



SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, 26 APRIL 2007

AGENDA AND REPORTS

South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne, Cambridge
CB23 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 (as amended) 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, FIRST FLOOR** at **2.00 P.M.** on

THURSDAY, 26 APRIL 2007

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

DATED 18 April 2007

GJ HARLOCK
Chief Executive

Requests for a large print agenda must be received at least 48 hours before the meeting.

AGENDA

PRESENTATION

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES OF THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING**
To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2007 as a correct record.

(Pages 1 - 6)
4. **MINUTES OF THE TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2006**
Following the previous Council resolution to disband the Transformation Committee, Council is requested to authorise the Chairman of Council to sign the Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 21 November 2006 as a correct record.

(Pages 7 - 10)
5. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
6. **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND THE PUBLIC**
No questions from councillors and the public have been received at the time of publication. The deadline for the receipt of public questions is **12 noon on Monday 23 April 2007.**
7. **PETITIONS**
To note all petitions received since the last Council meeting.

8. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

8 (a) Improvement Plan (Cabinet, 12 April 2007)

Cabinet **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the Improvement Plan be approved.

Subject to approval of this recommendation, Council is further **RECOMMENDED to RESOLVE** that the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council be authorised to agree any further changes to the plan prior to submission to the Audit Commission.

The Improvement Plan considered by Cabinet on 12 April has been subject to further amendment by the Project Team and Improvement Board. An updated version of the plan will be circulated to all Members following the meeting of the Improvement Board on 24 April 2007.

(Note – draft plan attached, 23 April 2007).

(Pages 11 - 42)

8 (b) Policy for the Award of Discretionary Housing Payments (Cabinet, 12 April 2007)

Cabinet **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the policy for award of discretionary housing payments be adopted in order to facilitate future awards from the financial year 2007/08 onwards.

8 (c) MILTON Country Park - Future Management (Cabinet, 12 April 2007)

Cabinet **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that it approve in principle the disposal of the SCDC land in the park, and the land on a 999-year lease from the Stokes, on the basis of a 99-year lease on a peppercorn basis to the organisation which is selected to take on the management.

8 (d) Review of the Constitution - Recognition of Members' roles and responsibilities within the Constitution and agreement of a revised Protocol on Member Officer relations (Constitution Review Working Party, 12 April 2007)

The Constitution Review Working Party **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

1. That the following additions to the Article 2 of the Constitution be approved:

Recognition of political groups

“Members shall be entitled to join political groups. In accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, a political group shall be treated as constituted when there is delivered to the Chief Executive a notice in writing which:

- (i) is signed by two or more Members of the Council who wish to be treated as a political group;
- (ii) states that Members of the Council who have signed wish to be treated as a political group;
- (iii) states the name of the political group;
- (iv) states the name of the Member who shall be the Leader of the political group.”

Definitions of Controlling and Opposition Groups

“The Political Group or groups of the Council whose Members have been appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader of the Council shall be identified as the Controlling Group or Groups. For the purposes of political control, the Cabinet shall collectively be identified as the Executive.

“The Political Group with the largest number of seats on the Council and whose Members have not been appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader of the Council shall be identified as the Major Opposition Group.

“Other Political Groups with seats on the Council and whose Members have not been appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader of the Council shall be identified as Minor Opposition Groups.”

- (2) That the revised Protocol on Member / Officer Relations (final draft incorporating comments by the Working Party **attached as Appendix 2**), be approved, replacing the existing version at Section H of Part 5.
- (3) That the Member role descriptions (final draft incorporating comments by the Working Party **attached as Appendix 1**) be approved and incorporated into Part 5 of the Constitution.
- (4) That the following recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel be approved:

“That a Special Responsibility Allowance equivalent to 30% of the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Leader of the Council be paid to the Leader of the Major Opposition Group, with effect from the start of the 2007-2008 civic year.”

- (5)
 - (a) That the role of Opposition Spokespersons at Portfolio Holder meetings be recognised within Part 4 of the Constitution.
 - (b) That the recognition of a ‘Shadow Cabinet’ be not supported.
 - (c) That the Leader of the Major Opposition Group be required to produce an annual report to Council.

***Note** – Also attached is a paper summarising amendments suggested by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, which considered the draft protocol at its meeting on 19 April 2007.*

(Pages 43 - 80)

9. REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT

To consider the adoption of a revised Code of Conduct. The revised model code was recently published by the Government following an extensive consultation process, and has effect from 3 May 2007.

RECOMMENDATION

That the revised Code of Conduct be adopted for incorporation into the Council’s Constitution with effect from 3 May 2007.

A covering report by the Deputy Monitoring Officer, the revised Code and a table summarising changes from the existing version are attached.

10. MEMBER TOOLKIT AND CONTRACT

Council is recommended to approve the Member Contract and Toolkit. The toolkit draws together in one folder documents already in the Constitution and guidance from external partners.

The Member Contract is a summary of the contents of the Toolkit along with a procedure to be followed in the event of a breach of any of the codes and protocols in the Toolkit. All Members will be asked to sign their own copy of the contract. The intention is for Members to have a single point of reference for the Codes, protocols, guidance and advice that should help them in their roles as Councillors.

Cabinet delegated responsibility for developing the contract and toolkit to the Chairman and Leader of the Council, who have sought advice from the Cabinet, Group Leaders, the Chief Executive and other officers. In addition, the contents of the Toolkit were endorsed by the Member Training Advisory Group at its meeting on 10 April 2007.

The Member Contract will be circulated to Members as soon as it is finalised and prior to the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Member Contract and Toolkit be approved.

The contents page of the Member Toolkit is attached to this Agenda

A revised recommendation sheet is also attached, seeking agreement of the documents making up the Member contract.

(Pages 105 - 108)

11. SECOND ANNUAL SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

To receive the Second Annual Scrutiny and Overview Committee report (attached).

(Pages 109 - 114)

12. UPDATES FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

13. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS

To note the Chairman's engagements since the last Council meeting:

Date	Venue / Event
Friday 23 March	Funeral, Snowy Farr at Oakington
Sunday 25 March	Civic Service at Mid Beds District Council
Monday 26 March	Opening of Indian Restaurant at Great Shelford
Saturday 14 April	Opening of extension to Village Hall at Harlton
Sunday 15 April	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Young Musicians Gala Concert at Cambridge
Tuesday 17 April	Natural Heritage Awards, presentation evening at Cambourne
Monday 23 April	Citizenship project at Guilden Morden School
Tuesday 24 April	Citizenship project at Great Wilbraham School

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL

Whilst the District Council endeavours to ensure that you come to no harm when visiting South Cambridgeshire Hall you also have a responsibility to ensure that you do not risk your own or others' safety.

Security

Visitors should report to the main reception desk where they will be asked to sign a register. Visitors will be given a visitor's pass that must be worn at all times whilst in the building. Please remember to sign out and return your pass before you leave. The visitors' book is used as a register in cases of emergency and building evacuation.

Emergency and Evacuation

In the event of a fire you will hear a continuous alarm. Evacuate the building using the nearest escape route; from the Council Chamber or Mezzanine viewing gallery this would be via the staircase just outside the door. Go to the assembly point at the far side of the staff car park.

Do not use the lifts to exit the building. If you are unable to negotiate stairs by yourself, the emergency staircase landings are provided with fire refuge areas, which afford protection for a minimum of 1.5 hours. Press the alarm button and wait for assistance from the Council fire wardens or the fire brigade.

Do not re-enter the building until the officer in charge or the fire brigade confirms that it is safe to do so.

First Aid

If someone feels unwell or needs first aid, please alert a member of staff.

Access for People with Disabilities

All meeting rooms are accessible to wheelchair users. There are disabled toilet facilities on each floor of the building. Hearing loops and earphones are available from reception and can be used in all meeting rooms.

Toilets

Public toilets are available on each floor of the building next to the lift.

Recording of Business

Unless specifically authorised by resolution, no audio and / or visual or photographic recording in any format is allowed at any meeting of the Council, the executive (Cabinet), or any committee or sub-committee of the Council or the executive.

Banners / Placards / Etc.

No member of the public shall be allowed to bring into or display at any Council meeting any banner, placard, poster or other similar item. The Chairman may require any such item to be removed.

Disturbance by Public

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

Smoking

The Council operates a NO SMOKING policy.

Food and Drink

Vending machines and a water dispenser are available on the ground floor near the lifts. There shall be no food and drink in the Council Chamber.

Mobile Phones

Please ensure that your phone is set on silent / vibrate mode during meetings.