

## **Council**

**Thursday, 13 July 2023**

### **Decisions**

Set out below is a summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 13 July 2023. The wording used does not necessarily reflect the actual wording that will appear in the minutes.

If you have any queries about any matters referred to in this decision sheet please contact Democratic Services.

#### **Extension to Six Month Attendance Rule and Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of Employment and Staffing Committee** Council

##### **Agreed to**

- A)** Waive the attendance requirements of Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 for Councillor William Jackson-Wood and to extend the six-month attendance rule for a period of a further six months from the date of this meeting.
- B)** Appoint Councillor Sally Ann Hart as Chair of the Employment and Staffing Committee and Councillor Anna Bradnam as Vice-Chair of the Employment and Staffing Committee with immediate effect.

#### **Standing in the name of Councillor Annika Osborne** Council **agreed** the following motion:

First Past the Post (FPTP) originated when land-owning aristocrats dominated parliament and voting was restricted to property-owning men.

In Europe, only the UK and authoritarian Belarus still use archaic single-round FPTP for general elections. Internationally, Proportional Representation (PR) is used to elect the parliaments of more than 80 countries. These countries tend to be more equal, freer and greener.

PR ensures all votes count, have equal value, and that seats won match votes cast. Under PR, MPs and Parliaments better reflect the age, gender and protected characteristics of both local communities and of the nation.

MPs better reflecting the communities they represent in turn leads to improved decision-making, wider participation and increased levels of ownership of decisions taken.

PR would also end minority rule. In 2019, 43.6% of the vote produced a government with 56.2% of the seats and 100% of the power. Fair, proportional votes also prevent 'wrong winner' elections such as occurred in

1951 and February 1974.

PR is the national policy of the Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, Green Party, SNP, Plaid Cymru, Reform UK and Women's Equality Party along with a host of Trade Unions and pro-democracy organisations.

PR is already used to elect the parliaments and assemblies of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Its use should now be extended to include Westminster.

This Council therefore resolves to write to H.M. Government calling for a change in our outdated electoral laws and to enable Proportional Representation to be used for UK general elections.

### **Standing in the Name of Councillor Natalie Warren-Green**

Council **agreed** the following motion:

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) notes that on 16 May 2023, Cambridgeshire County Council at its Full Council meeting, passed a motion to request that District Councils throughout Cambridgeshire consider on strategic new developments, a planning condition that developers covenants explicitly exempt childcare provision on domestic premises, where there is an identified need which can be demonstrated. And highlight the importance of such changes with developers and house builders to ensure that they are aware of the barrier that these covenants can cause.

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) recognises that some house builders place restrictive covenants on properties which prohibit residents living within them from running a business from home, including providing childcare. Whilst it is possible to have a covenant revoked, it is not guaranteed. Although covenants are not exclusive to strategic developments, it appears to be for these that the issue is most prevalent.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service has been discussing this blanket covenant with Homes England who are now aware that the restriction on childminders works at cross purposes with their intention that residents of new builds have a positive experience living in their homes. It is also clear that sustainable community requires residents to be able to access work, education and all services by either active travel or public transport. Requiring whole new communities to drive to access child care facilities is in conflict with South Cambs zero carbon policy.

SCDC now has an opportunity to capture, working with Cambridge City Council, the need for more childminders in the emerging joint local plan through policy which excludes childminders from the restriction of operating businesses from home.

This motion is requesting support for SCDC to address this need as follows:

1. Commence meetings with Homes England and other house builders active across South Cambridgeshire to (a) address this childcare crisis

for new communities being delivered as part of the current adopted Local Plan 2018 and (b) in view of the predicted growth, engage them in policy development to achieve buy-in for policy that will meet the needs of childcare providers and families in the emerging joint local plan

2. Develop a planning policy regarding Childminders that will include feedback from the engagement with house builders and stakeholders across South Cambridgeshire, and organisations like PACEY, to ensure that the needs are balanced across all the interests in the community so that Childminders are exempt from a blanket covenant to restrict businesses being run from homes.