

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning and New Communities Joint Portfolio Holders' Meeting held
on
Tuesday, 26 January 2010 at 10.00 a.m.

Portfolio Holders: Simon Edwards and Nick Wright

Councillors in attendance:

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors: Val Barrett and Roger Hall
Opposition spokesmen: Trisha Bear, Anthony Berent and Bridget Smith

Officers:

James Fisher	S106 Officer
David Grimster	Accountant
Richard Hales	Strategic Sustainability Officer
Peter Harris	Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing)
Gareth Jones	Corporate Manager, Planning & Sustainable Communities
Keith Miles	Planning Policy Manager
Jo Mills	Corporate Manager, New Communities
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Claire Spencer	Senior Planning Officer (Transport Policy)

48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Dr David Bard (New Communities Portfolio Holder) was unable to be present.

Part 4 of the Constitution, relating to delegation rules) states that "... The Leader, and in his / her absence, the Deputy Leader, shall have all the delegated powers, functions and responsibilities of any portfolio holder in their absence. The Deputy Leader shall assume the full powers of the Leader in any circumstances in which the Leader is unable to act, and shall act as Leader if the post of Leader is vacant (Article 7.03...refers."

Councillor Ray Manning (Leader of the Council) was unable to act.

Accordingly, Councillor Simon Edwards (Deputy Leader) assumed the full powers of the Leader, and attended the meeting in place of the New Communities Portfolio Holder.

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

50. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Deputy Leader and Planning Portfolio Holder agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2009 were a correct record, and signed them accordingly.

51. REVENUE AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES: PLANNING

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2010-11 and the Capital Programme up to the year 2014-15.

Those present received a revised Appendix A and discussed a number of issues raised in the report.

The Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities) highlighted the benefits the Council had enjoyed by being able to obtain Housing and Planning Delivery Grant monies, but cautioned against ongoing reliance on this as a funding stream.

Concern was expressed at imminent redundancies within the Planning Service, and the implications for the Council when the local economy recovered, resulting in a likely increase in the number of planning applications received.

Concern was also expressed at apparently budgeting for an overspend.

The Planning Portfolio Holder **endorsed** the Revenue Estimates at Appendix A (as revised) to the report; the Capital Programme at Appendix B, and associated proposal forms at Appendices C1 to C4, and recommend them for consideration by the Cabinet.

52. REVENUE AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES: NEW COMMUNITIES

The Deputy Leader considered the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2010-11 and the Capital Programme up to the year 2014-15.

In response to a question about whether the Council could claim extra government funding should Northstowe now be classed as an Eco-town, the Corporate Manager (New Communities) referred to a 'Gap Analysis' being undertaken to determine the chances of successfully bidding for funds enabling the further studies needed in assessing Eco-town status.

Concern was expressed about redundancies in the short term potentially leaving the Council without sufficient capacity later on in terms of the number and experience of staff available.

The Deputy Leader

- (a) **endorsed** the Revenue Estimates and the Capital Programme at Appendices A and B to the report, and recommend them for consideration by the Cabinet; and
- (b) **confirmed** the proposals for capital expenditure shown at Appendix C (1-3), for inclusion in the Council's draft capital programme.

53. REVENUE AND CAPITAL ESTIMATES: SUSTAINABILITY

The Deputy Leader considered the Revenue Estimates up to the year 2010-11 and the Capital Programme up to the year 2014-15.

It was noted that the PPS1 grant from central government went straight into the Council's General Fund summary. The Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities) undertook to investigate whether this could be reflected in the accounts as income to the New Communities Portfolio.

The Deputy Leader

- (a) **endorsed** the Sustainability Revenue Estimates and Capital Programme shown at Appendices A and B to the report and recommended them for consideration by the Cabinet; and
- (b) **confirmed** the proposals for capital expenditure shown at Appendix C2.

54. SECTION 106 ADMINISTRATION FEES

The Planning Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader considered a report outlining the

proposal for South Cambridgeshire District Council to apply an administration fee for handling planning obligations entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Section 106 Officer explained that, while the scheme would not in itself fund officer costs, it would at least help cover the additional costs, pro rata, of additional time commitments required on an Agreement-by-Agreement basis.

Concern was expressed about future staffing levels within the Planning and New Communities Service currently being created.

Responding to a call for a significant increase in fees, the Planning Portfolio Holder said that the level should be set relatively low at the outset and increased gradually. He agreed in principle with the idea of seeking alternative ways of funding the Council, but said these had to be realistic

The Planning Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader **agreed** that South Cambridgeshire District Council should, with effect from 1 January 2010, increase the level of legal fees charged in association with the additional administration work necessitated by the completion of a Section 106 agreement. Such fee would be applied at a level appropriate to the degree of complexity involved (subject to a maximum charge of £250 for each Agreement and review on an annual basis).

55. ADOPTION OF STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Deputy Leader considered a report outlining the results of a public consultation exercise carried out in relation to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The Planning Policy Manager highlighted the fourth bullet point in paragraph 12 of the report. He also outlined the rationale behind the 21-day period during which parish councils could ask that the full Planning Committee considered planning applications. Following the disbandment of the Chairman's Delegation process, a shorter timescale was needed to make sure that South Cambridgeshire District Council met the requirement of delegating at least 90% of applications received. In response to the Deputy Leader, the Planning Policy Manager made it clear that the 21-day period would run from the day on which parish councils were notified.

The Deputy Leader suggested adding into the SCI details about consultation with parish councils.

The Planning Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader **agreed** that South Cambridgeshire District Council should adopt the Statement of Community Involvement, as contained in Appendix 1, subject to the addition to that document of an Appendix clarifying the process for consultation with parish councils.

56. DRAFT ADVISORY HEAVY COMMERCIAL VEHICLES ROUTE MAP

The Planning Portfolio Holder considered a report on Cambridgeshire County Council's consultation on a draft advisory Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) route map as the first stage in the process of reviewing its HCV policy.

Concern was expressed that nothing should be done that might increase the incidence of HCVs taking alternative routes along minor roads and residential streets.

The Deputy Leader called for South Cambridgeshire District Council to support strongly

the downgrading of the A1123, but added that Cambridgeshire County Council should make sure that adequate funds were made available for ongoing maintenance of this route, in the event that downgrading it meant there was less money available from elsewhere for such maintenance.

The Planning Portfolio Holder **agreed** that, in response to consultation from Cambridgeshire County Council about the draft advisory HCV route map, South Cambridgeshire District Council:

1. **supported** the strategic routes identified as being the most appropriate through routes for HCV traffic, and strongly supported the downgrading of the A1123 from a strategic to local route;
2. **supported** strongly the downgrading of the A1123, while urging Cambridgeshire County Council to make sure that adequate funds were made available for ongoing maintenance of this route, in the event that downgrading it meant there was less money available from elsewhere for such maintenance; and
3. **requested** continued involvement, together with local communities, in addressing local concerns particularly in areas close to where new development is proposed to ensure appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate any impact from HCV traffic on local communities.

57. JOINING THE NATIONAL "10:10" CARBON EMISSIONS REDUCTION CAMPAIGN

The Deputy Leader considered a report on the national "10:10" carbon emissions reduction campaign.

Concern was expressed at future staff capacity.

The Deputy Leader **agreed** that South Cambridgeshire District Council should formally join the national "10:10" carbon emissions reduction campaign.

58. NEW COMMUNITIES PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Deputy Leader **received and noted** a report outlining progress made by the New Communities Service, up to 31 December 2009, in meeting its targets set in the published 2009-10 Service Plan. The report, taken together with the financial report provided a comprehensive overview of the state of the service, both financially and in terms of its delivery.

Concern was expressed at the decision to cease publication of the Arts Guide as part of the *South Cambs Magazine*. The Corporate Manager (New Communities) said that this was as a result of a lack of resources.

59. FORWARD PLANS

The Deputy Leader and Planning Portfolio Holder **noted** the Forward Plans for the New Communities and Planning portfolios.

The Forward Plans were updated as follows:

Planning

- 2 March 2010 – add Performance update
- Unscheduled items – delete Cambridgeshire Horizons Integrated Development Plan

New Communities

- 2 March 2010 – add Climate Change Action Plan
- 2 March 2010 – add Local Transport Plan
- 2 March 2010 – delete Statement of Community Involvement (duplicate entry)
- May 2010 (date to be re-arranged) – Gypsy and Traveller DPD

60. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Planning and New Communities Portfolio Holders' meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 2 March 2010, starting at 10.00am.

The Meeting ended at 12.18 p.m.
