working Party and, in particular, the Chief Executive for his valuable investigations

into similar policies already established by other authorities.

The Arts Development Officer explained that, although the contribution of 1-5% of the associated construction costs of a capital project was recognised as good practice, the exact percent for art would be negotiated as part of a section 106 agreement. He confirmed that the figure of 1-5% was not prescriptive, but a guideline. Members asked that the reference to site area under the eligibility criteria for residential developments of ten or more dwellings and other developments with a floor space of over 1000m² (paragraph 23 of guide) be deleted.

Cabinet

AGREED

- (a) to approve the Draft Public Art Policy as set out in paragraph 6 of the report; and
- (b) to the publication and distribution of Guidance to Developers regarding the inclusion of Public Art in new developments (with amendments requested above), such guidance to serve as informal Council policy in the short term and likely to be consulted on as a draft supplementary planning document if a public art policy becomes part of the Local Development Framework.

11. FUTURE MEETINGS OF CABINET

Cabinet **AGREED** that future meetings would start at 9.00am.

The Meeting ended at 2.10 p.m.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**NEW OFFICES WORKING GROUP**

At a meeting held in the Council Chamber on 15th December 2003 at 2pm

Present: Councillor RT Summerfield – Chairman

Councillors: Mrs J Hughes & SGM Kindersley

Officers: JS Ballantyne, Chief Executive
GJ Harlock, Finance & Resources Director
P Barnes, Special Projects Manager
J Garnham, Finance Project Officer

Lambert Smith Hampton: Andrew Gordon & Matthew Williams

Apologies were received from Cllr JA Nicholas, Cllr Mrs DSK Spink and Cameron Adams.

1. MINUTES

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 11th November 2003 were agreed as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING**Cambridge Office (minute 2.2)**

2.1 Andrew Gordon reported that two alternative locations for the Cambridge Office had been passed to the Council, both were in Regent Street. He added that it was too early to secure a venue without having to pay for an empty office until it was required.

2.2 The Finance and Resources Director reported that he had received an e-mail from the City Council, stating that space would be made at Mandela House for 5 staff working on behalf of the Council. However, the annual charge for renting this space would be £30,000. There would be an additional charge for adaptation costs. The Group agreed that this charge was excessive. It was noted that the rent for the offices at Station Road was £50,000 and this housed approximately four times the staff. Andrew Gordon informed the Group that there was little increase in the rental value for properties at Station Road compared to Regent Street. He added that the alternative locations on Regent Street were £12,000 per annum and £27,000 per annum. It was suggested that an extra cost would be due regarding the cash handling aspect that was required and it was suggested that different options be considered, such as going into partnership with a bank or building society on Regent Street.

Partitions (minute 2.3)

2.3 The Special Projects Officer reported that he was meeting with the developer on Thursday 18th December where the materials to be used for partitions and doors would be discussed.

Furniture for Council Chamber (minutes 4.12 & 4.13)

2.4 The Special Projects Officer reported that the Health and Safety Advisor had

confirmed that the current furniture used in the Council Chamber complied with health and safety legislation. The Special Projects Officer informed the Group that it had proved impossible to negotiate a new price with Breathe to allow new chairs for the Council Chamber within the budget. It was reported that Councillor Mrs DSK Spink was in favour of using existing furniture in the Council Chamber.

Stain Guarded Seating (minute 3.4)

- 2.5 The Special Projects Officer agreed to check with Alison Langford if the chairs would be "scotch guarded" against stains. **PB**

Virement Regarding ICT Equipment (minute 6.4)

- 2.6 It was understood that Council had agreed new rules regarding virement and this would allow the current ICT infrastructure to be replaced.

Artwork (minute 7.2)

- 2.7 The Special Projects Officer reported that there had been a positive visit by the Arts Development Officer and Anthony Green of the Building 6010 on 11th December. It was noted that there were power points that the art displays could use.

Weather Proofing (minute 8.2)

- 2.8 The Special Projects Officer reported that the developer had reported at the progress meeting on 11th December that the building was still on track to be weather proof by Christmas and to be complete by 31st March 2004. He added that all the windows had now been delivered to site and that the only outstanding items are the doors, which were expected to be supplied shortly. This matter would be discussed at the meeting with the developer on 18th December.

Partition Changes (minute 8.4)

Matthew Williams reported that there had been no agreement on the re-design costs. He hoped this matter would be resolved at the meeting with the developer on 18th December 2003.

Cash Office Protective Glass (minute 8.5)

- 2.10 The Special Projects Officer reported that the cost of removing the protective glass from the current office and cutting it to the correct size was prohibitive and as a consequence new protective glass would be required for the new office. The Finance and Resources Director reminded the Group that the Council's insurers insisted that cash office staff had the same level of protection that they had currently. He expressed his dissatisfaction with the possibility that the developer could incur an extra charge on the Council for the provision of a cash office as the architect had inspected the Council and knew what facilities would be required. Matthew Williams reported that this issue would be discussed at the meeting with the developer on the 18th December.

Rainwater Harvesting (minute 8.7)

- 2.11 The Special Projects Officer reported that a 36,000 litre tank would be

installed and this would allow the staff toilets to be flushed with rainwater. However the public toilets would still be flushed with mains water. It was understood that if there were insufficient rainwater in the tanks, mains water would be used to flush staff toilets.

- 2.12 The Special Projects Officer explained that the original plans had to be revised when it became clear that it was impossible to put a drainage tank on one side of the building. He added that the one drainage tank would receive more than half the rainwater fall off as it was on the side of the Council Chamber. It was expected that the actual saving would exceed the projected saving.

Removals and Disposal of Old Furniture (minutes 8.12 & 8.13)

- 2.13 The Special Projects Officer stated that Cheffins had advised against attempting to auction the Council's old furniture as there was no market for it. It was suggested that staff be invited to purchase any furniture for personal use and the remainder could be taken to charities. It was noted the Wildlife Trust in Cambourne required furniture. It was suggested that UCLES and Cambridge students should be invited to purchase the Council's surplus furniture.

Council Crest (8.14)

- 2.14 The Special Projects Officer reported that the developer had agreed to fix the existing Crest to the new building. It was noted that the Council would have to pay approximately £200 for the cleaning of the crest and £200 for its transportation. It was understood that £3,500 had been saved.

Council Lettering on Building

- 2.15 The Group agreed that the lettering on the new offices should state: "South Cambridgeshire District Council". The Chairman advised that the size and style of the lettering was a decision for the Information and Customer Services portfolio holder who was responsible for the Council's corporate identity.

Gym (8.16)

- 2.16 The Group expressed surprise at the cost of £500 per staff member offered by Marston Hotel for membership of their gym. It was noted that corporate membership of Hills Road Sports Centre was £2,500 per year, which ensured that staff were charged a reduced rate for use of their facilities. Andrew Gordon stated that it made good business sense for the Hotel to offer a more competitive rate.
- 2.17 The Special Projects Officer explained that other options were being investigated such as the scheme used by the Papworth NHS Trust and the facilities at Comberton Village College. Any further developments would be reported to a subsequent meeting of the Group.

- 2.18 It was understood that the showers and changing areas were for the benefit of staff that cycled to work and contribute to the building's BREEAM rating.

Member Parking (8.23)

- 2.19 The Group agreed that instead of a chain, a moveable sign should be used to

indicate which places would be available for Members. It was noted that it would be the responsibility of the caretaker to mark the Members parking area.

Projection Facilities (8.33)

- 2.20 The Special Projects Officer stated that he had spoken to an audiovisual company who had confirmed that the projection system could display A1 size plans. He was investigating the possibility of using small monitors for the top table in the Council Chamber. He reported that the actual cost of this system would be determined at a meeting with the audiovisual company. The Finance and Resources Director warned that the draft estimates had been published and any subsequent virement of funds would need to be indicated in revised estimates.

External Lettings (8.35)

- 2.21 The Finance Project Officer stated that a report on this issue would be discussed at the next meeting. The Chief Executive stated that there may be an opportunity for the Council to offer its meeting facilities at a commercial rate and so an official policy was important.

3. Council Chamber Voting System for Cambourne Office

- 3.1 The Special Projects Officer presented this report on the different options for the voting system in the new Council Chamber. He announced that the new system which could record the way individual Councillors had voted was available at cost price which was a saving of almost 50%. However, with the completion of the new office in March, the Council would need to make a decision soon.
- 3.2 The Chairman reminded the Group that there was no budget for the new system and that Full Council would need to approve any expenditure over budget. It was not within the powers of the NOW Group to authorise the recording of votes.
- 3.3 It was suggested that the permission of Full Council was required to take this decision. It was noted that the next Council meeting was on 26th February. The Special Projects Officer agreed to check if this was too late to take advantage of the offered discount. **PB**
- 3.4 Councillor SGM Kindersley proposed that the NOW Group endorse the need for recorded votes. However, Councillor Mrs J Hughes countered that in some cases, such as voting on appointments, it was inappropriate to have recorded votes.

The Group decided not to endorse this proposal but pass this issue to the Constitutional Working Party for their views on the appropriateness of recorded votes.

4. Opening Hours

- 4.1 The Finance Project Officer presented this report which advised the Group of the possibilities of longer opening hours at the new office. In paragraph 3 of the report, the time 8.00am was amended to 7.00am. The Finance Project Officer warned that if the Cash Office working hours were not extended to 5pm the balance could not be agreed until the following day as staff collecting

cash at the City Council Offices at Mandela House would be collecting cash until 5pm. The Finance Project Officer stated that the Assistant Director (Revenues) had asked the Chief Cashier to investigate the practicalities of opening until 5pm. UNISON had expressed the need to consult with management and staff before altering staff hours.

4.2 It was agreed that the Council's current rules regarding flexitime should not be altered. The Chairman requested that steps be taken to ensure that the decision to review working hours was carried out and not forgotten.

- 4.3 The Group **AGREED** that
- a) Opening hours for staff working should be reviewed after the new offices have been open for some time, possibly as part of a wider ranging review of service delivery.
 - b) The Cambourne Cash Office and Reception should remain open until 5pm.
 - c) Officers provide a report on further extending opening hours for the public, to the appropriate forum, after new offices have been open for some time.

5. PROJECT PLAN UPDATE

Builder Development

5.1 This issue had already been discussed under paragraph 2.8 and will be raised again at the meeting with the developer on Thursday 18th December.

Cambridge Office

5.2 This issue had already been discussed under paragraph 2.2. The City Council has promised to send a revised floor layout of the Cambridge Office. The ICT links have been ordered and no abortive costs have been incurred. Should the position arise where the City council is unable to provide suitable accommodation the City Council has agreed to cover any ICT installation costs incurred.

Cambourne Floor Plans

5.3 The second revision of the floor plans was being examined by staff. The revised plans would be sent out in the new year, after the comments on the second revision had been received.

Cash Office

5.4 This issue had already been discussed under paragraph 2.10. The developer needs to ensure that the cash office meets security requirements and complies with the Disability Discrimination Act.

Post Box

5.5 A post box will be provided at the side of the building, not the front.

Utilities

5.6 Electricity and Gas supplies for the building have been sourced using ESPO contracts, to ensure best value. The Council have been added to the BT Office of Government Commerce contract which has ensured savings of

approximately £9,000 per year compared to the existing service.

Travel Plan

- 5.7 It was noted that the postcodes of only three staff were still required for the analysis of the travel survey results. The results of the bid for the County's Rural Bus Challenge for improvements to bus services along the A428 corridor will be known in January.

Removals

- 5.8 The Special Projects Officer informed the Group that he had a meeting this week with a removals firm to evaluate the requirements in the light of the decision to purchase new furniture for open plan areas.

6. RISK REGISTER

- 6.1 The Special Projects Officer presented this report to the Group and the following items were discussed.

Failure to Implement Corporate DIP System

- 6.2 It was understood that paperwork which needed to be scanned before being disposed of might be transported to the new office. It was suggested that the gym area could be used to store this paperwork as this would protect the office carpets.

City Council Unable to Provide Space for Cambridge Office

- 6.3 It was understood that recent communication from the City Council had reduced the probability of this occurring. This issue had already been discussed fully under paragraph 2.2.

Resourcing of ITNET Project Manager Poses Risk to Project

- 6.4 The Special Project Officer explained that removals companies could be contracted to provide removal of desktop computers, allowing ITNET to concentrate on maintaining the servers.

Building Not Fully Watertight

- 6.5 The Special Project Officer reported that the developer had confirmed that the building would be fully watertight by Christmas.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cambourne Officer Group (COG)

- 7.1 It was understood that the last meeting of COG took place on 10th December where the terms of the sub-groups had been discussed. It was agreed that it was important that COG met regularly and that the communication links between the two organisations were maintained as the move was only a few months away.

Blinds

- 7.2 Matthew Williams explained that a high level of manifestation would ensure a

level of privacy for meeting rooms and the rooms of Chief Officers. It was understood that the only room which would have blinds fitted before occupation was the mezzanine floor. The Finance and Resources Director asserted that confidentiality would also be required in the Directors' offices. The Group agreed to wait until after the move had taken place before deciding which rooms would require blinds. Matthew Williams volunteered to discuss this matter at the meeting with the developer later this week.

8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

8.1 It was generally agreed that the Council office was a more appropriate venue for these meeting than the site office, although it would be beneficial for Members to visit the site. The Special Projects Officer agreed to provide Members with a list of the times of the site visits that they could attend.

8.2 It was agreed that the next two meetings should be held on:

- Tuesday 13th January 2004 at 2pm in Committee Room 1
- Monday 23rd February 2004 at 2pm in Committee Room 1

The meeting ended at 3.50 pm

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**NEW OFFICES WORKING GROUP**

At a meeting held in the Committee Room 1 on 13th January 2004 at 2pm

- Present:** Councillor RT Summerfield – Chairman
- Councillors:** SGM Kindersley, JA Nicholas & Mrs DSK Spink
- Officers:** GJ Harlock, Finance & Resources Director
P Barnes, Special Projects Manager
J Garnham, Finance Project Officer
A O’Hanlon, Arts Development Officer
- Lambert Smith Hampton:** Andrew Gordon & Matthew Williams

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs J Hughes and John Ballantyne.

1. MINUTES

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15th December 2003 were agreed as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING**Cambridge Office (minute 2.1)**

- 2.1 The Finance and Resources Director reported that he had met with senior officers from the City Council and the following offer had been forthcoming:
- The annual service costs had been estimated at £5,601.
 - The Capital Costs would be a maximum of £25,000, to be paid over five years.
 - The annual rent would be £22,500 (a reduction from the original £30,000).
- 2.2 It was understood that these costs were within budget. The Finance and Resources Director explained that the Council had an opt out clause that would allow the authority to withdraw from the Cambridge Office if there was insufficient demand; in this event, the outstanding capital costs would become payable.
- 2.3 Andrew Gordon confirmed that although he was commissioned by both Councils, on this issue he was working exclusively for the District Council. He commended the deal and suggested that annual rises in the charge should be indexed linked to protect the authority against any unexpected increases.
- 2.4 It was understood that the Council would be able to use the interview room facility at Mandela House and video conferencing could also be used.

Stain Guarded Seating (minute 2.5)

- 2.5 The Special Projects Manager confirmed that the chairs in the new offices would not be “scotch guarded” against stains as this would have affected the fabric company’s environmental credentials. The Group agreed that scotch guarding was unnecessary.

Removals and Disposal of Old Furniture (minutes 2.13)

- 2.6 It was suggested that village halls and parish offices should be offered the Council's unwanted furniture. The Finance Project Officer agreed to consider contacting parish councils regarding the availability of furniture after the relevant audit had been completed. It was suggested that Emmaus could receive the remaining surplus furniture. **JG**

3. NOTES FROM CAMBOURNE OFFICERS GROUP

- 3.1 The Finance Project Officer explained that the sub-groups of the Cambourne Officers' Group had been refocused to ensure that the crucial issues received adequate attention in the months before the move. The Staff Facilities and the Cambridge Office & Cambourne Reception sub-groups and the Cambridge Office & Cambourne Reception had been disbanded as they were no longer required; however, these would be re-convened if any issues arose.
- 3.2 The Finance Project Officer reported that he was aware that some departments were behind schedule with the shredding of paperwork.

Corporate Identity

- 3.3 It was noted that Cllr JD Batchelor, the portfolio holder for Information and Customer Services, was unaware of this Group's decision to refer the style and size of the lettering of the new office to the corporate identity group, which was under the auspices of his portfolio. It was agreed that this decision should be made at the next meeting of the NOW Group on 23rd February 2004 and Councillor Batchelor should be invited to attend.
- 3.4 Matthew Williams stressed the importance of making an early decision on the style of lettering on the outside of the new offices. It was understood that the current lettering could not be used on the new building as it was of a similar colour to the outside walls and so would not be visible.

4. ROOM LETTINGS POLICY

- 4.1 The Finance Project Officer presented this report which asked the Group to approve a policy on external room lettings at the new offices. He advised against a policy of refusing all lettings as this was not in the spirit of partnership, which was one of the Council's corporate objectives.
- 4.2 Concern was expressed at a recent article which warned that charging local organisations less for the use of public facilities, than other organisations, could be unlawful. The Finance Project Officer stated that he had not yet received confirmation of this law. It was understood that such a rule may have consequences for the leasing of public halls for local authorities throughout the country.
- 4.3 The Group agreed that only minor alterations to the current policy were required. This was to reflect the fact that the size of the relevant rooms would be different from the rooms at 9-11 Hills Road.
- 4.4 The Group **AGREED** to the charges shown in appendix B. These are summarised below:

Type of Fee/Charge	Proposed Fee			Effective Date
	<u>A</u> £	<u>B</u> £	<u>C</u> £	
a) Monday - Friday (normal working hours) - Council Chamber (1st floor)	Free	Free	275 (full day) 145 (half day)	4th May 2004
b) Saturdays/Evenings (per session) - Council Chamber (1st floor) - Meeting Room (ground floor) - Mezzanine Room (2nd floor), or - Committee Room (1st floor)	<u>A</u> £	<u>B</u> £	<u>C</u> £	4th May 2004
	65	165	215	
	50	65	90	
	45	50	65	

Where:

A: Organisations where the Council has a particular involvement (eg officers' professional groups)

B: Organisations that provide facilities, support or advice for the benefit of the Council or residents (eg Citizens Advice Bureau)

C: Other organisations (eg commercial businesses)

5. RISK REGISTER AND PROJECT PLAN UPDATE

- 5.1 The Special Projects Manager announced that the December payment to Wrenbridge had been withheld because the building had not been made weather tight before Christmas. The Council's representatives had met with the developers on 11th December who had given assurances that the office would still be complete by 31st March 2004. It was noted that the Council's representatives would meet again with the developers on 15th January 2004 and then again on 22nd January 2004 where these issues would be discussed.

Cambourne Floor Plans

- 5.2 It was understood that the floor plans for the planning department on the 1st floor were in the process of going through another revision. This was to ensure the space meets current requirements as well as remaining flexible for possible future Area Team structures.

Council Crest

- 5.3 The Council Crest will be removed from 9-11 Hills Road at the end of February, for installation at the new offices.

Partition Changes

- 5.4 It was understood that the partition changes proposed by the Group had been agreed with the developers at no extra cost. However, the savings made by using the existing Council Crest were expected to compensate the developers

for these changes.

Cash Office

- 5.5 Concern was expressed over the Developers insistence at charging extra for the ballistic resistance glass for the cash office. It was noted that this issue would be raised at the next meeting with the developers.

Utilities

- 5.6 The Special Project Manager stated that the electricity should be connected to the building by the end of the month.
- 5.7 The Special Project Manager announced that under a package offered by NTL, staff would be able to keep their extension numbers. He was contacting BT to ascertain whether they could offer a similar deal. It was unclear whether the new office would have a 01223 or 01954 area code.

Travel Plans

- 5.8 The Special Projects Officer explained that the Council was awaiting the outcome of the Rural Bus Challenge fund bid which, if successful, would result in a service frequency to Cambourne every 15 minutes. There is also the possibility that the service may be extended to the railway station, which could affect how the Council runs its service for staff from the station. It was agreed that the Council's bus service for staff would only continue if the staff used it.

6. ART UPDATE

- 6.1 The Arts Development Officer presented this report that proposed an exhibition programme from June 2004 to February 2005. It was proposed that Whitcombe Associates would manage the first exhibition programme featuring local artist Anthony Green. The second exhibition would be organised through Art Contact, based at the Limberhurst Arts Centre in Horseheath. The estimated cost of this programme would be £3,950 to be funded by the 40% commission paid to the Council for the artwork sold.
- 6.2 The capital cost of displaying the artwork would be £3,000 to be paid from unallocated funds from the current financial year.
- 6.3 The Group agreed that although the Council should use the space in the new office to promote the work of local artists, it would be inappropriate to have a commercial involvement to fund the revenue costs of the exhibition programme.
- 6.4 Andrew Gordon suggested that local artists connected to Comberton Village College or other educational institutions would be prepared to display their art for free. The Arts Development Officer replied that these artists would not have the same reputation as artists such as Anthony Green and an exhibition by Art Contact would have the advantage of including a wider selection of work by local professional artists, based on quality and suitability, undertaken by a professional third party.
- 6.5 The Group recommended that the first exhibition of 4th June be delayed as this was too soon after the move in May.

6.6 It was suggested that the art displays could form part of the official opening ceremony. It was hoped that a member of the royal family would be available for the opening ceremony. The Group requested an update report on this issue from the Chief Executive. **JSB**

6.7 The Group agreed that the Arts Development Officer should suggest to Art Contact that they meet the cost of the exhibition programme in return for which the Council would forgo the 40% commission on artwork sold. **AOH**

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

UNISON

7.1 The Group agreed that minutes and agendas of this Group should be sent to a UNISON representative to ensure that they were informed of all developments. **PA**

8. DATES OF NEXT MEETING

- 8.1 The next meetings of the Group will be held on:
- 23rd February 2004 at 2pm in Committee Room 1
 - 19th March 2004 at 2pm in Committee Room 2

The meeting ended at 3.45 pm

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DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE

At a meeting held on Wednesday, 3 December 2003 at 10.00 a.m..

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs JM Healey – Chairman
Councillor JH Stewart – Vice-Chairman

Councillors	Dr DR Bard	CC Barker
	RE Barrett	JD Batchelor
	RF Bryant	G Elsbury
	CJ Gravatt	R Hall
	Mrs SA Hatton	Mrs J Hughes
	SGM Kindersley	LCA Manning JP
	Mrs JA Muncey	Mrs CAED Murfitt
	JA Nicholas	CR Nightingale
	Dr JPR Orme	Mrs DP Roberts
	NJ Scarr	RGR Smith
	RJ Turner	LJ Wilson
	AW Wyatt MBE	

Councillors RF Collinson, Mrs MP Course, PL Stroude and Mrs VM Trueman attended the meeting by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs DSK Spink MBE.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2003, copies of which had been made available electronically.

2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the following applications be determined as recommended in the report of the Planning Director, or otherwise as stated below, and that, in all cases, the Planning Director be given delegated authority to finalise details of Conditions and reasons for refusal consistent with such determinations.

(1) S/1550/03/F - SWAVESEY

Storage buildings, The Grange, 20 Market Street for the Whitfield Group

DELEGATED APPROVAL, as amended by plan no. 03/981/01B, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement, and to the Conditions set out in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(2) S/0785/03/O - HORNINGSEA

Erection of house and associated garaging following demolition of existing house, "Terrell", Church End for the Executors of Mrs MVV Lewin

REFUSED, as amended by letter dated 17th October 2003 and drawings numbered 03/04/01/Rev B and 03/04/02 date stamped 22nd October 2003, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(3) S/2141/03/F - TEVERSHAM

Erection of outbuilding providing swimming pool, changing rooms and ancillary facilities for private use, 2b Church Road, Teversham for Mr and Mrs A Willis

DEFERRED for a site visit, and to enable the applicant to demonstrate that the proposal

would not have an adverse impact on the character of the adjacent listed building.
(Councillor Mrs DP Roberts declared a personal interest in this item and did not contribute to the debate.)

(4) S/2161/03/F - GULDEN MORDEN

Variation of Condition 2 of planning permission S/0994/02/F to retain the stables on a permanent basis, Cold Harbour Farm, for Ms H Flint
DEFERRED for a site visit.

(5) S/2076/03/F - WATERBEACH

Extension and conversion of dwelling into two flats at 5 Burgess Road for Mr P Garner
APPROVAL, as amended by plan number 03/977/02B (revised on 11th November 2003), subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(6) S/2080/03/RM - WILLINGHAM

House and garage, Plot 2, 67 Earith Road
Members noted that this application had been **WITHDRAWN**.

(7) S/2081/03/F - BALSAM

Replacement dwelling and double garage with gym/office above at 87 High Street for S Sutch and L Cook
DELEGATED APPROVAL/REFUSAL. The application would be approved, subject to a Condition requiring that the detailed design of the front wall, gate posts and any gates be agreed by officers, if amended plans were submitted addressing officers' concerns set out in the third paragraph of the planning comments' section of the report from the Director of Development Services, and the Conservation Manager's concern that the design of the building should be appropriate to the village of Balsham. It would be refused if satisfactory amended plans were not received.
(Councillor Mrs DP Roberts did not vote.)

(8) S/1941/02/F - SHEPRETH

Change of use to residential dwelling and garden land at house and land at Shepreth Wildlife Park for T Willers
APPROVAL, subject to the Conditions set out in the report from the Director of Development Services.
(Councillor Mrs DP Roberts declared a personal interest in this item, did not contribute to the debate, and did not vote.)

(9) S/1982/03/F - GRANTCHESTER

Alteration and conversion of existing barn to annexe at Lacies Farm, 34 Coton Road for Mr and Mrs M Miller
DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement ensuring that the building is not sold or let as a separate dwelling, and subject to confirmation that the proposal complies with Building Regulations, the sliding door remaining functional, and exploration of the possibility of setting back the openings on the eastern elevation.

(10) S/1219/03/F - BASSINGBOURN

Change of use of agricultural building to commercial vehicle body building and painting workshop at Highfields Farm for Kneesworth Farms Ltd
Members noted that this application had been **WITHDRAWN**.

(11) S/2164/03/F - COTTENHAM

Continuation of use of land as clay shooting ground on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays,

Willow Grange, Ely Road for Mr Kirby

DELEGATED APPROVAL, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to Conditions reflecting the second paragraph of the History section therein, and appropriate noise attenuation measures. Members considered that, subject to these Conditions, and in view of the site's relatively remote location, the proposal would have no significant adverse impact on properties in the vicinity.

(Councillors LCA Manning, RGR Smith and LJ Wilson declared prejudicial interests in this item, and withdrew from the Chamber during the consideration thereof.)

(12) S/2229/03/F - RAMPTON

Siting of eight caravans for gypsy families (8 pitches) Primrose Meadow, OSP 9586, Cow Lane for H Price

DEFERRED, pending consideration by the Travellers Consultative Group and receipt of comments from Cambridgeshire Constabulary on the law and order implications involved. Having visited the site and taken officers' advice, Members considered that further development on site, which would have an adverse impact on the countryside, should be prevented. Accordingly, they instructed officers to issue and serve Enforcement Notices on the current occupiers and Stop Notices to prevent new occupiers from carrying out further work pending a final decision about this application.

(13) S/2060/03/F - FULBOURN

Erection of eight houses, land off the Chantry for G C Lacey and Son

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the receipt of the revised plans referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services, the formal adoption of the Deposit Local Plan excluding the site from the Green Belt, and safeguarding Conditions.

(14) S/1873/03/F - GAMLINGAY

Variation of Condition no. 4 of planning permission reference S/0476/02/F to allow a continuation of use for open storage until 31st July 2004 at land to the rear of units 1 and 2 Station Road for Pinewood Structures Ltd

APPROVAL, subject to the Condition referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(15) S/2187/03/F - GIRTON

Erection of two-storey rear extension and front porch at 40 St Margaret's Road, for Mrs Braham

APPROVAL, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(16) S/2069/03/F - HARDWICK

Bungalow, land off Links Road for Camstead Ltd

APPROVAL, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services, and an additional Condition limiting the hours of construction.

(17) S/2146/03/F - IMPINGTON

Three flats, land off St George's Way for HRB Properties Ltd

APPROVAL, subject to the submission of satisfactory amended plans clarifying use of the gardens, location of bin areas and drying areas, and any other issues deemed appropriate.

(18) S/2379/01/O - IMPINGTON

Outline application for the development of a residentially led mixed-use sustainable urban extension on land at Arbury Camp, Cambridge

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to:

- (a) the satisfactory outcome of ongoing negotiations to secure the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement reflecting the issues highlighted in the report from the Director of Development Services, the terms of which should be agreed, prior to completion, by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and the local Members, namely Councillors JP Chatfield, NS Davies and Mrs JA Muncey
- (b) the receipt of confirmation from GO East that South Cambridgeshire District Council could determine the application; and
- (c) safeguarding planning Conditions, including those summarised in the report.

(19) S/2145/03/F - GREAT AND LITTLE CHISHILL

Conversion of stables/stores and barn into two dwellings and garaging - North Hall Farm for S M Akhtar

REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services (Reasons 2 and 3 being replaced with a single reason stating that the buildings were not of historic interest or worthy of retention, and that the principle of their conversion to residential uses could not be justified therefore in terms of Adopted Local Plan Policy C29), and for an additional reason relating to the likely level of noise and disturbance that future occupiers of the dwellings would encounter as a result of the proximity of the dwellings to the existing working farm and the lack of private amenity space provided for each property

(20) S/2188/03/F AND S/2189/03/F - HINXTON

- S/2188/03/F - Replacement dwelling and garage at 3 Grange Cottages, Hinxton Grange for Ford Construction Ltd
- S/2189/03/F - Replacement dwelling and garage at land adjacent to Grange Cottages, Hinxton Grange for Russell Smith Farms

DELEGATED APPROVAL of Application no. S/2188/03/F, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement requiring demolition of existing dwellings prior to commencement of the development, and subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services

DELEGATED APPROVAL of Application no. S/2189/03/F, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement requiring demolition of existing dwellings prior to commencement of the development, to no objections being received from the Trees and Landscape Officer, and to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(Councillor RGR Smith declared a prejudicial interest in this item, and withdrew from the Chamber during the consideration thereof.)

(21) S/1883/03/F - HAUXTON

Workshop extension at Cambridge Farm Machinery, Church Road for Cambridge Farm Machinery and W Garfit

The Committee was Minded to **APPROVE** the application, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to it being referred to the Secretary of State as a Departure from the Development Plan and not being called in by him for determination. Having visited the site, Members considered that the proposal would not have any significant adverse impact on the surrounding area and could be approved, contrary to Green Belt Policy, because

- it involved the expansion of a successful local business (closely related to agriculture) which provided an important service to the District
- it was needed for reasons outside the control of the applicant (namely the increase in size of farm machinery, including tractors, combines and cultivators)

- of the Health and Safety considerations identified by the applicant
- the building would cover an existing open storage area
- given the length of time the applicants had been on the site, relocation was not a viable option.

Members also resolved that the use of the building must be tied to the assembly, maintenance, repair and sale of farm machinery. If the existing 1990 Agreement relating to the site would not achieve this, a new Section 106 Legal Agreement (or variation of the existing Agreement) would be required prior to the issuing of any approval (Councillor LCA Manning declared a prejudicial interest in this item, and withdrew from the Chamber during the consideration thereof.)

(22) S/1762/03/RM - LONGSTANTON

Erection of 91 dwellings and ancillary works on land west of Longstanton (Phase 1 - Home Farm) for Persimmon Homes (East Midlands) Ltd

APPROVAL of Reserved Matters (siting, design and means of access), as amended, following the receipt of a further amended layout plan to show a chain link fence along the southern boundary of Plot 9's front garden; and subject to the Conditions and Informatives set out in the report from the Director of Development Services presented to the Development and Conservation Control Committee at its meeting on 5th November 2003.

(23) S/2185/03/F - MELBOURN

Erection of 20 affordable dwellings, land off New Road for the Cambridge Housing Society.

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the comments of the Environment Agency, the receipt of satisfactorily amended plans, and the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement securing the provision of housing in accordance with Policy HG9 of the Deposit Local Plan, and maintenance of the Public Open Space, and subject also to safeguarding Conditions.

(Councillor Mrs DP Roberts voted for refusal, and requested that this fact be recorded.)

(24) S/2095/03/F - MELDRETH

Erection of warehouse to replace existing building and new entrance gates, Southfield Farm, Whaddon Road, for Mr M Bitton

The Committee was minded to **APPROVE** the application, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Members considered that, given its contribution to the local rural economy, the proposal would not have any significant adverse impact on the countryside, and would not therefore contravene Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003. Subject to there being no comments received following the advertisement of the proposal as a Departure from the Development Plan, it was considered unnecessary to refer it to the Secretary of State.

(25) S/2071/03/F - MILTON

First floor front extension, single storey rear extension and insertion of dormer window and erection of detached garage/games room at 5 Coles Road for Mr S F Lander

APPROVAL, as amended by plans date stamped 10th November 2003, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(26) S/2099/03/O - OVER

Dwelling, land to the rear of 54 The Lanes (fronting Webster's Way), for Mrs Howard

APPROVAL, as amended by Drawing 3067 date stamped 29th October 2003, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(27) S/2025/03/O - GRAVELEY

Agricultural dwelling, Cottage Farm, Papworth Road for R Billings

The Committee noted that this application had been **WITHDRAWN** from the agenda at the request of the local Member (Councillor MP Howell) and requested that further consideration of it be **DEFERRED** pending a site visit.

3. **UPDATE ON APPEALS AGAINST PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION**

The Committee noted the following from the report prepared by the Director of Development Services:

- Decisions notified by the Secretary of State

The Deputy Planning Director informed Members that the intention was to present to them, at the Committee meeting on 7th January 2004, full details of the Appeal decision relating to 307 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, including legal advice on whether or not the Council had any grounds upon which to seek Judicial Review.

- Summaries of recent decisions of interest

The Chairman recorded her appreciation of the work carried out by John Koch, Appeals Officer.

- Appeals received
- Local Inquiry and Informal Hearing dates scheduled before the next meeting of the Committee on 7th January 2004

Councillor JA Nicholas (a local Member) highlighted the large number of Inquiries and informal hearings relating to Travellers in Cottenham.

- Advance notification of future local inquiry and Informal Hearing dates (subject to postponement or cancellation)

4. **TREE PRESERVATION ORDER CONFIRMATION - PAPWORTH EVERARD**

The Committee considered whether to confirm Tree Preservation Order no. 31/03/SC made in Papworth Everard.

Members noted that the Varrier Jones Foundation had now withdrawn their objection to the Order.

RESOLVED that Tree Preservation Order 31/03/SC be confirmed without modification.

5. **PUBLIC FOOTPATH NO. 30 - STEEPLE MORDEN**

Members **NOTED** a proposal from Cambridgeshire County Council to divert public footpath no. 30 in Steeple Morden.

The Committee had responded to informal consultation about this application in February 2003.

RESOLVED that Cambridgeshire County Council be informed that this Council reaffirms its response to the informal consultation carried out in February 2003, based on the comments contained in the report from the Finance and Resources Director, and does not object to the proposal to divert public

footpath number 30 in Steeple Morden.

The Meeting ended at 3.45 p.m.

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DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE

At a meeting held on Wednesday, 7 January 2004 at 10.00 a.m..

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs JM Healey– Chairman
Councillor RGR Smith – Acting Vice-Chairman

Councillors	Dr DR Bard	CC Barker
	RE Barrett	JD Batchelor
	RF Bryant	R Driver
	G Elsbury	R Hall
	Mrs SA Hatton	SGM Kindersley
	Mrs JA Muncey	Mrs CAED Murfitt
	JA Nicholas	CR Nightingale
	Dr JPR Orme	JA Quinlan
	Mrs DP Roberts	NJ Scarr
	Mrs DSK Spink MBE	RJ Turner
	LJ Wilson	AW Wyatt MBE

Councillors RF Collinson, TJ Flanagan, Dr SA Harangozo, PL Stroude and Mrs LM Sutherland attended the meeting by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors CJ Gravatt and JH Stewart.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2003 copies of which had been made available electronically.

2. LIMITED LIABILITY (INFRASTRUCTURE) PARTNERSHIP

The Planning Policy Manager gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Infrastructure Partnership for the Cambridge Sub-Region.

The presentation addressed the following issues:

- Implementation challenges
- Vision for the Cambridge Sub-Region
- Housing completions 1991-2002 (actual against target)
- Infrastructure costs
- Interim Partnership arrangements
- Need for a 'delivery vehicle'
- Sub-regional approach
- Growth Area Funding
- SmartLIFE
- Partnership Structure
- Potential Board membership
- Next steps

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Infrastructure Partnership had been established at the behest of central Government, but that it fell short of being a Development Corporation. Its overriding purpose was to help local authorities in the Cambridge Sub-Region meet the challenges posed by the high level of development planned for the area up to the year 2016.

In reply to concern that the Partnership would result in South Cambridgeshire District Council losing some of its planning powers, the Planning Policy Manager assured the Committee that the Council would play a pivotal role in co-ordinating such activities as ensuring that infrastructure was targeted at those areas where it was most needed. The Partnership would greatly assist the Council by enhancing the effectiveness of project planning, and by identifying, and sourcing, available funding. The Leader of Council confirmed that South Cambridgeshire District Council would remain the local planning authority for South Cambridgeshire.

In reply to concern that South Cambridgeshire District Council would be under-represented on the Board (given the projected level of development in the District compared to some other local authority areas within the Sub-Region), the Leader of Council explained that local authority representation on the Board had been determined by central Government.

The Chairman thanked the Planning Policy Manager for his presentation, and concluded by acknowledging that the Infrastructure Partnership would prove invaluable in helping to deliver the County Council's Structure Plan efficiently and effectively.

3. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the following applications be determined as recommended in the report of the Planning Director, or otherwise as stated below, and that, in all cases, the Planning Director be given delegated authority to finalise details of Conditions and reasons for refusal consistent with such determinations.

(1) S/2205/03/O - OAKINGTON

Erection of dwelling and carports on land adjacent to, and to the rear of, 27 Water Lane for the Executors of L W Wilson

APPROVED, as amended by drawing 001A date-stamped 4th December 2003, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(2) S/2233/03/F - SHUDY CAMPS

Dwelling adjacent to Street Farmhouse, Main Street for Mr and Mrs Luckies

DELEGATED APPROVAL/REFUSAL, subject to satisfactory amended plans being received showing revisions to the design and siting of the dwelling and addressing the issue of flood risk.

(3) S/1895/03/O - COMBERTON

Erection of six houses and four flats on land off Milner Road, for Mrs M Morgan

DELEGATED APPROVAL, as amended by the tree survey and site layout plan date-stamped 19th November 2003 and by the revised site plan, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement securing the provision of affordable housing and an education contribution, and to the Conditions referred to in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services. Members requested officers to consider attaching an additional Condition regarding foul water drainage (should this be requested by Anglian Water) and to explore with Cambridgeshire County Council the feasibility of upgrading the footpath to the east of the site to a cycleway.

(Mrs Dorothy Morison, Chairman of the Planning Committee of Comberton Parish Council, addressed the meeting.)

(4) S/2181/03/F - COMBERTON

Extension and boundary fence at 7 Barton Road, Comberton for Mr and Mrs Munns

DELEGATED APPROVAL, in line with the amended recommendation contained in the

report prepared by the Director of Development Services, subject to the Conditions referred to therein and to consideration of an additional Condition relating to landscaping in view of the impact of the fence on Hines Lane.

(Mrs Dorothy Morison, Chairman of the Planning Committee of Comberton Parish Council, addressed the meeting.)

(5) S/2229/03/F - RAMPTON

Siting of eight caravans for gypsy families (eight pitches) Primrose Meadow, OSP 9586, Cow Lane for H Price

REFUSED, as recommended verbally by the Deputy Director of Development Services, because the application conflicted with Policies P1/2 and P5/4 of the Structure Plan, and Policy HG/29 of Local Plan No. 2. The Deputy Director of Development Services reported that the Police had concluded that there was no evidence that the applicant and his family had been intimidated, and that there were no other law and order issues that needed to be addressed. The local Head Teacher had expressed the view that there was no evidence that the applicant's children had been bullied at school. At its meeting on 23rd December 2003, the Panel established by the Travellers Consultative Group had considered all the available information, and accepted these assertions. The Committee expressed its gratitude to those officers who had been instrumental in dealing with the complex issues involved in this case.

(6) S/0827/03/F - DUXFORD

Erection of 12 dwellings following demolition of three dwellings (numbers 13, 15 and 23 Hunts Road) – land at Hunts Road for Nene Housing Society

APPROVAL, subject to no objections being received from the Council's Trees and Landscape Officer, and to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement ensuring that the housing is only occupied by qualifying persons and secured in perpetuity for that purpose, to the Conditions referred to in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services, and to an additional Condition relating to surface water drainage.

(7) S/2203/03/F - DUXFORD

House at 9 Grange Road and land adjoining for T Mendham

REFUSED for the reason set out in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

RESOLVED to issue an Enforcement Notice requiring the number and position of dormer windows on the front elevation of the dwelling to accord with the scheme approved under Planning Reference S/2385/02/F with a one month compliance period.

(8) S/2110/03/LB AND S/2111/03/F - GAMLINGAY

Dismantling of existing front boundary wall and rebuilding with new coping, railings, matching front entrance gate and replacement of vehicular gates with framed, ledged and braced timber gates. Charnock House, 30 Church Street, for Mr P Haith.

DELEGATED APPROVAL, as amended by letter dated 14th November 2003 and the enclosed drawing, date-stamped 4th December 2003, subject to the applicant agreeing

- (a) to keep the finials simple
- (b) to use a style of bricks acceptable to the Local Planning Authority, but not new stock
- (c) to ensure that the gates and railings match each other in appearance and to the Conditions referred to in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(9) S/2276/03/F - GAMLINGAY

Extensions, 1 Honey Hill for Mr and Mrs Vanstone

DELEGATED APPROVAL/REFUSAL, subject to the applicants agreeing to modifications required by the Local Planning Authority in respect of the form of the structure and to the

width and height of the roof and eaves.

(10) S/1614/03/F - GREAT SHELFORD

Erection of 13 dwellings and garages following demolition of existing buildings - Tunwells Close, Tunwells Lane for Hubert C Leach Ltd

DELEGATED APPROVAL, as amended by drawings date stamped 14th November 2003 and landscaping/tree protection plan date stamped 27th November 2003, subject to

- the receipt of street scene elevations for Plot 10
- amended plans to delete the wall at the rear of Plot 8
- the Conditions referred to in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services, with Condition 10 being revised so as to include the words "...other than..." between the words "...period..." and "...between..."

(11) S/1559/03/F - HISTON

Erection of 57 dwellings (including 17 Affordable dwellings) on land off Chivers Way (Accessed Off Kay Hitch Way), for Taylor Woodrow Development Ltd

REFUSED unanimously for the reasons outlined in the report dated 10th November 2003 from Atkins Highways and Transportation

(Mr Mike Mason, a member of Histon Parish Council, addressed the meeting.)

(12) S/2180/03/F - IMPINGTON

Extension at no. 4 Villa Road for Mr and Mrs A. Duncan

REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(13) S/2231/03/F - LONGSTANTON

Extension, 76 Rampton Drift for Mr and Mrs Tommaso

REFUSED for the reason set out in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(14) S/1848/03/F - KINGSTON

Erection of building for office and garage/store at Gamekeepers Cottage, Kingston Wood Manor for Mr and Mrs T Evans

REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(15) S/2147/03/F - LITTLE EVERS DEN

Conversion of silos into dwelling, silos on land at Church Farm for Thos Banks & Partners

REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(16) S/2025/03/O - GRAVELEY

Agricultural dwelling, Cottage Farm, Papworth Road for R Billings

The Committee noted that this application had been **WITHDRAWN**.

(17) S/2258/03/F - SAWSTON

House and two garages on land to the rear of 50 and 52 London Road for N Facer

APPROVAL, as amended by plans date stamped 18th December 2003 (not 1st and 12th December 2003 as stated in the report), subject to the Conditions referred to in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(18) S/2141/03/F - TEVERSHAM

Erection of outbuilding providing swimming pool, changing rooms and ancillary facilities for private use, 2B Church Road, Teversham for Mr and Mrs A Willis

REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report prepared by the Director of Development

Services.

(Councillor Mrs DP Roberts declared a personal interest in this item, and withdrew from the Council Chamber.)

(19) S/2161/03/F - GULDEN MORDEN

Variation of Condition 2 of planning permission S/0994/02/F to retain the stables on a permanent basis, Cold Harbour Farm, for Ms H Flint

APPROVAL, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

(20) S/1215/03/F - LITTLE WILBRAHAM

Erection of seven houses (including two Affordable units), Rectory Farm site, Rectory Farm Road for R and H Wale Ltd

REFUSED, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services. Members took the view that there was a need for 50% Affordable Housing (three units) on this site, that there should be one entrance only, that some redesign and/or siting of the units was necessary, and that the two clunch barns should be retained in order to achieve a satisfactory form of development.

(Mr M Crisp, Chairman of Little Wilbraham Parish Council, addressed the meeting.

Councillor RJ Turner declared a prejudicial Interest in this item, and withdrew from the Chamber.)

(21) S/2241/03/F - WILLINGHAM

Two dwellings (revised design), Plots 26 and 30, land to the west of High Street for Bovis Homes Ltd

REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report prepared by the Director of Development Services.

4. UPDATE ON APPEALS AGAINST PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION

The Committee noted the following from the Planning Director's report.

- Decisions notified by the Secretary of State
- Summaries of recent decisions of interest

In connection with 307 Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, the Deputy Director of Development Services informed Members that the Secretary of State's decision to approve the application was now being challenged by a third party. Some Members regretted that the Council had not sought itself to challenge the decision. The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development observed that the overriding issue was not whether or not the purpose behind the application was in the national interest or not, but whether or not the laboratory was being proposed in the most suitable location.

- Appeals received
- Local Inquiry and Informal Hearing dates scheduled before the next meeting of the Committee on 4TH February 2004
- Appeals withdrawn or postponed
- Advance notification of future local inquiry and Informal Hearing dates (subject to postponement or cancellation)

5. ENFORCEMENT ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Mr David Brock, Solicitor with Messrs Mills and Reeve (Solicitors), summarised the steps

taken by his Firm, on behalf of the Council, between Christmas 2003 and 5th January 2004 to issue and partially serve an injunction on certain named and unnamed persons on an unlawful Travellers encampment at Histon.

Mr Brock confirmed that

- the Injunction obtained at Histon was an interim measure, subject to a full Hearing in due course. Those subject to the interim Injunction could apply for a Stay, or for discharge of it.
- there was a hierarchy of land where Injunctions were appropriate. It was necessary to balance the degree of environmental harm with the inconvenience caused to, and the status of, those in breach of planning law. The qualitative nature of the land in question was just one of many factors that had to be taken into account.
- the matter would remain with the High Court in London, and would not be transferred to the District Registry in Cambridge.
- the Injunction had been issued, and was therefore in force. It would take effect once it had been duly served on all those affected by it.

The Committee **NOTED** an Index of current Enforcement Cases and a report, dated 7th January 2004, detailing progress being made with Enforcement Action. A number of issues raised by Members were clarified by officers.

On behalf of those present, the Chairman expressed her gratitude for the work undertaken by Mr Brock on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council, and for the involvement of Council officers, particularly over the Christmas and New Year break.

6. PROPOSALS TO REFORM PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

The Committee considered a report on the Consultation document entitled *Contributing to Sustainable communities – a new approach to Planning Obligations: a consultation on proposals to reform Planning Obligations*, published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in November 2003.

The Development Control Quality Manager highlighted the Officer comments contained in paragraphs 11 to 15 of the report prepared by the Director of Development Services, and summarised representations made to the ODPM by the Limited Liability (Infrastructure) Partnership.

It was **RESOLVED** that the comments contained in paragraphs 11 to 15 inclusive of the report prepared by the Director of Development Services be endorsed and forwarded to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, and that the ODPM be informed also that, as a member of the Limited Liability (Infrastructure) Partnership for Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire District Council fully supported the representations made by that organisation.

7. REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE - REFUSE DESIGN GUIDE

The Committee received a draft document entitled *South Cambridgeshire District Council: Planning Design Guide* for the storage of solid waste in new developments.

However, due to the complexities involved, and the late stage of the meeting at which this point of the agenda had been reached, Councillor SGM Kindersley proposed that consideration of the issues be deferred until the Committee meeting on 4th February

2004.

Councillor Kindersley also requested that parish councils be consulted about the Design Guide. The Development Control Quality Manager pointed out that, in order to give parish councils sufficient time to consider, and respond to, the Design Guide, it would be necessary to defer consideration by the Development and Conservation Control Committee until its meeting on 3rd March. This would enable officers properly to collate and report to Members comments received from parish councils. Councillor CC Barker, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, stated that it was imperative that the issues be discussed at the earliest opportunity so that developers could be given guidance on the refuse factors they needed to take into account when building new dwellings. He urged, therefore, deferral of no longer than one month. It was agreed that individual Members of Council should decide for themselves whether or not to consult their local parish councils over the Design Guide.

It was **RESOLVED** that consideration of the document entitled *South Cambridgeshire District Council: Planning Design Guide* for the storage of solid waste in new developments, together with the covering report from the Director of Development Services, be deferred until the meeting of Development and Conservation Control Committee to be held on 4th February 2004.

8. **CAMBOURNE SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENT - FACILITIES AND TIMING OF PROVISION**

The Committee considered a report on the lack of provision of certain facilities required to be provided at Cambourne as a result of the Section 106 Agreement dated 20th April 1994.

Members noted that the Scrutiny Committee had agreed that the Council's stance should be that no further permissions for market housing should be granted at Cambourne until the Community Centre, Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and Burial ground had been provided.

The New Village/Special Projects Officer (Cambourne) summarised comments received from the Project Director representing the developers of Cambourne on progress being made in providing those facilities that had not been provided to date.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council's approach, outlined in the report from the Director of Development Services, be endorsed, and that a further progress report be presented to Members at the meeting of the Development and Conservation Control Committee to be held on 4th February 2004.

The Meeting ended at 6.03 p.m.

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DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE

At a meeting held on Wednesday, 4 February 2004 at 10.00 a.m..

Councillors	Dr DR Bard	CC Barker
	RE Barrett	JD Batchelor
	RF Bryant	R Driver
	G Elsbury	CJ Gravatt
	R Hall	Mrs SA Hatton
	Mrs J Hughes	SGM Kindersley
	LCA Manning JP	Mrs JA Muncey
	Mrs CAED Murfitt	JA Nicholas
	CR Nightingale	Dr JPR Orme
	JA Quinlan	Mrs DP Roberts
	NJ Scarr	RGR Smith
	Mrs DSK Spink MBE	RJ Turner
	LJ Wilson	AW Wyatt MBE

Councillors SJ Agnew, Dr SA Harangozo and Mrs EM Heazell attended the meeting by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs JM Healey and JH Stewart.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

In the absence of the Committee Chairman, Councillor RF Bryant (Chairman of the Council) took the Chair to oversee election of a Chairman for the meeting. Upon duly being proposed and seconded

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor RGR Smith be elected as Acting Chairman for the meeting.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

Upon duly being proposed and seconded

It was **RESOLVED** that Councillor SGM Kindersley be appointed Acting Vice-Chairman for the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Subject to the addition of a comma, followed by the words "...but not new stock" after the word "...Authority" at the end of (b) in Minute no. 3(8) (S/2110/03/LB and S/2111/03/F in Gamlingay), the Committee authorised the Acting Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th January 2004, copies of which had been made available electronically.

4. REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE - REFUSE DESIGN GUIDE

The Committee considered a report, deferred from the meeting on 7th January 2004 (Minute no. 7 refers), seeking its comments on the draft Refuse Design Guide, attached thereto as an Appendix.

The Development Control Quality Manager explained that the intention was that the Refuse Design Guide should be adopted now as Council policy and, in due course, as a Supplementary Planning Document within the pending Local Development Framework. It

would therefore be subject to full public consultation as part of the LDF process.

In response to a Member's question, the Recycling and Waste Minimisation Officer confirmed that Donarbon Ltd was still awaiting the issue of the appropriate licence to enable it to begin composting organic waste.

In connection with the amended final paragraph of Section 2 of the Draft Guide, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health acknowledged that further amendment was necessary to make it clear that a householder could only purchase an additional black wheeled bin after a needs assessment carried out by the Environmental Health Department.

Members discussed the questions of bin capacity and entitlement. The Head of Legal Services urged Members to be flexible about capacity, suggesting that between 1 ½ and 2 ½ square metres should be provided for receptacles (without specifying the type) depending on the size of dwelling.

In its capacity as consultee, the Development and Conservation Control Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development

- (1) commend the Refuse Design Guide to full Council, and invite full Council to adopt it as Council policy and, in due course, as a Supplementary Planning Document, subject to the amendment about flexibility of capacity suggested by the Head of Legal Services; and
- (2) implements the necessary procedures to ensure that the Refuse Design Guide is made available to applicants for planning permission as soon as possible.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the following applications be determined as recommended in the report of the Planning Director, or otherwise as stated below, and that, in all cases, the Planning Director be given delegated authority to finalise details of Conditions and reasons for refusal consistent with such determinations.

(1) S/6212/03/F - CAMBOURNE

Shops, offices and 16 flats, Building W2, High Street, Cambourne, for Bovis Homes **APPROVAL**, in line with the amended recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to Conditions relating to (among other things)

- details of the windows facing the market square
- hard surfacing details
- the need to clarify the future use of the open space in front of the retail units
- a scheme for public art (in accordance with the Design Guide)
- hours of construction
- details of lighting
- details of any barrier
- details of location and extent of the building compound

Members instructed officers to write to the applicants, stressing that the grant of planning permission in this case reflected the need for commercial units in Cambourne, and acknowledged the lengthy timescales involved, given the incorporation into the scheme of underground car parking. It had been granted strictly as an exception to the Council's embargo on issuing permissions for more market housing in the village, pending substantial progress being made, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, in

providing the community facilities envisaged by the Section 106 Legal Agreement completed in 1994.

The Head of Legal Services stated that, in any event, the so-called embargo should not be treated as being absolute in nature, and should not be cited as being such by certain elements of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee ("MLC"). The Scrutiny Committee had examined this matter in detail and, while it concurred with the Council's approach of withholding planning approvals for as long as the developers were in default of their planning obligations, it acknowledged the Development and Conservation Control Committee's duty to determine each individual application in the light of all the relevant circumstances, including the progress of infrastructure provision.

In the 'Consultations' section of the report, Members agreed that the paragraph stating that, "The Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC) – a forerunner of the future Parish Council recommends refusal, due to non-compliance with the s106 trigger points relating to the provision of community facilities" should be replaced with the following words namely, "The Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC – a forerunner of the future Parish Council) recommends refusal, due to non-compliance with the s106 trigger points relating to the provision of community facilities."

(Mike Jocelyn addressed the meeting as a member of the Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee but without authority from the MLC itself.)

(2) S/6223/03/RM - CAMBOURNE

71 dwellings at GC31 for Circle 33 Housing Trust Ltd

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement, amended plans addressing the issues raised in the report from the Director of Development Services, and Conditions relating to materials and boundary treatment. In the 'Consultations' section of the report, Members agreed that the paragraph stating that, "The Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC) – a forerunner of the future Parish Council recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows." should be replaced with the following words namely, "The Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC – a forerunner of the future Parish Council) recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows."

(Mike Jocelyn addressed the meeting as a member of the Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee but without authority from the MLC itself.)

(3) S/6225/03/RM - CAMBOURNE

35 dwellings at GC16 for Circle 33 Housing Trust Ltd

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement, amended plans that better relate Plots 26 and 27 with the neighbouring site GC13, small changes to the position of blocks H and I, changes to the site boundary to show an indicative highway connection, a rationalisation of the number of footpaths within the site, and planning Conditions relating to materials, boundary treatment, lighting and comments from the Council's Ecology Officer. In the 'Consultations' section of the report, Members agreed that the paragraph stating that, "The Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC) – a forerunner of the future Parish Council recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows." should be replaced with the following words namely, "The Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC – a forerunner of the future Parish Council) recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows."

(Mike Jocelyn addressed the meeting as a member of the Planning sub-Committee of the

Cambourne Management Liaison Committee but without authority from the MLC itself.)

(4) S/6226/03/RM - CAMBOURNE

29 dwellings at GC21 for Circle 33 Housing Trust Ltd

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal agreement, amended plans addressing the issues raised in the report from the Director of Development Services, and planning Conditions relating to materials, boundary treatment, landscaping, lighting and comments from the Council's Ecology Officer. In the 'Consultations' section of the report, Members agreed that the paragraph stating that, "The Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC) – a forerunner of the future Parish Council recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows." should be replaced with the following words namely, "The Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC – a forerunner of the future Parish Council) recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows."

(Mike Jocelyn addressed the meeting as a member of the Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee but without authority from the MLC itself.)

(5) S/6227/03/RM - CAMBOURNE

30 dwellings at GC22 for Granta Housing Society

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement, amended plans addressing the issues raised in the report from the Director of Development Services, and planning Conditions relating to construction access, materials, boundary treatment, landscaping and lighting. In the 'Consultations' section of the report, Members agreed that the paragraph stating that, "The Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC) – a forerunner of the future Parish Council recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows. It also makes comments about overlooking from two unnecessary balconies on block I (plots 27-30) and the lack of a turning head at the end of the road next to the access to the allotments." should be replaced with the following words namely, "The Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC – a forerunner of the future Parish Council) recommends refusal. Its principal complaint is that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows. It also makes comments about overlooking from two unnecessary balconies on block I (plots 27-30) and the lack of a turning head at the end of the road next to the access to the allotments."

(Mike Jocelyn addressed the meeting as a member of the Planning sub-Committee of the Cambourne Management Liaison Committee but without authority from the MLC itself.)

(6) S/6228/03/RM - CAMBOURNE

Multi-Use Games Area, access and car park at sports area, Back Lane, Cambourne, in the Parish of Bourn

DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to no objections being received during the period for public consultation, and to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(7) S/2458/03/F - BOURN

Extension to 16 Church Street for Mr and Mrs I Jones

APPROVAL, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services and an additional Condition requiring the replanting of a hedge along the front boundary in order to screen the dwelling from Church Street.

(Councillor Mrs DP Roberts abstained from voting)

(8) S/2329/03/F - CAXTON

Extension at Grange Farm, Bourn Road for V. Chapman

APPROVED, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of

Development Services. Having visited the site, Members did not consider that the development would have an adverse impact on the countryside such as would contravene Policy HG19 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (proposed to be adopted December 2003).

(Councillor NJ Scarr abstained from voting)

(9) S/2529/03/F - CROXTON

Temporary portable building for storage of furniture (retrospective application), land at Wykeham House, High Street, Croxton for Mr and Mrs G Green

APPROVED, subject to a Condition (revised from that set out in the report from the Director of Development Services) stating that the portable building hereby permitted shall be removed and land restored to its former condition on or before 31st July 2004 or within 14 days of the date the works to repair the flood damage to the house is completed, whichever is the sooner.

(10) S/2170/03/F - CASTLE CAMPS

Change of use of post office/shop to dwelling at the post office, High Street for Mr and Mrs Lott

APPROVAL, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Members considered that the applicants had undertaken an appropriate marketing exercise, that there had been insufficient local support, and that the post office/shop was unviable due to its relatively close proximity to Haverhill.

(11) S/2202/03/F - COMBERTON

House, land adjacent to Vine House, 26 West Street for Mr and Mrs Funge

APPROVAL, as amended by plan showing amended position of access, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services.

Having visited the site, Members considered that the siting and design of the proposed dwelling did not adversely affect the Conservation Area or the well-being of the Yew tree on site.

(Miss Chris Westgarth, Chairman of Comberton Parish Council, addressed the meeting)

(12) S/2273/03/F AND S/2272/03/CAC - COMBERTON

Erection of house following demolition of existing bungalow and garage

Total demolition of existing bungalow and garage

4 Hines Lane for C B and P A Walker

APPROVAL of both applications, including details of the roof and fenestration, subject to the Conditions set out in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(Miss Chris Westgarth, Chairman of Comberton Parish Council, addressed the meeting)

(13) S/2512/03/F - COTTENHAM

Erection of extension to form garage at 10 Kingfisher Way for S Harris

REFUSED, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Members reaffirmed part of the reason for refusing application S/2042/02/F at the same site, and stated that application S/2512/03/F should be refused for the second reason, namely that the garage was of insufficient width to be usable, thereby reducing the amount of available parking on site.

(14) S/1409/03/O AND S/1410/03/O - DUXFORD

- S/1409/03/O - residential development (affordable housing) on land off Lacey's Way for Mr J Hilbery and Cambridge Housing Society

- S/1410/03/O - erection of four dwellings and garages following demolition of commercial buildings on land off Moorfield Road for Mr J Hilbery

APPROVAL of application no. S/1409/03/O, as amended by plan date stamped 28th October 2003 and letter dated 21st January 2004, subject to the prior completion of a

Section 106 Legal Agreement ensuring that all of the housing would be affordable and would remain so in perpetuity, and to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

APPROVAL of application no. S/1410/03/O, as amended by letter dated 21st January 2004, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement to tie the development of this site to the provision and delivery of the Lacey's Way site and to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(15) S/2523/03/F - FOWLMERE

Replacement dwelling, North Grove, for M Weztl

Members noted that this application had been **WITHDRAWN**.

(16) S/0011/04/F - FULBOURN

Erection of car port extension to garage, 31 Cherry Orchard for Mr Wilkinson

APPROVAL, for the personal benefit of the applicant and his family (in accordance with the 'private interests' provision of Planning Policy Guidance Note no. 1), subject to the Condition referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(17) S/2561/03/F - FULBOURN

Erection of an extension and outbuilding, Hind Lodgers House, Stonebridge Lane for Mr and Mrs Mason

DEFERRED for a site visit.

(18) S/0141/01/O - GAMLINGAY

Two dwellings, land to the rear of 32 Mill Street (off School Close) for the Executors of Mr S Cross

APPROVAL, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(19) S/2344/03/F - GIRTON

Extension, The Bungalow, Cambridge Road, for R Kennedy and K Meaby

REFUSED, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Members considered the proposal to be out of scale and that it would have an adverse impact on its surroundings, thus being contrary to Policies GB/2 and HG/18 of the Local Plan.

(20) S/2325/03/F - GREAT SHELFORD

Dwelling at no. 1 Woollards Lane for Mr and Mrs Rankine

APPROVAL, as amended by plan date-stamped 22nd January 2004 reducing the height of the garage, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services and to an additional Condition relating to the area to be provided clear of the public highway for the parking, turning, loading and unloading of all vehicles visiting the site during the construction period.

(Councillor R Hall declared a personal interest in this item and withdrew from the Chamber.)

(21) S/2474/03/F - GREAT SHELFORD

House on land adjacent to 1 Stonehill Road for Dr and Mrs Onuorah

DELEGATED REFUSAL, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Having visited the site, Members considered that, by virtue of its forward position and design, the proposed dwelling would have an adverse impact on the street scene and would not respect the rhythm of development along Stonehill Road.

(22) S/2617/03/LB AND S/2618/03/F - HARSTON

- S/2617/03/LB – alterations - dismantling of section of front boundary wall to form new access and construction of new entrance piers
- S/2618/03/F - vehicular access and entrance piers adjacent to Park House, 87 High Street for City and Country Residential Ltd

REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, and an additional reason for application S/2618/03/F relating to the likely adverse impact the foundations of the proposed piers would have on the rooting systems of the two adjacent trees.

(23) S/1731/03/F - HISTON

Erection of dwelling on land adjacent to 8 Winders Lane for Mr and Mrs B Martin
APPROVAL, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Having visited the site, Members did not consider that the proposal would have an adverse impact on the character of Clay Street.
 (Councillor CC Barker declared a personal interest in this item, and withdrew from the Chamber.)

(24) S/2486/03/F - HISTON

Dwelling adjacent to no. 8 Farmstead Close for Alan Collinson
DEFERRED for a site visit.

(25) S/2058/03/F - LITTLE SHELFORD

Alteration to vehicular access at 65 Hauxton Road for F T A Smart
REFUSED, as amended by plans date stamped 10th November 2003, for the reason set out in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(26) S/2247/03/F - HORNINGSEA

Replacement dwelling and garaging, Kings Farm, High Street for Mr and Mrs N J Gibbs
DEFERRED to enable the applicants, officers and the Parish Council to consider an alternative access to the site in consultation with Cambridgeshire County Council and Councillor SJ Kime, the County Councillor representing the Fulbourn Division.
 (Michael Helowell, Chairman of Horningsea Parish Council, addressed the meeting.)

(27) S/2460/03/F - THRILOW

Extensions and garage/store at 5 Middle Street for Mr and Mrs L Holmes
APPROVAL, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement to ensure that there is no further development within the site other than the extensions and garage/store, and that the main extension is only occupied as an annexe to the existing dwelling. Having visited the site, Members considered that the proposal was of a good design, would enhance the Conservation Area, and would not adversely impact on neighbouring properties.

(28) S/2302/02/O - WILLINGHAM

Two dwellings on land adjacent to, and to the rear of, 35-37 Church Street for Willingham Combined Charity
APPROVAL, as amended by drawing no. WILL/312/3 'A' date stamped 29th October 2003 and certificate dated 30th October 2003, subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services.

(29) S/2121/03/F - WEST WRATTING

House and garage - land to the rear of 3 High Street for J and J Alderton Ltd
DELEGATED APPROVAL/REFUSAL, as amended by plans date stamped 31st October 2003, 20th and 26th January 2004 and facsimile message dated 3rd February 2004.
 Approval would be granted if, after further discussions had taken place with the

Environment Agency, the Council's Drainage Manager and the local Member, it was agreed that existing dwellings would not be at increased risk of flooding as a result of the development. The application would be refused if it was agreed that existing dwellings were likely to be at increased risk of flooding as a result of the development. Any approval would be subject to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services, and to additional Conditions relating to the finished floor level of the dwelling and the provision and maintenance of the visibility splay.

6. UPDATE ON APPEALS AGAINST PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION

The Committee noted the following from the report prepared by the Director of Development Services:

- Decisions notified by the Secretary of State
- Appeals received
- Local Inquiry and Informal Hearing dates scheduled before the next meeting of the Committee on 3rd March 2004

In connection with the nine appeals at Smithy Fen, Cottenham (Plots 7-12 and 14-16 Pineview), Members noted that the Informal Hearing had been postponed.

- Appeals withdrawn or postponed
- Advance notification of future local inquiry and Informal Hearing dates (subject to postponement or cancellation)

7. APPLICATIONS OVER 13 WEEKS AWAITING DECISIONS AS AT THE END OF WEEK 42

Members **RECEIVED** and discussed a list of applications over 13 weeks old awaiting decision as at the end of Week 42.

8. PLANNING APPEAL STATISTICS

Members **NOTED** Planning Appeal statistics for the period from 1st January 2003 to 31st December 2003.

9. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Members **NOTED** performance criteria for the three-month period ended 30th September 2003.

10. PLANNING DECISION TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES

Members **NOTED** graphs in respect of:

- Planning Decisions for the period from July to September 2003
- Planning Decisions for the year ended 30th September 2003
- Total decisions issued quarterly by South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Percentage of applications determined within eight weeks
- Planning Decisions by development type and speed of evaluation for the three-month period and year ended 30th September 2003

The Deputy Planning Director pointed out to Members that the year ending September 2003 comprised the worst four quarters for some time. During this period, it had proved

impossible to retain and recruit to keep the Area Planning Teams fully staffed. However, the last vacancy would be filled in March 2004, and this would be the first time in over two years that the Teams had been complete. Unfortunately, the Planning Delivery Grant from Government was based on the year ended September, and the figures could adversely impact on the level of grant payable to South Cambridgeshire District Council, despite the Authority being in the second to top quartile and actually determining more applications within eight weeks than it had done during the equivalent period in the previous year (the total number of applications had increased considerably and at a rate above the national average). The Planning Delivery Grant was funding the Council's two informal inquiry officers, who had dealt with over 250 inquiries during the last quarter.

11. CAMBOURNE SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENT - FACILITIES AND TIMING OF PROVISION

The Committee noted a further report on the lack of provision, in Cambourne, of a series of facilities required under the terms of the Section 106 Legal Agreement dated 20th April 1994.

The New Village/Special Projects Officer (Cambourne) conveyed to Members an update report from the Project Director at Cambourne on progress being made with such provision, especially in connection with the skateboard park, allotments and Multi-Use Games Area ("MUGA")

Councillor Mrs DSK Spink (local Member) expressed her appreciation of the work conducted by officers in monitoring performance against the provisions of the Section 106 Agreement, and requested that the March update should highlight planning permission S/6212/03/F – Cambourne (Shops, offices and flats, Building W2, High Street, Cambourne, for Bovis Homes) as an exception to the Council's stance on withholding further permission for market housing pending substantial progress in complying with the 1994 Agreement.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council's stance be maintained for the time being, and a further report to be received at the next meeting.

12. REVIEW OF THE CAMBOURNE DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENT GROUP (DEG)

The Committee considered a report detailing the history of the Cambourne Design and Environment Group ("DEG") and assessing its current effectiveness.

Due to the cancellation of the DEG meeting referred to in paragraph 7 of the report, the views of its individual members had been canvassed. One response had been received, expressing concern at the proposal to disband the Group.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Cambourne Design and Environment Group be suspended for a period of twelve months.

13. TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

The Committee considered whether or not to confirm Tree Preservation Orders made in the parishes of Girton, Bassingbourn and Willingham.

It was **RESOLVED** that Tree Preservation Orders 40/03/SC (5 Cambridge Road, Girton), 41/03/SC (131 The Causeway, Bassingbourn) and 42/03/SC (1 Priest Lane, Willingham) be confirmed without modification.

The Meeting ended at 4.50 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Electoral Arrangements Committee held on
Thursday, 11 December 2003

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs J Hughes – Chairman
Councillor Dr JA Heap – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: R Hall JA Nicholas
J Shepperson RT Summerfield
Mrs BE Waters

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence had been received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor RT Summerfield declared a personal interest as the local member for Milton.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

On the nomination of Councillor JA Nicholas, seconded by Councillor Dr JA Heap, and there being no further nominations, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs J Hughes be re-elected Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Committee for the coming financial year.

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

On the nomination of Councillor Mrs J Hughes, seconded by Councillor JA Nicholas, and there being no further nominations, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Dr JA Heap be re-appointed Vice-Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Committee for the coming financial year.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 25th March 2003 as a correct record.

6. MILTON DETACHED

The Electoral Arrangements Committee, at its meeting of 25th March 2003, had agreed that a limited review be undertaken confined to the possibilities and consequences of the Milton Detached area, i.e. land primarily south of the A14, being either warded, parished without a Council or remaining as an unwarded part of Milton Parish. The Head of Legal Services had copied to members the information sent to stakeholders as part of the consultation exercise, including a notice published in the local paper. Letters had been sent to all residents in the Milton Detached area who were on the electoral roll. Two responses had been received.

The first response, from Milton Parish Council, supported the formation of a new Parish

for the Milton Detached area, with or without its own Parish Council or Parish Meeting. It was noted that there had not been any previous interest in local government from residents in the Milton Detached area.

The second response was from the Cambridgeshire County Council Education, Libraries and Heritage, noting that primary-aged children in the Milton Detached Area fell within the City catchment area for schools and would continue to do so regardless of the outcome of the review.

Members recalled that, at the previous meeting, the Chairman of Milton Parish Council had reported that residents of Milton Detached had no interest in being a separate ward. It was unlikely that a representative would stand for election for a warded seat, leaving the Parish Council one member short, but if the area remained unwarded, residents could still stand for Parish Council elections if they so wished. Residents were also free to approach the Parish Council if they had any concerns.

Members felt that it had been right to review the electoral arrangements for Milton Parish at this time, but noted that a more comprehensive electoral review would form part of the Arbury Camps development in the coming years. The Head of Legal Services was asked to convey the Committee's thanks to Milton Parish Council for bringing the matter to the Committee's attention.

The Electoral Arrangements Committee

AGREED that no further action be taken.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7 (a) Cambourne

The Head of Legal Services reported that the order for the parish of Cambourne had been made, but that the electoral arrangements remained in draft form. Cambourne would become a parish on 1st April 2004.

The Meeting ended at 12.45 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Employment Committee held on
Thursday, 22 January 2004

Councillors: Mrs JM Healey Mrs GJ Smith
Dr JA Heap Mrs VM Trueman
RT Summerfield Mrs BE Waters

Councillor SGM Kindersley was in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors MP Howell, DL Porter and JA Quinlan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

On the nomination of Councillor Mrs JM Healey, seconded by Councillor Mrs GJ Smith, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Dr JA Heap be elected Chairman of the Employment Committee.

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

On the nomination of Councillor Mrs GJ Smith, seconded by Councillor RT Summerfield, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs VM Trueman be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Employment Committee.

5. MINUTES

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2002 as a correct record.

6. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & RESOURCES (ICT)

The Finance and Resources Director explained that the immediate challenge was to identify a qualified replacement for the Assistant Director of Finance and Resources (ICT), who was retiring shortly. A consultancy firm would nominate a shortlist of candidates to be interviewed by the Employment Committee's appointments panel in March. The Constitution required the Chairman of the Employment Committee to make appointments to this panel, which must include the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder and one other relevant Portfolio Holder, in this instance the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder. The Finance and Resources Director indicated that, in his view, he and the consultant should also be present to assist the panel as non-voting members. Although the constitutional requirement was for a panel of five Members, the Committee recognised that it would be intimidating for candidates to be faced with a panel of nine, and therefore agreed, in this instance, that the Chairman

should appoint three Members.

Members discussed the interview process and made the following points:

- Member involvement would be kept to a single day;
- The consultants would be asked to prepare a short list of five candidates, with six candidates being the absolute maximum;
- Candidates would make a short presentation to the interview panel; and
- The Finance and Resources Director would arrange for candidates to meet staff in the ICT section. This could be on a separate date rather than part of the interviews.

The Chairman of the Employment Committee

AGREED that the panel for the appointment of the new Assistant Director of Finance and Resources (ICT) would be comprised of the Chairman of the Employment Committee, the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder and the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder, with the Vice-Chairman of the Employment Committee as substitute. The Finance and Resources Director and the consultant would be non-voting members of the interview panel.

The Meeting ended at 1.55 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on
Thursday, 27 November 2003

PRESENT: Councillor SGM Kindersley – Chairman
Councillor MP Howell – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	SJ Agnew	RE Barrett
	RF Bryant	EW Bullman
	NN Cathcart	Mrs J Hughes
	Mrs GJ Smith	LJ Wilson

Councillors CC Barker, RF Collinson and RT Summerfield were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor EL Monks, WH Saberton, PL Stroude and DALG Wherrell.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Committee: Councillors EL Monks, WH Saberton PL Stroude and DALG Wherrell, and the following Councillors: DR Bard, JD Batchelor, Mrs EM Hezell and Mrs DSK Spink.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor NN Cathcart declared a personal interest as a trustee of the Farmhouse Museum and took no part in the debate on CIP bid 5(d).

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

4. CONTINUOUS IMPROVMENT PLAN - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Chairman explained that as the Continuous Improvement Plans had not been in the public domain for 5 clear working days it was necessary for him to accept them as an emergency item. On behalf of the Committee he expressed his concern that report writers had failed to meet their agreed deadlines to allow the CIP report to be dispatched on time.

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith stated that there was too much paperwork in front of the Committee and that this reinforced the need for a dedicated Scrutiny Officer who could have summarised this report and highlighted the relevant base budgets and Priority Indicators. Paperwork was circulated at the meeting indicating which performance indicators the Council was failing in and the CIP bids they related to. The Performance Improvement Officer explained that Members needed to examine these bids in full and summarising them would deny member involvement in these important decisions.

The Chairman stated that the Committee would not be discussing the CIP bids that were less than £10,000 as these were small amounts that departments should be able to fund

through virement. The Finance and Resources Director disagreed with the assertion that all CIP bids under £10,000 could be funded through virement. It was noted that all these bids added up to approximately £150,000.

The Chairman explained that the budget could only accept a minority of bids, so each bid would be rejected unless the Committee could establish a good reason to accept it.

It was agreed that it would have been beneficial if information on the base budgets accompanied each CIP bid.

1(a) To Appoint a Senior Housing Strategic Enabling Officer to Support Work on the Local and Sub-Regional Strategic Housing Agendas

The Development Services Director explained that the Planning department had too few staff that had experience of affordable housing and the bid would help to reverse this. He added that affordable housing would be built in Northstowe and Arbury Camps but the flexibility to force affordable housing in the smaller villages did not exist. It was noted that affordable housing was important for the local economy.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

1(b) To Roll Forward and Allocate the Available Negative Housing Subsidy of £960,000 in 2003/04 for Rural Affordable Housing Schemes in 2004/05

The Finance and Resources Director explained that previous funding awarded to Social Housing from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was replaced with Local Authority Social Housing Grants (LASHG) funding. However, it was now clear that there would be no funding from LASHG and this bid was to award the funding to Social Housing in the knowledge that it would not be replaced.

Members of the Committee suggested that:

- affordable housing could only be built in new developments where their provision would form part of the agreement with the developer.
- it was impossible to build affordable housing in small developments in our existing villages.
- there were other more deserving bids than this one.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

1(c) To Appoint a Partnership Projects Officer

It was suggested that this bid would benefit the City Council who should therefore pay half the costs.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

1(d) Contribution to County/Sub-Regional Research Facility

The Committee voted by 5 votes to 2 to **RECOMMEND** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

2(a) Employment of Housing Advice (Homeless Prevention) Officer

The Performance Improvement Officer informed the Committee that there were two

failing performance indicators related to this post, in particular the number of nights that homeless people spend in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

It was suggested that internal re-organisation could provide the necessary hours for this post. In response to questioning the Head of Shire Homes explained that the postholder could prevent stays in Bed & Breakfast by advising people before they become homeless and preventing family breakdown. It was noted that this appointment would be for 18 months, after which their performance would be evaluated.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

**2(b) Additional Bed and Breakfast Costs (Precautionary Amount) &
2(c) Additional Bed and Breakfast Costs (Addition to Budget)**

It was understood that this year's budget of £40,000 would be overspent by an estimated £100,000. This meant that extra money would not only have to be found for this year but for subsequent years to avoid future overspends. It was noted that each night a homeless person spend in a Bed & Breakfast cost the Council £30-£50. It was suggested that it would be cheaper for the Council to own its own hostel. However, this idea was rejected on practical grounds.

It was understood that these costs were unavoidable.

3(a) Data Image Processing

Concern was expressed that this request could be a duplication of IEG bids. It was asserted that the cost of DIP should not be passed on to the departments. The Head of Shire Homes reported that the funding for this would be sought this year as part of a corporate exercise to ensure that DIP work was completed before the move to Cambourne. This represents HRA funding.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

3(b) Independent Tenant Advisor Consultancy

The Head of Shire Homes reported that this could be funded from the HRA budget.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

3(c) Tenants' Handbook

The Head of Shire Homes reported that this could be funded from the HRA budget.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

4(a) Recruitment of an Occupational Therapist

The Committee noted that they had expressed support for this post at the meeting on 20th November 2003.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **AGREE** this bid.

4(b) Pilot Provision of Solar Panels in Tenants' Homes

The Head of Shire Homes explained that the Strategic Development Officer was

overseeing this partnership project with the City Council. This is HRA funding.

Members of the Committee expressed the following views:

- This partnership should be supported in the hope that the pilot will develop into something larger.
- Fuel efficiency was important.
- Concern was expressed at the cost of the pilot.
- A list of expected achievements of the pilot was requested.

The Strategic Development Officer explained the installation of solar hot water systems would reduce CO² emissions and other Greenhouse gases, which were essential to help offset climate change. The pilot would aim to provide training to both housing staff and contractors on how to install these systems on council owned housing stock. He explained the estimated cost would be £1,680 per system, which would include an installation grant of £500 from the DTI's Clear Skies initiative. This cost would compare favourably with a typical 'off the shelf system' costing between £2,500 to £3,000. The Strategic Development Officer also reported that discussions had been held with Heatrae Sadia who had recently developed a new type of hot water cylinder with a dual coil specifically designed for installing solar hot water systems. Heatrae Sadia have offered to provide the Council with two of these prototypes free of charge to enable the cylinders to be fully tested prior to mass production.

This is HRA funding.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **AGREE** this bid.

4(c) Asbestos Software and Hardware Equipment

It was noted that the management of asbestos would probably be a statutory requirement next year. The Head of Shire homes explained it was important to carry out a survey of which houses had asbestos and this would inform the stock condition survey and help the Council to achieve the decent homes standard. It was noted that asbestos was not harmful unless disturbed so knowing the location of asbestos in the Council houses in the District would help to protect our tenants. This would ensure that any renovations carried out on these properties would be done in the knowledge that asbestos was present.

This is HRA funding.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **AGREE** this bid.

4(d) Employment of Two Additional Staff Members Following Reorganisation of the Technical Service

It was noted that the funding for this bid would be coming from the Housing Revenue Account.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

5. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

5(a) Community Provision Officer

The Head of Community Services stated that this bid was to ensure that the Section 106 agreements would ensure facilities of a high standard, with a high technical specification.

It was noted that the Committee had discussed the need for this post at its meeting on 23rd October.

The Head of Community Services confirmed that this officer would advise on Section 106 agreements outside Northstowe.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

5(b) Employment of a South Cambs Parish Plans Officer on a Two-Year Trial Basis

The Head of Community Services explained that the Council did not have the capacity to handle the growing demand from parishes regarding their parish plans. He warned that there would be no substantial underspend in the Community Services budget this year that could be used to fund this post. He concluded that for parish plans to be successful they would require extra resources from the Council.

It was noted that if this officer was appointed, the £6,000 grant currently contributed towards the countywide post based at Cambridgeshire ACRE would be withdrawn.

Members of the Committee expressed the following opposing views:

- Parishes did not require this post and were producing parish plans without it.
- This officer would allow parish councils to formulate their parish plans.

A vote was taken and by 4 votes to 5 the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

5(c) Partnership Contribution Towards a South Cambs Youth Participation Project Phase 2 Co-ordinator (SCYPP)

The Committee agreed that this was an excellent idea. The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

5(d) Increasing Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey Grant by £10,000

It was suggested that this was a grant increase that would be better discussed by Cabinet with the other museum grants than as part of a separate CIP bid. The Head of Community Services explained that this was a one-off bid to increase the museums budget to allow an extra £10,000 to be paid to Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey.

Councillor Barker suggested that any increase in the museum budget should be decided by the portfolio holder.

It was asserted that this bid should be supported because it was a museum in our District and that the Cambridge area was below average in terms of museum visits per head of population.

Committee voted 3 votes to 3 and so there was no recommendation.

5(e) Expansion of the South Cambs "Fitness 4 Health" Programme

The Committee agreed that this was an excellent example of preventative health measures and they **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

6. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

6(a) Consultation and Survey Costs on the Evaluation of the Integrate Wheeled Bin Scheme

The Chairman stated that the wheeled bin scheme was in the process of being implemented and a survey of satisfaction levels could not fundamentally alter this policy.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

6(b) Extension of the Contract of One of the Refuse and Recycling Support Officers for one year

The Chairman suggested that the contract be extended for six months instead of a year.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

6(c) Consultation, Survey and Research Costs Associated with the Production of the Waste Management Strategy, Waste Minimisation Strategy and Cleaner Streets Strategy

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

6(d) Mechanisation of the Street Cleaning Service

Members of the Committee expressed the following views:

- The District's highways required an improved cleaning service, but were not this Council's responsibility.
- The District's village streets were this authority's responsibility but did not require an improved cleaning service.
- Parked cars would hinder any mechanised service

The Chief Environmental Health Officer reminded the Committee that the Best Value Review of 1999 had revealed street cleaning to be a high priority amongst our residents. The Chairman stated that street cleaning was not one of the Council's Priorities.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

6(e) Installation of 20 Plastic Recycling Banks at 16 Recycling Centres, Including Main Supermarket Sites in the District

In response to questioning, the Chief Environmental Services Officer stated that although the District's supermarkets had recycling centres, none of them had plastic recycling, and so this was an ideal location for a plastic recycling bank.

It was agreed that plastic recycling was required as it was the only obvious material that the Council did not offer to recycle. It was suggested that one plastic recycling bank was required in each village.

The Chief Environmental Health Officer explained that a kerbside collection for plastics could not be provided. He expressed the hope that the £49,600 required would be met by DEFRA.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

7(a) Extend Temporary Post of Caseworker and New Fixed Term Post of Trainee Technical Officer

It was understood that the net cost of this bid to the Council would be less than £10,000.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

7(b) Additional Disabled Facility Grants

It was understood that government would reimburse 60% of the £50,000 cost.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

7(c) Live On-Line Air Quality Information on Web

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

7(d) Document Imaging Processing (DIP)

Concern was expressed that the cost of DIP was being passed onto the Council's departments when it had been understood that these costs were to be covered by one central fund.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

7(e) Additional Members of Staff to Meet the Challenge of the Licensing Act 2003

It was understood that after the income from fees were taken into account this bid would actually make the Council money.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

7(f) Half Time EHO to Deal With Private Sector Housing

The Chief Environmental Health Officer explained that this post was necessary to ensure the introduction of the new Health and Safety housing fitness regime.

The Committee expressed its support for this, due to the importance of supporting vulnerable people in private housing.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

7(g) Development of Transactional Website to Provide Electronic Access to Services Via the Web

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

7. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PLANNING

8(a) Printing Statement of Community Involvement

Concern was expressed at the amount of paper, printing this statement would use. It was suggested that the investment the Council had made in IT and the Government's e-government strategy, made it more appropriate to ensure that the document could be accessed electronically, with a limited number of paper copies for those who ask for it.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

8(b) Consultation and Inquiry into Statement of Community Involvement

The Development Services Director stated that this bid might not be necessary and information was expected from Government.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

8(c) Printing Deposit Local Development Framework

Support was expressed for this bid, as a wide distribution of the Local Development Framework was important. However, it was also suggested that a large number of paper copies was unnecessary if the document could be accessed electronically.

The Development Services Director explained that Local Plans 1 & 2 had been distributed on government guidelines and he advised that Local Plan 3 should not be an exception. Councillor RT Summerfield stated that if this was an annual cost then it should have been budgeted for and should not be the subject of a CIP bid, which was for additional funding.

There being considerable doubt over whether this was eligible the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

8(d) Action Area Plan Workshops

It was suggested that it was the responsibility of Parish Councils to consult with the community about planning issues. The Development Services Director replied that the District would continue to experience an unprecedented rate of growth and it was important to give the public a chance to interact with the decision makers and express their views.

Concern was expressed that three of the seven suggested workshops would consult outside the area of the District. The Development Services Director replied that workshops for discussing Northstowe had been agreed at a strategic level. These had proved very useful and involved parish councillors. Councillor RF Collinson confirmed that workshops for the northern fringe had proved valuable.

It was suggested that the City Council contribute for the cost of the workshops that affect them.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

8(e) Consultation on Local Development Framework

Councillor Summerfield stated if this had been carried out in previous years it was not a request for new funding and therefore should not be a CIP bid.

Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

8(f) Consultation on Site-Specific Objections to the Local Development Framework

It was noted that if this consultation had been carried out in previous years it was not a request for new funding and therefore should not be a CIP bid.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

8(g) Flood Risk Assessment

Members of the Committee expressed the following views:

- flood control was the responsibility of the Environment Agency, not the Council;
- a flood survey had already been done and a new assessment should only be carried out if new information was likely to be found.

The Development Services Director replied that assessing the flood risk was essential before any development was built and Lincolnshire had already carried out such an assessment. The importance of not building on a flood plain was recognised and the effect this had on housing insurance was noted.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

8(h) Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Appraisal

It was noted that this was not yet a strategic requirement. There was no evidence that this CIP would improve services in response to 2004/05 priorities. Concern was expressed that this CIP was a duplication of the bid for a Strategic Planning Officer.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

9(a) Principal Officer (Northstowe)

The Development Services Director explained that the experience of Cambourne had demonstrated that a Principle Officer would be required for Northstowe as the first planning applications were expected in the middle of next year.

It was agreed that the development of Northstowe was a high priority for the Council and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

9(b) Service Officer (Northstowe)

The Development Services Director explained that the experience of Cambourne had demonstrated that a Service Officer would be required for Northstowe as the first planning applications were expected in the middle of next year.

It was suggested that at a similar stage in Cambourne's development a single officer had been sufficient and so a Service Officer for Northstowe was not required. The Development Services Director replied that Northstowe would be double the size of Cambourne and so double the staff would be required. It was noted that revenue generated from planning fees was less than might be expected for large sites as a number of properties could be submitted as part of a single application.

It was agreed that the development of Northstowe was a high priority for the Council and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

9(c) Principal Officer (Cambridge East / Eastern Northern Fringe Development)
&

9(d) Service Officer (Cambridge East / Eastern Northern Fringe Development)

In response to questioning, the Development Services Director explained that the northern fringe was entirely within the District. However the administrative boundary of both the City Council and this authority bisects the eastern area for development and so some form of joint working would have to be investigated.

It was suggested that when Cambourne was completed the Cambourne planning staff could transfer to work on the new developments. The Development Services Director explained that only a third of Cambourne had been built and so in the immediate future it would be impossible to transfer staff.

It was stated that it was unnecessary to appoint two new officers for the northern fringe development as only 1,000 houses would be built.

It was unclear from the agenda whether funding for this post would be required in 2004/05 or 2005/06. The Development Services Director reported that the posts of Principal Officer and Service Officer would be required late in the next financial year. He agreed to provide more precise information to resolve this query for Cabinet's discussion of this bid on 18th December 2003.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** these bids.

10(a) Rationalisation of the Trees & Landscape Assistant Post

The Chairman asked why extra funding was required for the rationalisation of the post that existed. The Development Services Director explained that the Trees and Landscape section required a tree preservation order database. The work would take at least 2 years and so a full time appointment was appropriate.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

8. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - REVENUE & BENEFITS

12(a) To Provide Financial Childcare Assistance for Eligible Employees to Take Effect from 1st July 2004

The Finance and Resources Director explained that staff had been led to believe that childcare assistance would be improved with the move to Cambourne. He added that the bid had originally been £80,000 but had been reduced to an ongoing cost of £50,000. He recommended that the Committee support this bid, as the Council should provide this service as a good employer.

The Committee expressed concern about the cost of this bid, although it was supported due to the benefits to our staff.

A vote was taken and by 3 votes to 2 the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

12(b) To Provide a Management Development Programme Every Two Years

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

12(c) To Fund the Implications from the Introduction of Single Status, Which Requires the Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions of Staff

The Finance and Resources Director explained that single status was a requirement under the NJC Agreement for Local Government services.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

12(d) Customer Services Manager

The Committee noted that they had expressed support for this post at the meeting on 20th November 2003.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

9. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - FINANCE & RESOURCES**11(a) Replacement of the Council's Cash Receipting System**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that the success of this bid was vital if the Council was to honour its commitments regarding the Contact Centre and the Cambridge Office.

The Committee **recommended** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

10. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - ICT**13(a) ICT Support Officer**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this bid would allow skilled ICT officers to concentrate on the work they have been trained to do instead of working on administrative staff.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

13(b) Web Services Officer

It was noted that the Committee had discussed this post at the meeting on 20th November and had suggested that the post should be fixed term. The Finance and Resources Director reported that this post was proposed as a 3 year contract. The Chairman replied that a 6 month contract would be more appropriate.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid but on a 6 month contract not a 3 year one.

13(c) Networking Costs for Cambourne and the Cambridge Office

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this bid was essential if the Council was to honour its commitment of offering a full service to residents at the Cambridge Office. He expressed the hope that an additional £180,000 that was required would be met through virement and special approvals this financial year.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

13(d) Completion of the Corporate DIP Implementation

Concern was expressed by members of the Committee at the huge cost of this bid and the lack of foresight in the drawing up of the paper reduction guidelines.

The Finance and Resources Director explained that more information was required on this bid and that the work carried out this financial year would influence the amount of funding required for backscanning. It was hoped that no paper that needed to be scanned would be moved to Cambourne.

Despite reservations the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

13(e) Maintenance and Improvement of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

13(f) GIS and Planning Systems Development

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this was a one off installation cost.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

13(g) To Transfer Additional Front-Office Services to the Contact Centre

The Finance and Resources Director stated that this was to enable the Council to divide into front line and back office staff. He explained that it was hoped that savings would result from the restructuring of back office functions.

Members of the Committee made the following suggestions:

- If restructuring will reduce the revenue costs, the capital costs should be met from the reserves.
- This will be detrimental to current staff and make it difficult to attract new staff.
- There had been no prior indication that the costs of this project would be so high.

The Finance and Resources Director explained that the original ITNET bid had included a projected cost of £1.75 million and on these figures the Council were within budget, with phase 1 costing £1 million and phase 2 costing £0.75 million.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to reserve judgement on this bid but **RECOMMENDED TO OFFICERS** that a more detailed report be presented to Cabinet on this bid.

13(h) To Standardise Network Printers at Cambourne

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this would reduce revenue costs on inkjet cartridges and would end up saving the Council money in the long term.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

11. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**14a) New and Replacement Computers for Members Following June Elections**

The Chairman suggested that it would be more appropriate to upgrade computers gradually than all at once.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

12. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND TOURISM**15(a) European Climate Change Menu Programme (ECCMP)**

The Strategic Development Officer stated that this bid was for £20,000 over two years to commit the Council to a cross departmental approach to reducing the District's CO² emissions.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

15(b) Community Strategy Project Officer

The Head of Community Services stated that community services required a lead officer to ensure effective service delivery. It was suggested that this officer could fulfil some of the work that would have been the responsibility of the Parish Plans Officer.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

15(c) Sustainability Projects Fund

The Strategic Development Officer explained that £30,000 was required to ensure a wide range of practical community-led projects were funded and supported. Councillor Collinson explained that this fund would aid the set up costs of these projects, which would otherwise continue unsupported.

The Committee recognised that extra funding was required to honour the pledges made in the Sustainability Best Value Review. However, it was suggested that the funding for these projects should come from a budget and not from a successful CIP bid.

The Strategic Development Officer explained that officers from other departments would be involved to help oversee the allocation of funding towards these projects. He also suggested some of the funding could be used to undertake a feasibility study to assess the likely benefits and implications of the Council setting up its own Renewable Energy Supply Company. Councillor CC Barker asserted that although Council could enable the setting up of a renewable energy company it would be wholly inappropriate for the authority to become a provider.

A vote was taken and by three votes to two the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

15(d) Sustainability Planning Officer

Councillor Collinson stated that the District was faced with a huge number of developments and it was impossible for the Strategic Development Officer to examine all planning applications at that was why this post was necessary. This bid enjoyed the

support of the Planning department.

It was suggested that the Planning department should contribute to this post, as it would be to their benefit. It was agreed that a sustainability input was required on all planning applications and the sooner the better.

A vote was taken and by 6 votes to 0 the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

15(e) Voluntary Sector Forum

The Head of Community Services stated that a Voluntary Sector Forum would provide co-ordination and support for the voluntary sector in the District.

It was suggested that £29,000 was a large amount of money that would be of more benefit if awarded directly to the charities operating in the area. In response the Head of Community Services informed the Committee that government funding was available for at least part of the costs, but he was hoping to secure funding from the Council should this option fail. It was suggested that this would be an excellent way of co-ordinating voluntary sector effort throughout the District.

A vote was taken and by 4 votes to 1 the Committee recommended that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

15(f) Development/Training for Community Access Points

The Committee recommended that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the officers who presented these bids to Committee.

13. TO NOTE THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that future meetings would be held on:

2003: 18th December

2004: 22nd January, 12th February, 11th March, 15th April and 13th May.

All at 2.00pm unless otherwise stated.

The Meeting ended at 5.59 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on
Thursday, 18 December 2003

PRESENT: Councillor SGM Kindersley – Chairman
Councillor *MP Howell – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	SJ Agnew	RE Barrett
	RF Bryant	EW Bullman
	NN Cathcart	Mrs J Hughes
	EL Monks	WH Saberton
	Mrs GJ Smith	LJ Wilson

Councillors Dr DR Bard, JD Batchelor, RF Collinson, Mrs SA Hatton, Dr JPR Orme, Mrs DP Roberts and RT Summerfield were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor PL Stroude and DALG Wherrell.

Officers:	John Ballantyne	- Chief Executive
	Tara Edwards	- Community Safety Officer
	Simon McIntosh	- Community Services Director
	Jane Thompson	- Cultural Services Manager
	Patrick Adams	- Senior Democratic Services Officer

The Chairman introduced Mike Mosley, Deputy Chief Executive of the East of England Regional Assembly who had been commissioned to review the Committee's performance.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Committee: Councillors MP Howell, PL Stroude and DALG Wherrell; and the following Councillors: Mrs EM Heazell & Mrs DSK Spink.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 20th November 2003 were agreed as a correct record.

The minutes of 27th November 2003 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- Councillor NN Cathcart's name be removed from the list of apologies and his presence be acknowledged.

Councillor Cathcart suggested that a presentation should be given on the possibility of the Council providing its own Renewable Energy Supply Company. Councillor RF Collinson, portfolio holder for sustainability, recommended that the presentation be open to all Council members and unconnected to the Scrutiny Committee. The Committee agreed with this suggestion.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

5. DRAFT AGENDA PROGRAMME AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith suggested that the Committee should examine the issues discussed at the Audit Panel on 17th December, including the corporate performance and the number of Performance Indicators. On the Chairman's suggestion it was agreed that these issues were the responsibility of the Audit Panel which reported directly to Council.

It was agreed that an alternative for shading be used to distinguish which agenda items had already been discussed, as shading did not show up on the photocopied paper.

It was understood that the Chief Environmental Health Officer would give a verbal report on the new waste management service in January.

The Committee **AGREED** to set up a task and finish group, comprised of Councillor Mrs GJ Smith and NN Cathcart, to investigate the maintenance of open space in our villages.

The Committee **NOTED** the Draft Agenda Programme.

6. UPDATE REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY SAFETY BEST VALUE REVIEW

The Community Safety Officer introduced this report which detailed the progress made on Community Safety since the Best Value Review had reported to the Committee on 24th October 2002.

The Community Safety Officer explained that the new National Crime Recording Standard had changed the definition of a reported crime and this had inflated crime figures nationally. This needed to be taken into account when analysing the local crime statistics for South Cambridgeshire. She highlighted the fact that crime had increased for the first quarter but had fallen during the second quarter indicating that the increase was due to the new way of recording crime and not a real increase. She informed the Committee that vehicle crime had increased but burglary had decreased.

The Community Safety Officer informed the Committee that the Council worked in partnership with the Police, but had no powers to tackle crime directly. The Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group was a product of this partnership. It was understood that there had been 3 anti-social behaviour orders granted in Cambridgeshire but none of them had been in the District of South Cambridgeshire.

The Community Safety Officer stated that the Vehicle Crime Task Group existed to tackle the increase in vehicle crime. She asserted that it was imperative that crimes were reported to ensure that remedial action could be taken to counteract crime in the area. Partnership working had led to the employment of Police Community Support Officers.

The Committee made the following suggestions:

- The report required more details of actions.
- An article should be placed in the South Cambs News describing the ways in which Parish Councils can end the isolation of vulnerable residents,

- including the appointment of Police Community Support Officers.
- The Council should focus on achieving a small number of targets, instead of making limited progress on a larger number of issues.
- The number of robberies per 1,000 homes should be kept as a local performance indicator.
- The Committee should receive another update report in a year's time.

The Community Safety Officer explained that the number of robberies per 1,000 homes could not be collected without a statutory marker and that had been removed.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts paid tribute to the Community Safety Officer for her work with the communities, in particular with the children of the District. She praised the partnership that the Council had with the police, which allowed the authority to voice its concerns.

Concern was expressed regarding the future of the youth bus. The Community Safety Officer praised the effectiveness of the bus but explained that recent staff turnover had temporarily blunted its effectiveness. She stated that the Council was responsible for facilitating these types of projects but not for the running of them.

Concern was expressed over the protection of vulnerable people. The Community Safety Officer stated the Council were working with Age Concern, and local voluntary groups such as lunch clubs, to tackle isolation. She explained that residents in sheltered housing were well looked after and it made sense to focus on elderly residents in their own homes. The Bobby Scheme made contact with victims of crime but also works with those that are vulnerable to being victims of crimes such as those over 65 or the disabled.

The Community Safety Officer explained that appendix D showed a report that had been prepared to secure funding from Go-East and was included for the Committee's information to show how the recommendations of the Best Value Review were being implemented.

The Chief Executive explained that the Council had invested in the crime prevention partnership with the police and other public bodies. He stated that levels of crime in the District were low and maintaining those levels, despite government priorities being focussed on urban areas, was a considerable achievement.

The Committee **NOTED** this report.

The Chairman acknowledged that this was the first follow-up report to the Best Value Review and indicated that future reports could usefully focus on actions and achievements. He thanked the Community Safety Officer and the Cultural Services Manager for their contributions.

7. DRAFT SCRUTINY HANDBOOK

The Chairman introduced this report on the Draft Scrutiny Handbook and invited the Committee to suggest amendments. It was understood that the final handbook would be presented to the Committee, for agreement, at its next meeting in January.

Members of the Committee asked for the following issues to be added to the handbook:

- The Committee's power to form Task and Finish Groups.

- A record of the recommendations made by the Committee with an indication of results and consequences.
- The Committee's power to examine external issues.
- The Committee's responsibility to listen to the demands of the public.
- The Committee's responsibility to examine policy.
- The removal of the description of Chairman as "a figurehead".
- The Committee's duty to agree what needs to be discovered before conducting a scrutiny.
- A preamble that defines the role of the Committee.
- More emphasis was required on the overview role of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman stated that the Constitutional Working Party would examine whether the Committee should focus on policy. He asserted that the handbook needed to be simple, clear and informative.

Concern was expressed that members of the public were only allowed one supplementary question. It was noted that the Constitution had been amended to give the public the right to ask at least one supplementary question and the Chairman had the power to allow questioners more leeway if necessary.

Councillor Mrs Smith agreed to liaise with the Senior Democratic Services Officer on further minor amendments to the draft handbook.

8. REVIEW OF GRANTS POLICY FOR THE AWARDING OF PLAY EQUIPMENT

The Chairman introduced this report on the grant criteria for Play Equipment Grants to villages, which excluded grants to villages with a population of over 1,000. It was understood that this rule was introduced in the mid 1990s, then relaxed for two years, before being re-introduced.

The Chairman introduced Peter Miles, the Vice-Chairman of Little Abington Parish Council. Councillor Miles explained that Little Abington and Great Abington had agreed to jointly administer the recreation ground and as a result had been excluded from applying for a play equipment grant as the joint population of both villages was over 1,000. He asserted that this was unfair as the Council had encouraged the two villages to work together and individually both villages had a population under 1,000. Councillor Miles explained that funding secured for the play equipment from other bodies was not dependent on funding from the Council. Councillor Dr JPR Orme supported the grant application from the Abingtons and asserted that the current rule was arbitrary and unfair, especially for parishes who had populations just over 1,000.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, the portfolio holder for Community Development informed the Committee that the original play equipment in Abington had become damaged because the Parish Council had situated it in a flooded area. She expressed her disappointment that the combined resources of both villages could only contribute £2,000 to the total cost of £33,000. Councillor Orme explained that the Parish Council was contributing £20,000 towards the refurbishment of the village hall and could only afford £2,000 towards the cost of play equipment.

The Chairman informed the Committee that Barrington had also been excluded from applying for a play equipment grant as their population was over 1,000. The local member, Councillor DL Porter, had expressed his support for a policy change. County Councillor Tony Orgee had written to the Chairman to suggest that grant applications be

considered for all villages with a population of up to 2,000.

Members of the Committee expressed the following views:

- The existing policy was correct because it ensured a small budget was allocated to those communities who were least able to raise enough money for play equipment unaided.
- The rule was arbitrary and failed to take into consideration changes in population and cost of equipment.
- A sliding scale that offered larger grants to smaller communities should be considered.
- A sliding scale would remove funding from small communities to the benefit of those communities that could raise more money through their precept.
- Play equipment was very expensive and so a larger budget should be considered.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts expressed her support for the current rule which was established and understood by local communities. She added that changing the rule would be unfair on those parishes that had recently paid for their own play equipment. She warned that without the rule, it would be impossible for small communities to obtain play equipment, which in some parishes are the only facility in the village.

Councillor Mrs Roberts opposed the adoption of a sliding scale, which would require a larger budget for it to be workable and would be more difficult to understand. She reported that a larger budget was unlikely given the recent Cabinet decision to identify savings to fund a greater number of CIP bids. The play equipment fund could only be increased by making savings elsewhere within the Community Services budget.

The Cultural Services Manager explained that the cost of play equipment had increased by approximately four times since the rule was introduced, mainly due to new safety rules. It was suggested that in view of this fact the rule should be reviewed.

It was suggested that this policy should be reviewed. Members of the Committee made the following points:

- The 1,000 number was arbitrary and did not take population increase into consideration.
- The cost of play equipment had increased considerably in recent years.
- A review was unnecessary as the current policy was correct.
- Extra funding was available through the National Lottery.

Councillor Mrs Roberts opposed reviewing the decision, which could lead to unrealistic expectations, when the size of the budget prevented any fundamental alterations.

In response to questioning the Community Services Director explained that the Council had a database which detailed which communities had play equipment as part of the future local development framework. The Cultural Services Manager reminded the Committee of the costs of maintaining play equipment.

It was suggested that either Great or Little Abington should apply for a grant as an individual Parish Council to comply with the rule.

Councillor Monks proposed and Councillor Barrett seconded that the existing rule remain unchanged and unreviewed. A vote was taken and by 6 votes to 4 the Committee

AGREED that no review be undertaken of the guidelines for awarding grants for play equipment.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Peter Miles, Councillors Mrs Roberts and Dr Orme, the Cultural Services Manager and Community Services Director for their attendance and contributions.

9. PROGRAMME OF KEY DECISIONS

The Committee **NOTED** the programme.

10. TO NOTE THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that future meetings would be held on:
2004: 22nd January, 12th February, 11th March, 15th April and 13th May.
All at 2.00pm unless otherwise stated.

The Meeting ended at 4.03 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on
Thursday, 22 January 2004

PRESENT: Councillor SGM Kindersley – Chairman
Councillor *MP Howell – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	SJ Agnew	RE Barrett
	RF Bryant	EW Bullman
	NN Cathcart	Mrs J Hughes
	EL Monks	WH Saberton
	Mrs GJ Smith	PL Stroude
	DALG Wherrell	

Councillors JD Batchelor, Mrs DP Roberts, Mrs DSK Spink MBE and RT Summerfield were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers:	Dale Robinson	- Chief Environmental Health Officer
	Charlotte Mills	- Human Resources Officer
	Patrick Adams	- Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Committee:
Councillors MP Howell and LJ Wilson.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 18th December 2003 were agreed as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Four public questions had been received:

Question 1 regarding the High Court Appeal: Planning Permission 307 Huntingdon Road

The Chairman introduced Pat Griffin and Susan Hughes, from the organisation X-cape, who were presenting a question on behalf of Andrew Tyler, Director of Animal Aid. In their three minutes speech they stated that the Council would benefit if the appeal was a success because:

- The expensive policing costs of the inevitable protestors would be avoided.
- The majority of the Council's residents opposed the laboratory and would welcome the success of the appeal.

They explained that X-cape had not been included as one of the appellants as they were not a limited company and could not afford the possible liability costs of the appeal. They asked the following question:

Will SCDC agree to pay one third of any costs of the High Court appeal to the decision by the Deputy Prime Minister to allow Cambridge University to build a primate research Centre in the Cambridgeshire green belt? The other parts being met by Animal Aid and the National Anti-Vivisection Society.

The Chairman stated that this Committee was not a decision making body and did not have the power to grant funding for appeals. He explained that Councillor Mrs JM Healey, the Chairman of the Development and Conservation Control Committee, was responsible for this decision. It was expected that Councillor Mrs Healey would provide a written response within the next two weeks. This question had been received on Wednesday afternoon and there had been insufficient time to gain comprehensive legal advice. For these reasons the Chairman advised that the Committee did not discuss this issue.

In their supplementary question, Pat Griffin and Susan Hughes asked why only the public order issue had been given as a reason for refusing planning permission and the additional issue of the green belt had not been highlighted.

The Chairman thanked Pat Griffin and Susan Hughes for their questions and reiterated that they could expect a reply from the Chairman of the Development and Conservation Control Committee in the next fortnight.

Questions 2, 3 & 4 Regarding the Green Box Collection of Recyclable Waste

Three questions had been received regarding the "Green Box" collection carried out by Cleanaway on behalf of the Council. In the absence of the questioners, the Chairman read out the three questions:

Could the Council please explain why the recycling in the green boxes in Gamlingay was collected late twice just before Christmas, and then 4 days late after?

Rob Warner, resident of Gamlingay

Gamlingay Parish Council should like to know what steps are being taken to ensure that the late collection of green boxes does not become normal practice and if residents of this community can expect to receive a higher standard of provision.

Debra Royal, Clerk to Gamlingay Parish Council

Why does the order of collection of Green Boxes clearly change week by week between 7am and 5.30pm? How are residents to know when the collection is due?

Dr Alison Littlefair, Chair of Harlton Parish Council

The Chairman informed the Committee that similar concerns regarding delayed collections had been expressed from Mr and Mrs Hough, residents of Gamlingay, Peter Dean, resident of Little Shelford and residents of Guilden Morden and Steeple Morden who had made their feeling known to their local member Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt.

The Chairman informed the Committee that Councillor Mrs EM Heazell had expressed her concern over the process of returning green boxes.

The Chairman invited Linda Brighton and Ian McLees of Cleanaway to answer these questions. Linda Brighton apologised on behalf of Cleanaway for the disruption of the service. She explained this was due to:

- The unprecedented volume of recyclable waste after Christmas.
- Sickness of Cleanaway staff.

Rise in Demand

Linda Brighton reported that a rise in demand had been expected. The normal collection amounted to approximately 40-50 tonnes and Christmas 2002 had seen this increase to 70-80 tonnes. However, Christmas 2003 had resulted in approximately 150 tonnes being collected. This could not have been predicted and resulted in delayed collections as the vehicles had to make more trips to the depot to unload than expected.

Staff Sickness

In response to questioning Linda Brighton confirmed that staff sickness had been an issue. Absent staff had been replaced by agency staff but this contributed to the delay. It was noted that new staff would not know the route as well as the original crew. It was understood that there had been no industrial action by staff.

Concern was expressed that lessons had not been properly learnt from the problems experienced in Christmas 2002. Linda Brighton replied that next Christmas Cleanaway would be operating larger vehicles. Councillor CC Barker, portfolio holder for Environmental Health, stated he had expressed his concerns to Cleanaway and was satisfied that appropriate action had been taken to avoid a repeat of the recent problems. However, he warned that due to the increase in demand, Christmas was an unpredictable period. He praised the level of co-operation between Cleanaway and the Council.

The Chief Environmental Health Officer explained that extra funding had been agreed to deal with the extra demand but the final amount was under discussion. It was understood that this decision would be made by the Chief Environmental Health Officer under the terms agreed in the contract between the Council and Cleanaway.

Publicity and Communications

Linda Brighton promised a publicity campaign to inform residents that paper should be placed at the bottom of the green box and metal tins and glass should be placed on top of the paper in separate bags. This should avoid the problem of "co-mingling". Linda Brighton offered to attend parish meetings in an attempt to address the concerns of parish councillors. It was agreed that communication with residents needed to be improved.

Members of the Committee made the following points regarding the recent delayed collections:

- Late collections had caused problems with broken glass.
- Concern was expressed over the recorded message from Cleanaway, which failed to list all the villages that had delayed collections.
- Disappointment was expressed at the fact that the Cleanaway answer phone had been full when people needed guidance about the late collections.
- It was suggested that it would have been more appropriate to contact District Councillors on Friday afternoons instead of the Parish Clerk as the Parish Office would be closed over the weekend.

Members of the Committee made the following points regarding the dissemination of information to residents:

- The offer to attend Parish Council meetings was welcomed.
- More publicity was required on the issue of “co-mingling”.
- People who moved into area were often ignorant of the green box scheme as the previous home owners had removed the box when they moved out of the area.
- Writing an article in the village newspaper would be an excellent way of informing residents how to use the green box.
- It was understood that the addresses of the editors of the village newspapers could be obtained from the Council’s Information Section.
- An article on how to use the green box should be placed in the South Cambs News Magazine.

Members of the Committee made the following points regarding possible improvements to the Green Box service:

- Concern was expressed over the non-collection from more isolated houses.
- It was suggested that route maps should exist for vehicle crews to make it easier for new staff to complete a round they had not been on before.

It was agreed that the 3 questioners should receive a full written response and it was hoped that Cleanaway would ensure that the Parish Councils of Harlton and Gamlingay were contacted.

5. DRAFT AGENDA PROGRAMME AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

It was suggested that the Committee should conduct a scrutiny of the Arts Council England East as it appeared that the arts projects in the district stood to lose subsidies from this organisation. Councillor Mrs Roberts, the Community Development portfolio holder, expressed her support for this scrutiny.

It was understood that a letter had been sent out from the Grounds Maintenance Task and Finish Group to all Parish Councils. Concern was expressed regarding the complexities of the landownership issue. It was agreed that a progress report from this Group was required.

The Committee **AGREED** to add the following items to the agenda for February’s meeting:

- A Scrutiny of Arts Council England East.
- An Update from the Grounds Maintenance Task and Group.

The Committee **NOTED** the Draft Agenda Programme.

6. VERBAL ITEM FROM THE CHIEF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER ON THE NEW WASTE COLLECTION SCHEME

Councillor Barker updated the Committee on the implementation of the new waste collection scheme. He reported that the scheme was now District wide. The implementation of the scheme had been a huge task and he commended the Environmental Health staff who had carried out this work and expressed regret at the stress suffered by staff. The whole process had been completed in 3 months. He reported that the number of complaints per month were decreasing.

The Chief Environmental Health Officer made the following points:

- There had been approximately 1,000 more properties that required wheeled bins than had been indicated by the sack collection scheme.
- 108,000 homes had been provided wheeled bins in three months.
- This speed of implementation of a new waste collection scheme was unprecedented and this Council had been requested to publish a paper on the achievement within professional magazines.

Wheeled Bin Hotline

The Chief Environmental Health Officer reported that the Wheeled Bin Hotline had proved invaluable as the office staff would have been unable to deal with the number of calls during the implementation process. He informed the Committee that officers had called the Wheeled Bin Hotline, posing as a member of the public, to ensure that correct advice was being given.

Councillor JD Batchelor, the Information and Customer Services portfolio holder, informed the Committee that there had been 21,000 calls since the Wheeled Bin Hotline was set up. The average wait time for a caller was 20 seconds, the maximum wait time had been 8 minutes. The number of calls to the hotline had recently decreased.

Concern was expressed that not all queries from the call centre were being acted on by the DSO. The Chief Environmental Health Officer agreed to pass on the concerns of the Committee to the Commercial Services Director, but he reminded Members of the volume of calls received by the Hotline and the fact that the system was not yet integrated and all queries were e-mailed to the relevant officer. The Chief Environmental Health Officer stated that there would be an improvement in the service when the call centre was set up, as this would allow direct communication between the centre and the relevant officers.

Dealing with Queries

Between the 7th July and 12th January 6,200 enquiries had been received by Environmental Health and the aim was to deal with all queries within 3 working days:

- In July 88% of all queries were dealt with in this time.
- In August 95% of all queries were dealt with in this time.
- In September 76% of all queries were dealt with in this time.
- In October 72% of all queries were dealt with in this time.
- In November 87% of all queries were dealt with in this time
- In December 81% of all queries were dealt with in this time.
- So far in January this figure was 90%.

In response to questioning the Chief Environmental Health Officer stated that advice on how to recycle was always given over the phone in the first instance in the hope that this would make a home visit unnecessary.

Complaints from Residents

The Chief Environmental Health Officer informed the Committee that a small minority of residents were persistently complaining about the service and this was absorbing officer time. It was understood that three complaints had been passed to the ombudsman. The Chief Environmental Health Officer reported that despite the articles in the local media the number of complaints was decreasing and he demonstrated this by reading several complimentary letters.

The Chief Environmental Health Officer stated that a petition that merely requested a weekly black bin collection, without the background facts, would be likely to gain signatures. It was important to stress that a weekly black bin collection would be likely to

lead to an increase in Council tax and would increase the amount of refuse being put into landfill which could lead to the County Council and this District Council not meeting their obligations. It was suggested that there should be a publicity campaign to advertise these facts.

Performance

It was understood that there had been a low number of missed collections with a collection rate of 99.93%. This was an excellent rating for a newly introduced waste collection scheme. The scheme was on course to meet the recycling targets set.

Contaminated Rubbish

It was understood that the residents had been excellent at sorting out their rubbish and no loads had been rejected by Donarbon, the company that recycles the District's waste.

Fly-Tipping

It was noted that there had been no statistical increase in fly-tipping since the introduction of this wheeled bin scheme.

Sack Collections and Extra Bins

In response to questioning the Chief Environmental Health Officer stated that the percentage of those on special sack collections was in line with the figures expected and just over 200 people had been assessed as requiring extra bins to cope with their rubbish collection.

Recycling Animal Products

In response to questioning, Councillor Barker confirmed that the Council were still waiting for a response from DEFRA regarding the recycling of animal products. The Chief Environmental Health Officer pledged to keep up the pressure on DEFRA in demanding a response. He informed the Committee that DEFRA needed to award Donarbon (a private company) a licence and this limited the involvement of the Council in this process. It was suggested that residents needed to be able to dispose food waste once a week, in either the green bin or black bin.

Nappy Collections

It was expected that a separate collection service of disposable nappies would be set up later this year.

Publicity

The Chief Environmental Health Officer stated that a publicity campaign was required to encourage residents to put rubbish directly into their wheeled bins instead of first putting them into tied black sacks, which took up more room in the wheeled bin and so carried less rubbish.

Councillor JD Batchelor, the portfolio holder for Information and Customer Services, asserted that the timetable in the South Cambs News should be altered so that different symbols were used instead of just different colours to depict black and green wheeled bin collections to help the visually impaired. Councillor Barker replied that this issue was under review. It was suggested that the information should be enlarged and put on 2 full pages, as its current format was too small.

Members of the Committee made the following points regarding publicity:

- The signs advertising the change of rubbish collection dates had been very effective but should now be removed.
- Residents needed to be reminded that cardboard can be placed in the green bin.

Plastic Recycling

Councillor Barker confirmed that 20 plastic recycling bins would be placed in the District, 2 at each of the four supermarkets and the remaining 12 in locations to be decided; probably in the larger villages.

7. TO AGREE SCRUTINY HANDBOOK

The Chairman invited the Committee to agree the Scrutiny handbook. It was understood that the handbook would be circulated to all Members and would form part of the induction pack. It was noted that people who wished to ask public questions would be sent a separate guidance sheet.

It was noted that the Constitution Review Working Party had recommended that the Committee be renamed the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and a petitions process be adopted. If accepted by Council, these recommendations would alter the Scrutiny Handbook.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer was thanked for his work in producing this handbook.

The Committee AGREED the handbook, subject to proposed changes to the Constitution that would be debated by Council on 26th February 2004.

8. FUTURE MEETING DATES OF THE COMMITTEE

The Chairman presented this report, which invited the Committee to decide when it should meet during the municipal year 2004/05. The Chairman reminded the Committee that Cabinet had decided to meet on the second Thursday of every month.

It had been suggested that Scrutiny meet on the same day as Cabinet, the afternoon of the second Thursday of every month. However, it was understood that having two committee meetings on the same day put extra strain on the officers and councillors involved.

It was noted that Members found it difficult to attend meetings of this Committee when they were scheduled to last all day. It was suggested that in future this should be avoided and meetings should be scheduled for the afternoon only. It was suggested that this Committee should meet on an alternative day to Thursday, but it was noted that Cabinet and Council both met on a Thursday and so it made sense for this Committee to do the same.

The Committee

AGREED to meet on the third Thursday of every month for the municipal year 2004/05.

9. FEASIBILITY REPORT ON FLU JABS FOR STAFF

Councillor RT Summerfield, Resources and Staffing portfolio holder, presented this report on the feasibility of providing flu vaccinations and other inoculations to staff. He stated that there were strains of flu that the inoculations could not prevent.

Members of the Committee made the following points:

- Inoculation jabs could be provided for less than the £12 quoted in the

report.

- The cost of staff sickness due to flu outweighed the cost of the jabs.
- From first hand experience, these inoculations were effective.
- Flu inoculations were free to the elderly and other high risk groups.

The Human Resources Officer explained that it was too late to provide inoculations for this winter.

Councillor EL Monks proposed and Councillor RF Bryant seconded that no action be taken. A vote was taken and by 2 votes to 5 this proposal was **DEFEATED**.

Councillor Mrs J Hughes proposed and Councillor DALG Wherrell seconded that inoculations be offered to staff for next winter.

A vote was taken and by 7 votes to 2 the Committee **RECOMMENDED** to the Resources and Staffing portfolio holder that flu jabs be offered to all staff for the winter of 2004/05.

10. **INDUCTION, TRAINING AND MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

The Chairman informed the Committee that in response to this report Councillor JD Batchelor had decided to set up an Advisory Group to examine member training and development. Members of the Committee were invited to volunteer for membership of this Advisory Group. It was expected that this Group would operate as a Task and Finish Group and so would not be a large commitment on its members' time.

Councillors Mrs J Hughes, PL Stroude and DALG Wherrell volunteered to be on this Advisory Group.

11. **REPORT FROM MIKE MOSLEY ON COMMITTEE MEETING ON 22ND DECEMBER 2003**

The Chairman presented this report on the previous Committee meeting on 18th December 2003 from Mike Mosley, the Deputy Chief Executive of the East of England Regional Assembly.

Public Questions

It was noted that the rules regarding the asking of public questions had been altered to allow members of the public a supplementary question in addition to their original question.

Focussing on Important Issues

It was suggested that issues such as play equipment and swimming pools were of importance to the public and so should be discussed by the Committee. However, it was also suggested that these issues should be discussed by sub-groups of the Committee to allow the Committee to focus on the larger corporate issues.

Room Layout

It was agreed that the layout of the Committee room was different from that under the old Committee system and was entirely appropriate for this Committee.

Agenda and Reports

The new agenda layout, prompted by Mr Mosley's report, was commended. It was hoped that officers would heed Mr Mosley's recommendation of shorter reports.

Officer Support

It was suggested that the Committee required a designated officer to examine and summarise information presented in the Scrutiny reports.

New Political System

It was stated that the new political structure had disempowered non-executive Councillors and this problem could not be solved by this Committee.

Comparisons with Other Authorities

It was suggested that the Scrutiny Committee of other Councils, such as the County Council, should be visited. Councillor Stroude stated that the Scrutiny Committees of the County worked well and were open to the public. He added that there was a particular focus on facts and figures but he reminded the Committee that the County was more political than this authority and their approach might not be adaptable. It was noted that the Scrutiny Committees of the County Council would publish a minority report when opinion was divided on a subject.

The Chairman concluded that it would be a mistake to attempt to adopt any radical changes so soon before the elections on 10th June 2004. It was agreed that a letter should be sent from the Committee thanking Mr Mosley for his informative report.

12. PROGRAMME OF KEY DECISIONS

The Committee **NOTED** the Forward Programme.

13. TO NOTE THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that future meetings would be held on:
2004: 12th February, 11th March, 15th April and 13th May.
All at 2.00pm unless otherwise stated.

The Meeting ended at 4.50 p.m.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on
Thursday, 12 February 2004

PRESENT: Councillor SGM Kindersley – Chairman
Councillor MP Howell – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	SJ Agnew	RE Barrett
	RF Bryant	EW Bullman
	NN Cathcart	Mrs J Hughes
	EL Monks	WH Saberton
	Mrs GJ Smith	DALG Wherrell
	LJ Wilson	

Councillors Dr DR Bard, CC Barker, JD Batchelor, RF Collinson, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs EM Heazell, Mrs DP Roberts, Mrs DSK Spink MBE and RT Summerfield were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers:	Cameron Adams	- Strategic Development Officer
	Kari Greaves	- Head of Shire Homes
	Greg Harlock	- Finance and Resources Director
	David Lord	- Assistant Solicitor
	Andy O'Hanlon	- Arts Development Officer
	Stephen Rizzo	- Building Control Manager
	Dale Robinson	- Chief Environmental Health Officer
	Patrick Adams	- Senior Democratic Services Officer

Kate Lawrance from Arts in Cambs on Tour (ACT)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Committee:
Councillors PL Stroude.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 22nd January 2004 were agreed as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor DALG Wherrell declared a personal interest in item 7(h) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Sustainability and Community Planning as his wife was a Mobile Warden.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None.

5. DRAFT AGENDA PROGRAMME AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee **NOTED** the Draft Agenda Programme.

6. ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND EAST, RURAL TOURING

The Arts Development Officer presented this report which described the role of Arts Council England: East in supporting professional arts touring services in South Cambridgeshire through Arts in Cambs on Tour (ACT) and highlighted possible reductions in the funding of the company by the Arts Council in 2004 to 2005. He praised ACT for its professional performances at affordable prices. He informed the Committee that the issue of funding was an issue for all arts organisations supported by the Council and he suggested that an Arts Development Advisory Group was set up. It was noted that in the table at page 13, paragraph 9, the years in the final column header should be amended to 2003-2004.

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith expressed concern at the funding of ACT and suggested that an external scrutiny of Arts Council England: East (ACE) be considered. She stated that Regional Arts Lottery Programme (RALP) funding was intended to be temporary and the withdrawal of ACE funding made this an urgent matter.

Kate Lawrance from ACT informed the Committee that ACT was professionally organised but in the control of local people. Audiences averaged around 80, which was impressive considering the size of some village halls. She stated that when ACT was set up, ACE awarded a starter grant of £5,000 and it was hoped that this would increase substantially in future years. However, the grant had only increased with inflation to £5,450 and ACE have now announced that all grants below £20,000 would be scrapped next year. It was understood that this made ACT reliant on the Regional Arts Lottery Programme (RALP) which was time limited.

In response to questioning Kate Lawrance stated:

- Funding would be sought from other organisations, but substantial core funding would still be required.
- This Council contributed more than other authorities, but in return more performances were made in the District of South Cambridgeshire.
- ACT were committed to providing high quality productions at a subsidised price.
- ACT performed in villages that had the facilities and the volunteers to support their performances.

It was suggested that successful applications to temporary lottery funding could prove damaging in the long run as it could encourage other organisations to withdraw their funding.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to the portfolio holder for Community Development that

- a) An Arts Development Advisory Group be set up to inform the next District Arts Strategy 2005-2010. The portfolio holder for Community Development to Chair the Group and the membership consisting of the seven Council nominated observers on the governing bodies of arts organisations funded by this Council.
- b) A letter be sent from the portfolio holder for Community Development to East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire District Councils and the County Council, who were part of the partnership project that formed ACT, to obtain their views regarding the funding of ACT.

The Committee **AGREED** that a letter be sent to ACE to asking them to explain the change in their funding policy, especially in relevance to rural touring arts groups.

7. REVENUE AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES

7 (a) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Community Development

The portfolio holder for Community Development and the Finance and Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Community Development portfolio.

Travellers

The Chairman informed the Group that he had liaised with the Head of Community Services regarding the two Travellers sites at Whaddon and Blackwell which were run by the Council on behalf of the County Council. The Head of Community Services had informed the Chairman that the County Council reimbursed the Council for the cost incurred through the running of the sites. The Community Development portfolio holder stated that the aim was to ensure that the sites were run at no cost or profit to the Council. She asserted that running legitimate sites gave the Council more credibility when attempting to take action against illegal encampments.

It was suggested that the cost of running the Travellers Consultative Group should be shared amongst the relevant departments. The Community Development portfolio holder agreed to raise this matter with the Head of Community Services.

Milton Country Park

The Committee expressed concern over the £272,193 spent this year on Milton Country Park and it was suggested that as 40%-50% of visitors were from Cambridge the City Council should either make a contribution to the running of the park or offer the District's residents a similar discount to that offered to City residents for City Council sponsored facilities. It was understood that the Head of Community Services opposed these suggestions on the grounds that the District's residents used more of the City's facilities than the reverse and as a consequence this Council would lose out in any systematic attempt to redress any imbalance. The Community Development portfolio holder stated that a detailed report examining issues such as staffing would be required to inform any debate regarding sharing the costs of the Park with another authority. She added that Milton Country Park was one of the few facilities that the Council ran and asking the City Council for funding would invite counter claims for City Council facilities. It was noted that previous attempts to secure discounts for the District's residents attending City facilities had failed.

The Committee **REQUESTED** that Councillor Mrs DP Roberts ask the Head of Community Services to approach the City Council and ask:

- a) If the District's residents could be given a discount to City Council facilities.
- b) Whether the City Council would be prepared to share costs of running Milton Country Park.

It was noted that the increase of over £27,000 in the Milton Country Park budget was due to the increase in staffing and IT costs.

Recharging

The Finance and Resources Director explained that approximately £750,000 had been spent on recruitment and retention and approximately £1,500 per member of staff had been spent on IT improvements. These costs had been recharged to the relevant portfolio holder budgets and had caused notable increases. The Sustainability and Community Planning portfolio holder explained that the cuts he had made in his budget had been obscured by the recharging, making it difficult to highlight the savings made.

The Committee **REQUESTED** that a report be provided on the recharging of staffing and central overhead account (including IT costs) to the portfolio budgets.

7 (b) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Conservation

The portfolio holder for Conservation and the Finance and Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Conservation portfolio.

In response to questioning the Conservation portfolio holder explained that any uncommitted reserves, such as those in the Historic Building Grants, would be discussed by the portfolio holder early in the next financial year. It was understood that the purchasing homes at risk was rare and the Finance and Resources Director explained that at the last occurrence the Council made a profit on the resale. The Conservation Manager advised the Committee of the work of Green Belt Project.

7 (c) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Environmental Health

The portfolio holder for Environmental Health and the Finance and Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Environmental Health portfolio.

Pest Control

In response to questioning the Environmental Health portfolio holder explained that the Council's Pest Control section was in competition with the private sector and, after a recent Best Value review, increased its charges to a comparable rate. However, the removal of rats and mice continue to be carried out free of charge. He added that it was in the Council's best interest not to charge for this service as rats and mice could do damage that would cost the authority more in the long run. It was understood that squirrels would only be removed free of charge for residents on benefit. It was noted that the net expenditure for pest control was £146,000 and it was agreed that the Council also provided a useful advisory service on pest control within this sum.

Stray Dogs

The Environmental Health portfolio holder explained that the Council had a statutory duty to collect stray dogs. It was noted that Wood Green no longer accepted stray animals free of charge and this was a reason for the proposed budget increase.

Licensing

The Chief Environmental Health Officer explained that it was unlawful to pass the charge of enforcing licensing rules onto the cost of a taxi licence.

Abandoned Vehicles

In response to questioning, the Environmental Health portfolio holder explained that when removing an abandoned vehicle, little effort was made to attempt to charge the owner as this could encourage arson.

Compost Bins

The Committee suggested that a charge could be made for home composting bins as this would bring the Council inline with other authorities and it would reduce the £10,000 cost to the Council. It was suggested that the Waste Management Advisory Group examine this issue. It was agreed that the provision of Compost Bins should remain.

7 (d) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Housing

The portfolio holder for Housing and the Finance and Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Housing portfolio.

Rent Increase 2004/05

In response to questioning the Housing portfolio holder asserted that any increase in rents was regrettable but the Council was attempting to address what locally, at this time, were incompatible Government objectives:

- increasing rents to a level more in line with those of other social landlords, and
- retaining rent levels at or below the Government Guideline.

The Housing Portfolio Holder informed the Committee that any additional rent income received, as a result of imposing an increase above the Government Guideline, would involve a rent rebate penalty. This would require the Council to pay to the Department of Work and Pensions, a sum equivalent to the additional costs of housing benefit that would be awarded to tenants as a consequence of an "over Guideline" increase. The size of the rent rebate penalty was expected to be approximately half of the additional rent income received.

The Portfolio Holder went on to explain that in those instances where retaining rents at Guideline prevented otherwise more rapid progress towards rent equalisation (i.e. achieving target rents calculated in accordance with Government formulae), Officers had received confirmation from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that the Authority would not be criticised for any consequential delay in achieving equalisation. Indeed, Officers of the ODPM were most understanding of the Council's predicament and fully accepted that the Council would not wish to incur a rent rebate penalty, merely to achieve the aim of rent equalisation earlier than would otherwise be the case.

The Portfolio Holder confirmed her expectation that, for the vast majority of properties, target rents would be achieved in the next 8-9 years.

Safety Programmes and Repairs

The Head of Shire Homes explained that the asbestos management programme and the fire safety programme were both statutory. It was understood that repairs were carried out reactively and this made budgeting more challenging.

Tenant Participation

Concern was expressed by the Committee at the increase in the cost of Tenant Participation to an estimated £203,410 in 2004/05. Councillor Mrs DP Roberts added her concern at the cost of this programme as the Council owned 6,000 houses. The Head of Shire Homes explained that the five tenant groups within the District helped to empower the Council's tenants and improved communication between the stakeholders. It was noted that the quality of the tenant participation programme would be examined by the CPA inspectors. Councillor RF Collinson stated that Cottenham had three resident participation schemes that had resulted in improved communication between home owners and tenants. It was suggested that a detailed breakdown of the cost of tenant participation was required.

Councillor RT Summerfield expressed his concern at a possible housing budget deficit of £1.7 million. The Head of Shire Homes explained that if necessary, revenue savings out of the total Housing, Repairs and Maintenance budget of £9 million would have to be made.

Equity Share Housing

It was understood that the Equity Share Advisory Group would be reformed in the near future to discuss specific problems regarding the inequalities of the scheme. It was noted that the Council should be charging equity shareholders the cost relating to their individual scheme, rather than a set fee determined for the district as a whole.

Bus Services

The housing portfolio holder stated that she had contacted the County Council regarding the removal of a bus service that served the sheltered housing scheme in Meldreth. It was understood that a dial-a-ride scheme was planned for this area.

The Finance and Resources Director explained that a £34 million expenditure was planned on the Housing Capital Programme over the next three years. This would be spent on affordable housing.

7 (e) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Information and Customer Services

The portfolio holder for Information and Customer Services and the Finance and Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Information and Customer Services portfolio.

Meeting Rooms & European Elections

It was understood that the meeting rooms at the new office in Cambourne would be larger than the current rooms at 9-11 Hills Road and an extra square footage led to an extra cost. It was understood that there would be extra funding from the Government for the administration of European Elections.

7 (f) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Planning and Economic Development

The portfolio holder for Planning and Economic Development and the Finance and

Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Planning and Economic Development portfolio.

Building Control

Concern was expressed over the recent losses made by the Building Regulation Service, as the aim was to operate at no cost or profit to the Council. The Building Control Manager explained that a growing number of building works were being planned but not completed. From a budgeting point of view it was unfortunate that action taken to reverse the large profits achieved in previous years had combined with a down turn in the market and the filling of vacant posts. It was understood that 7 out of the 8 positions were now filled but three of these staff were still being trained and the remaining vacant post would remain unfilled for the time-being. It was noted that the Building Regulation Service operates were operating in a commercial market and so an increase in charges would not necessarily lead to a balancing of the budget. The Planning and Economic Development portfolio holder explained that some developers within the District were using their own contractors and as a consequence the Council winning a disproportionate number of less profitable building developments. A proposal that fees for Schedules 1 and 2 would be increased at the beginning of April, in line with the LGA model scheme, was noted.

It was agreed, with the consent of the Leader, that a report on financial matters would be appended to the planned Cabinet report on building regulation service levels in April.

South Cambridgeshire Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee

The Planning and Economic Development portfolio holder explained that this Committee carried out valuable work, encouraged partnership and was relevant to the Council's corporate objectives of improving village life and working to achieve a better future through partnership.

Economic Development Grants

Concern was expressed over the £60,000 allocated to Economic Development grants in an area of sustained economic growth and under employment. The portfolio holder for Economic Development explained that these grants were directed towards charities dedicated to employing those who could have difficulties finding employment elsewhere. It was suggested that the Committee should receive a report on the Economic Development Grants that had been awarded this financial year to determine the worthiness of these grants. It was added that measurable outcomes needed to be assessed. The portfolio holder for Economic Development explained that reports on Economic Development Grants had been discussed by the Finance and Resources Committee under the old political structure.

The Committee **REQUESTED** a report detailing the Economic Development Grants awarded in the municipal year 2003/04, to be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

7 (g) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Resources and Staffing

The portfolio holder for Resources and Staffing and the Finance and Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Resources and Staffing portfolio.

Land Charges

The Finance and Resources Director explained that he had discussed the increase in

net expenditure for the Land Charges section with the Head of Legal Services who had resolved to increase the cost of each search by £15 to reduce the expenditure and aim to operate at no cost or profit to the Council.

Membership of the LGA

It was noted that the results of a consultation on this issue showed varying degrees of support for Membership of the LGA amongst Councillors and senior officers. Councillor Mrs Spink stated that the LGA had allowed Councils to unite against the Government's plans for the abolition of the LASHG grants and ensure an amendment to their plans. It was noted that part of the benefit of LGA training courses was to meet representatives of other Districts and discuss mutual challenges. It was understood that all District Councils were members of the LGA.

7 (h) Revenue and Capital Estimates for Sustainability and Community Planning

The portfolio holder for Sustainability and Community Planning and the Finance and Resources Director were invited to answer questions regarding the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2004/05 and the Capital Programme up to 2006/07 for the Sustainability and Community Planning portfolio.

Tourism

Concern was expressed over the £67,000 to be spent on tourism. It was suggested that the benefits of tourism to the District was unaffected by this Council's expenditure. The portfolio holder for Sustainability and Community Planning stated that £133.6 million was brought into the region through tourism. He expressed disappointment over reports that Tourist Information at the Guildhall had failed to give basic information on this Districts tourist accommodation as the Council employed a tourist officer and the information should have been forthcoming. In response to questioning the portfolio holder for Sustainability and Community Planning stated that it was important that the information on the web-site was kept up to date as this technology was used by staff dealing with enquiries regarding tourist facilities within the District.

It was asserted that it was important that the Bed and Breakfast within the District was well publicised.

Partnership Working

It was suggested that Partnership Working was ineffective as it resulted in too many meetings and strategies, but little action. However, it was noted that achieving a better future through partnership working was one of the Council's objectives and so should be focused on.

CABs, Mobile Wardens and Council Tax

Concern was expressed that the Council's grants to Citizens' Advice Bureaux were being reduced and Village Mobile Wardens were being inadequately funded. It was suggested that as Council expenditure had increased by 15%, the sensible long term strategy was to increase Council Tax accordingly. It was noted that the level of Council Tax would be fully debated at the Council meeting on 26th February.

8. PROGRESS REPORT ON SUSTAINABILITY BEST VALUE REVIEW

Councillor RF Collinson introduced this report on the progress made on implementing the recommendations of the Sustainability Best Value Review, which was submitted to the Scrutiny Committee in January 2003.

Department “Mainstreaming”

In response to questioning the Strategic Development Officer stated that all departments were responsible for working towards the Council’s Corporate Objective of a sustainable future for South Cambridgeshire. The Strategic Development Officer reported the mainstreaming of sustainability was ongoing throughout the Council. The Council now needs to build upon its achievements to date and encourage further cultural change – a point confirmed by a recent survey of six local authorities which revealed successful mainstreaming remains dependent upon achieving significant organisational change . Efforts to promote further cultural change in the Council would be enhanced by the provision of additional resource.

Sustainability Checklist

The Strategic Development Officer stated his predecessor had issued a sustainability checklist for report writers across all departments to refer to when submitting reports. The officer would now review the checklist and determine whether its future use could be monitored by the Democratic Services section.

Performance Indicators

When asked how the mainstreaming of sustainability might be improved the Strategic Development Officer suggested the introduction of Sustainability Performance Indicators would help the Council assess how well it is progressing in terms of working towards a sustainable future for the District.

Assistant Strategic Development Officer

Members of the Committee stated that this Council would find it impossible to honour its Corporate Objective regarding sustainability without employing an assistant for the Strategic Development Officer. Concern was expressed at the number of planning applications that were being submitted without being examined for sustainability implications.

The portfolio holder for Sustainability and Community Planning praised the Strategic Development Officer for his work and asserted that a new Sustainability Planning Officer was required to examine the sustainability implications of the new settlement of Northstowe.

9. REGISTRATION OF TITLE OF LAND OWNED BY THE COUNCIL

The Assistant Solicitor introduced this report, which updated the Committee on the process of up-dating the registration of title of Council properties and the legal position of the Council regarding boundary disputes involving tenants.

In response to questioning, the Assistant Solicitor explained that the Land Registry were encouraging all unregistered landowners to register their land voluntarily through public meetings and seminars.

The Assistant Solicitor estimated that the registration of all unregistered land in the District would take approximately 18 months. It was understood that this had caused a great deal of extra work for staff and had led to a secondment of an officer from Development Services.

The Committee suggested that present records be stored in the County archive, to free up storage space in the new office.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

10. PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE GROUNDS MAINTENANCE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

It was agreed that the Task and Finish Group should report back to the Committee after more responses from Parish Councils had been received.

11. PROGRAMME OF KEY DECISIONS

The Committee **NOTED** the Forward Programme.

12. TO NOTE THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that future meetings would be held on:
2004: 11th March, 15th April and 13th May.
All at 2.00pm unless otherwise stated.

The Meeting ended at 5.45 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Audit Panel held on
Wednesday, 17 December 2003

PRESENT: Councillor SGM Kindersley

Councillors:	RF Bryant	
	NN Cathcart	
	Mrs GJ Smith	
	J Golding	External Audit (RSM Robson Rhodes)
	A Merchant	External Audit (RSM Robson Rhodes)
	P Winrow	External Audit (RSM Robson Rhodes)

Councillors JD Batchelor and RT Summerfield were in attendance, by invitation.

1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2003 were confirmed as a correct record.

Internal Audit: Quarterly Assurance Reports (Minute 4)

It was confirmed that the £3,000 cheque sent twice to the same consultant had been a one-off error. The Council's robust payment process had, unfortunately, not been followed on this occasion due to the unacceptably large workload on the officer authorising the payment. There was now a back-up check operating to identify any potential duplicate payments.

Partnership Arrangements for Housing Maintenance Contracts (Minute 5)

The Finance and Resources Director confirmed that he had met with the Head of Shire Homes, the Head of Legal Services and External Audit and the resulting report on the Council's partnership contracts would be presented to Cabinet on 18th December.

2. EXTERNAL AUDIT: ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

The Annual Audit Letter was a summary of the work done during the year. This had been an unusual year as the Audit Plan covered up to 31st March 2004 and the audit work for the second year of this Plan would not be completed until the conclusion of the audit of the annual accounts for the year ending 31st March 2004. The audit could not be certified as closed until the public inspection process, due in January 2004, had been completed. The audit work had been conducted before the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) Peer Review, but the audit team had since received copies of the Peer Review Team's comments and determined that there was little difference between their findings and those of the audit.

There were still improvements to be made to budgetary control and Mr Winrow stressed the importance of having proper risk management procedures in place, especially with the forthcoming CPA inspection in 2004. He explained that the Audit Plan risk assessments had met all the objectives of the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice 2000. The auditors would be reviewing the risk assessments and would notify the Council only if it were determined that any identified risks were changing for the worse.

Councillor RT Summerfield expressed his disappointment that the public inspection had not been advertised in time to certify the audit as closed before the end of 2003. The audit work undertaken had demonstrated that it would be unlikely any material interests would be raised during the public inspection period, but if any were received, they could

be addressed as the audit itself remained open.

Underspending

Underspending was being addressed and progress was being made through the new financial management systems. The need to spend budgets wisely was being reinforced with line managers and Chief Officers and the results of this work were being demonstrated during the current financial year, which had not yet been subject to an external audit. The relaxation of the virement rules, as agreed by Council on 11th December, would also help the Council better manage its budget in line with its financial strategy. The Staffing and Central Overheads estimate report, which would be presented to Cabinet on 18th December, showed a much improved situation.

Reservations and Amendments

The two reservations regarding Performance Management represented data not collected by the Council in the previous year, although it was being collected in the current year. The thirteen amendments were areas where data was changed during the audit. Mr Golding agreed to provide more details to members following the meeting.

Audit Plan Risk Assessment

Table Three of the Annual Audit Letter highlighted some areas in the performance management framework which were more fully developed than others; although all aspects met the Code Objectives, there were areas where more work was required before they were fully resourced.

CPA Peer Review

The Peer Review Team had been critical of performance management and Councillor JD Batchelor requested clarification of the value of the auditors' opinion. The Peer Review had been inspecting in greater detail than the auditors and identifying areas where more work was required, which was not inconsistent with the findings in the Annual Audit Letter. Mr Golding endorsed the steps proposed in the Peer Review assessment.

Reconciliation Controls

This had been included not because reconciliation did not exist, but to recommend that control would be further improved by more frequent reconciliation being performed.

Move to Cambourne

The move to Cambourne was mentioned in the risk assessment to encourage awareness of the risks before the move.

E-government

The inclusion of e-government on the list of areas of improvements to the performance management framework highlighted the need to resource adequately to complete the work by the deadline of 31st March 2004: at the time the Information Systems audit was undertaken, only 30% of the e-government work had been completed.

Communication Strategy

The Communication Strategy would be presented to Cabinet on 18th December.

Integrating Risk Management within Service Planning and Delivery

Management Team had identified a senior officer group, to be chaired by the Finance and Resources Director, to take this project forward. The Council's insurers had made funding available and a two-day intensive training programme was scheduled for January 2004.

Resources

There was concern expressed that the Council lacked sufficient resources to complete all performance management elements before the CPA inspection. It was crucial that the Council prioritise the issues and resource accordingly, otherwise it could run a serious risk of over-burdening senior officers. The Finance and Resources Director suggested that the Scrutiny Committee could receive oral, rather than written, reports on progress towards the CPA inspection, as this would be less demanding on officers' time.

Performance Indicators (PIs)

The Chief Executive noted that the high number of PIs made it difficult to have an improvement plan behind each, but only the number of local PIs could be reduced. He felt that outcome-based targets were more meaningful than reporting the process for achieving targets, for instance, showing the number of houses provided rather than the funds spent achieving this.

Mr Merchant explained that there were no problems with the Council's focus on Key PIs. Mr Golding recommended using the BVPIs set by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) as bottom-level targets, focussing only on those areas which matched local PIs. Assigning lower-level managers to address a large number of bottom-level PIs would enable senior officers to concentrate on the Key PIs and improve the performance management culture.

Community Strategy

Councillor JD Batchelor explained that some of the Community Strategy's priorities could not be closely related to the Council's priorities as they were areas which could be better addressed through a partnership. Mr Golding felt that areas where the Community Strategy differed from the Council's priorities should be those areas which other partnership organisations were addressing.

Human Resources Strategy

The Human Resources Strategy was in preparation.

Relationship Manager

Mr Golding felt that the Relationship Manager's role had not yet had a significant impact at the District Council level. The Relationship Manager would not be part of the CPA assessment team but would play an indirect co-ordination role before and after the inspection. The Relationship Manager had been appointed by the Audit Commission and, to maintain consistency, worked for all authorities in Cambridgeshire.

Conclusion

The Audit Panel **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that it receive the Annual Audit Letter.

3. DISCUSSION OF MATTERS OF TOPICAL INTEREST**CPA**

It was vital for the Council to produce a plan addressing the improvement points before the CPA inspection, and to give a robust answer to all the elements raised in the Peer Review Team's report. The Chief Executive felt that the steps being taken so far would address the elements successfully. The CPA formed a major item on Management Team agendas.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**Budget**

Mr Merchant noted that, although the planned reduction in balances had not been fully achieved, it was commendable that there had been some reduction overall. He recommended involving members in the broad budget setting but leaving the detail to

officers, allowing members the time for the important strategic decisions necessary for a good CPA.

Auditors

Mr Golding would be replacing Mr Merchant as the Council's appointed auditor from 2003/2004 as part of a six-yearly rotation. The Audit Panel thanked Mr Merchant for his efforts over the past six years and looked forward to working with Mr Golding.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Audit Panel would be convened once there was sufficient business to be considered.

The Meeting ended at 11.15 a.m.

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE CRIME AND DISORDER
PARTNERSHIP GROUP**

A meeting of the Group was held on
26th January 2004 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Linda Oliver (Cambridgeshire County Councillor) – Chairman
Cheryl Arnold (Young Peoples Initiatives Officer, SCDC)
John Ballantyne (Chief Executive, SCDC)
Chris Brown (Assistant Director, Environment, CCC)
Ian Burns (Primary Care Trust)
Michael Campbell (Cambridgeshire Constabulary)
Mark Chalmers (Community Safety Research Officer)
Rex Collinson (South Cambs District Councillor)
Tara Edwards (Community Safety Officer, SCDC)
John McGhee (Probation Service)
Fran Morris (Community Safety & Partnership Officer, Cambridgeshire Constabulary)
Nicole Morton (Partnership Support Officer)
Peter Niskin (Connexions)
John Reynolds (Cambridgeshire Police Authority)
Deborah Roberts (South Cambs District Councillor)
Chris Smith (Cambridge Fire Service)
Dave Warren (City Fire Services)
Gemma Webb (Community Safety Officer, CCC)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Vickie Crompton (Information Officer), Tony Hibberd (Fire Service) & Pat Kilby (Fire Service).

2. MINUTES

- 2.1 The Minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 27th October 2003 were confirmed as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Funding from Partnership Members (Minute 3.3)

- 3.1 Gemma Webb reported that Probation would not be making a financial contribution for the next municipal year. Fran Morris reported that the Police Force would not be increasing their contribution in line with the other Partners. The Health Service were thanked for their £4,500 contribution per year for 2004 and 2005.

Travellers Protocol (Minute 3.6)

- 3.2 John Ballantyne reported that the withdrawal of police support had made it impossible to make progress on a countywide consensus regarding travellers. Disappointment was expressed at this outcome as it was agreed that greater co-operation between public bodies was required on what was a growing national problem.

Arson Task Force (Minute 12)

- 3.3 It was understood that Chris Smith would be the lead officer of the Arson Task Group, in place of Kevin Smith.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (Minute 6.2)

- 3.4 Michael Campbell gave an update on the Automatic Number Plate Recognition system. He stated that the introduction and running of the system was taking a considerable number of staff hours and difficulties had been experienced in making the system compatible with the Police National Computer. However, this system had been responsible for an average of 60 arrests a month and a total of 400 arrests for driving without road tax or insurance. It was noted that those responsible for more serious crimes often drove without road tax or insurance. Michael Campbell concluded that this was an excellent anti-crime tool and he asserted there was public support for the police to focus on these crimes. **MC**
- 3.5 In response to questioning, Michael Campbell stated that this system was funded from a number of different sources, although he did not have the specific figures. He explained that this system had been used in the Police's anti-drugs operations Ortolan and Eagle.
- 3.6 Michael Campbell agreed to bring a detailed report to the next meeting regarding the ANPR system's effectiveness against drugs crimes.

Preventative Strategy Strategic Group (Minute 10)

- 3.7 Gemma reported that there had been no comments from Group members regarding the Strategy which would be finalised on 29th January 2004.

4. 2004 CRIME AND DISORDER AUDIT

- 4.1 Mark Chalmers reported that the Crime and Disorder Audit was going well and efforts were being made to gain data from the hard to reach groups such as lesbian/ gay/ bisexual and travellers. Chris Brown reported that a total of £3,600 (£1,800 each) would be spent on gaining data from both these hard to reach groups. This complied with the Group's advice that the cost of this exercise be kept below £5,000. Rex Collinson stated that it was imperative that there was an accurate portrayal of the traveller issue; he stated that he was aware of 63 reports of anti-social behaviour in Cottenham since September 2003.
- 4.2 John Reynolds asserted that the outcomes of these audits needed to be evaluated. Tara Edwards replied that this audit was a government requirement. It was noted that it was a long-term strategy and was not reactive. It was agreed that monitoring was important but this audit was designed to provide an assessment of Crime and Disorder issues in South Cambridgeshire over a three year period and would be essential for informing the next Crime and Disorder Strategy.

5. APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2003 QUARTERLY CRIME REPORT

- 5.1 Michael Campbell presented this report. He highlighted the main statistical findings, which were based on the total number of reported crimes this year, compared with the total number last year:

- Overall crime had decreased this quarter by 3.2%
- Burglary had decreased by 8.4%
- Domestic Burglary had decreased by 4.6%
- Violent Crime had decreased by 9.5%
- Street robbery had been virtually eliminated.

5.2 It was noted that the Cambridgeshire Constabulary's had implemented the NCRS to the satisfaction of the Home Office.

5.3 He explained that the Cambridgeshire Constabulary was meeting its target of a 25% clear up rate for all burglaries, which was an excellent achievement.

Percentage Changes in Low Crime Areas

5.4 He explained that percentage changes in low crime area hot spots were more difficult to explain as a small numerical increase could represent a large percentage change; he highlighted the fact that in one instance a burglar from Staffordshire had come into the area and committed 16 distraction burglaries. He attributed the number of vehicle crimes in the Milton area to the CRC car park.

Murders in Cottenham & Sawston

5.5 Disappointment was expressed that the recent murders in Cottenham and Sawston were not represented in the section, as these were very serious incidents. It was noted that the Sawston murder was not committed in this crime period and the Crime Report was not a public document but a tool for the partnership to obtain an overview of the Crime committed in the District. To focus on a small number of violent crimes, would misrepresent crime in the area.

5.6 It was agreed that these crimes should be recorded under the "Other Points to Note" section.

5.7 Concern was expressed that Community Beat Managers were being seconded from the South Cambridgeshire areas to work in the City. Michael Campbell replied that officers were moved from low crime areas to work in high crime areas but a minimal level of officer support in the low crime area was guaranteed.

6. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR REPORT

6.1 Gemma Webb presented this report, on national developments in the anti-social behaviour policy. It was noted that all Partnership Groups would receive approximately £25,000 from the Home Office, in each of the next two years. In return the Home Office would expect the Partnership to:

- Take action on the worst anti-social behaviour cases.
- Have a named co-ordinator responsible for the running of this process.
- Ensure that all partners are aware of Section 17 of the Crime & Disorder Act.
- Provide regular information on action to tackle anti-social behaviour

6.2 Concern was expressed at the suggested programme for data collection that would lead to extra bureaucracy. It was noted that the Partnership already had an Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group and an Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator. Tara Edwards stated that approximately a quarter of her time was spent on anti-social behaviour but this was insufficient and led the tasks being concentrated within one

6.3

It was agreed that the aim should be to provide more officers at grass roots level, to work with communities affected by anti-social behaviour. The Young Peoples' Initiatives Officer was praised for her work. The Anti-social behaviour unit at Islington was highlighted as an excellent example of effective partnership working.

6.4

Concern was expressed at the funding of this proposal, especially as there was no guarantee of Home Office funding after 2005/06.

6.5

It was stated that the level of unaddressed anti-social behaviour in Cottenham was causing a loss of faith in local authorities in that village.

6.6

It was agreed that it was important to analyse the contributions made by all partners to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour, to ensure that there was no duplication of effort.

6.7

The Group **AGREED** that officers discuss the best way of implementing this Home Office scheme and a report be brought to the next meeting.

ALL

7. CONNEXIONS AT CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH

7.1

Peter Niskin explained that Connexions existed for all 13-19 year olds. The service aims to provide integrated advice, guidance and access to personal development opportunities for teenagers and to help them make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life.

7.2

Connexions Partnerships and Youth Offending Teams work closely together to ensure that young people in the youth justice system obtain the support, advice and guidance according to their needs. Connexions Partnerships and Drug Action Teams need to work together, particularly in relation to young people's needs assessments, service provision, Personal Adviser training and setting local drugs targets.

7.3

Peter expressed his hope that by working in partnership, any duplication of work could be avoided. In response to questioning he suggested that not all career advice from teachers could hope to be as well informed and as impartial as the advice offered by Connexions. Concern was expressed at the high drop-out rate at University, which could be partly blamed on inappropriate career advice. It was suggested that more practical courses were required at University.

8. BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES FUNDING

8.1

Chris Brown presented this report. He explained that all £84,400 had to be focused on tackling drug related crime, although this category was hard to define as most crimes could be said to be drug related. He recommended that a decision regarding the £15,700 for Linton Action for Youth be postponed, due to uncertainty over funding.

8.2

Tara Edwards warned that the Youth Participations Initiative Officer and the Partnership Support Officer were not included in the funding at this stage.

8.3

John Reynolds asserted that it was imperative that these bids stated measurable outcomes, especially if they were to be ongoing. It was noted that Go-East designed the format of the table.

8.4

The Group **AGREED** to give delegated approval for the allocation of Building Safer Communities Funding to the Chairman.

9. 2004/05 FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Targeted Policing

9.1 Michael Campbell stated that Targeted Policing would help in the fight against drugs crime. Concern was expressed that this resource could be outsourced to the City area. Michael replied that if successful this application would benefit South Cambridgeshire alone.

9.2 Concern was expressed that the precise terms of this bid were too vague and that to be fair to all bids, this bid should be considered by the relevant Task Group, before being decided by the Group.

9.3 The Group **DEFERRED** this issue to the next meeting.

Community Safety Vehicle (Fire Service)

9.4 David Wilson explained that this was a partnership bid with the City, with each Crime & Disorder Group paying £15,000 for a vehicle which would spend alternate days in South Cambridgeshire and the City, educating the public about fire hazards.

9.5 It was generally agreed that it was very difficult to secure private sector funding for these promotions.

9.6 It was suggested that to be fair to all bids, this bid should be considered by the relevant Task Group, before being decided by the Group.

9.7 The Group **DEFERRED** this issue to the next meeting.

Community Safety Unit Vehicle

9.8 After a brief discussion the Group **DEFERRED** this issue to the next meeting.

10. BUDGET REPORT ON POOLED FUND AND BUILDING SAFER COMMUNITIES

10.1 Tara Edwards explained that there had been a large number of bids from parish councils and she suggested the more funding was required for next year to meet the increased demand.

Pooled Fund

10.2 The Group **NOTED** that £6,579 remained in the pooled fund.

11. BCU FUND 2003/04

11.1 Fran Morris circulated a sheet depicting 03/04 BCU funding. She informed the Group that the recent changes were in italics.

11.2 John Reynolds stated that Colleges also had responsibilities in reducing Student

11.3 Concern was expressed regarding the effectiveness of placing adverts on buses. It was understood that it was difficult to assess the effectiveness of any advertising campaign and that these posters were in addition to other adverts, including announcements on local radio. It noted that the use of buses was far cheaper than billboards.

11.4 The Group **NOTED** the report

12. QUARTERLY TASK GROUP NEWSLETTER

12.1 Nicole Morton presented the newsletter, which was commended by the Group.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Partnership Assessment Framework

13.1 Gemma Webb informed the Group that under Home Office rules an improvement plan needed to be drawn up by the end of March 2004. It was agreed that it was important to send out a copy of the annual review to all partners.

Removal of Abandoned Vehicles

13.2 It was understood that a process for reducing the time and cost in removing abandoned vehicles was being developed. It was noted that a similar programme had been carried out with success in Bedfordshire.

Update on Cottenham

13.3 Superintendent John Raine reported that since the arrival of Irish travellers the police has been working with all residents to defuse community tensions and address misunderstandings. Three additional officers had been deployed in Cottenham to carry out this task and to enforce the law if necessary. He highlighted a problem with travellers fly-tipping furniture on Setchel Drove.

13.4 John Raine explained that a meeting, called the Gold Group, was planned between District Councillors, Community leaders and the police on 15th February, to discuss the situation.

13.5 The Group expressed the following concerns:

- The Gold Group was unnecessary as various Committees for discussing traveller issues already existed
- The police needed to inform the District Council of infringements of planning issues.
- The possible increase of the number of travellers to this country after the relaxing of border controls in the European Union
- It was suggested that as the Irish travellers already had permanent homes in Rathkeale, Ireland and so did not qualify for traveller status in Cottenham.

13.6 Rex Collinson thanked the police for their presence in Cottenham. He requested that any information regarding planning issues in Cottenham be passed to Gareth Jones, Deputy Planning Director of South Cambridgeshire District Council. He suggested

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that contact should be made with the Irish Garda and the Irish government concerning the entitlements of the Irish travellers.

13.7 It was noted that many Irish travellers had gone back to Ireland for a funeral and the Christmas period. It was agreed that the enhanced police presence should continue until after their return.

14. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

14.1 • Monday 26th April 2004 in Committee Room 1 at 10am.

On behalf of the Group, the Chairman thanked Tara Edwards for her support of the Partnership and wished her well during her maternity leave.

Meeting ended at 1:10 pm

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Chairman's Engagements

Date	Venue	Other remarks
12 th December	Mid Beds District Council Charity Concert	
14 th December	Fenland District Council Carol Concert	
16 th December	Northcotts Garden Centre Horningsea - Xmas Tree re-cycling launch	
17 th December	Hunts Town Council Carol Concert	
3 rd January 2004	Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards – Hinchingsbrooke House	
22 nd January	Contemporary Art Exhibition- Cambourne	
24 th January	British Legion – County Conference	
26 th January	Semi Finals – debating competition	
29 th January	Dance East – Reception and Performance (Tessa Jowel)	
7 th February	Last Night of the Proms – Huntingdon Town Council	Cllr Mary and Mr Course attended
9 th February	Debating Competition Finals	
17 th February	Lunch workshop – Addenbrookes Hospital (Dr Mary Archer)	Cllr Mrs Daphne Spink also attended
18 th February	Presentation Ceremony UK Youth Parliament – Comberton Village College	
19 th February	Cambridge Gang Show	
20 th February	March Town Council Civic Ball	
25 th February	No Voice No Choice Launch – Impington village college	

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