

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on  
Wednesday, 6 February 2019 at 9.30 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)  
Councillor Aidan Van de Weyer (Deputy Leader of Council)

<b>Councillors:</b>	Neil Gough	Lead Cabinet member for Environmental Services and Licensing
	Philippa Hart	Lead Cabinet member for Customer Service and Business Improvement
	Dr. Tumi Hawkins	Lead Cabinet member for Planning
	Hazel Smith	Lead Cabinet member for Housing
	John Williams	Lead Cabinet member for Finance

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Ms S Gardner Craig	Head of People and Organisational Development
Mike Hill	Director of Housing and Environmental Services
Ms C Hunt	Planning Policy Manager
John	Democratic Services Team Leader
Kelly	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
McKenna	Deputy Head of Legal Practice
Bob Palmer	Interim Executive Director
David Roberts	Principal Planning Policy Officer
IR Senior	Democratic Services Officer

Councillors Anna Bradnam, Nigel Cathcart, Dr. Claire Daunton, Dr. Douglas de Lacey, Sue Ellington, Pippa Heylings, Brian Milnes, Bunty Waters and Heather Williams were in attendance, by invitation.

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no Apologies for Absence.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In the interests of transparency, Councillor Hazel Smith stated that Waterbeach (the subject of agenda item 7) was located in her Ward.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Cabinet authorised the Leader to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2019 subject to correcting a typographical error in the attendance list to read 'Douglas' rather than 'Duglas'.

### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

### **5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

One public question had been received, relating to the Waterbeach Supplementary

Planning Document. It would be considered as part of Minute no. 7.

## **6. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting on 22 January 2019 had been chaired by the Vice-Chairman Councillor Brian Milnes.

Councillor Milnes summarised the Committee's consideration of the Waterbeach Supplementary Planning Document, Budget, and the recent ICT outage.

With regard to the ICT issue, the Leader said that one option in moving to a resolution was to employ external consultants to work alongside staff from 3C ICT. She specifically thanked those officers involved in ensuring business continuity in the immediate aftermath of the outage.

## **7. WATERBEACH SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS ADOPTION**

Cabinet considered a report and supplementary report summarising and responding to representations made on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) during the public consultation held between 14 September 2018 and 26 October 2018, and relating to recent correspondence from the three statutory consultation bodies.

Mr. Goldsmith, representing RLW (the second landowner involved in developing Waterbeach New Town) addressed the meeting. He expressed concerns about the phasing of development, and about ransom. He said that, in order to ensure delivery of appropriate infrastructure and of the new town as a single and comprehensive unit, the SPD must address and remove the question of ransom.

The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development referred to paragraph 14 of the main report. He emphasised the SPD's status as a guidance document, and its function, which was to support the policies of the Local Plan.

The Planning Policy Manager referred to the main issues raised by the consultation, and referred Members to the supplementary report and its contents. By way of clarification, she said that the SPD could not change Local Plan policy. Once adopted it would be a material consideration in planning decisions. She referred to the following question from the Waterbeach Cycling Campaign:

"Within the Waterbeach New Town SPD, there are currently no modal share targets for trips made within the development. What is the targeted modal share of cycling, walking and public transport for trips to be made within the new town? If there are no targets, can SCDC explain why not?"

After pointing to paragraphs 25-31 of the main report she undertook that officers would provide the questioner with a written answer as soon as possible.

The Planning Policy Manager referred Members to the supplementary report, and to the representations from the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.

In relation to water recycling, the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development told Councillor Hazel Smith, a local Member for Waterbeach, that the provision of additional capacity would be for a separate planning

process distinct from the SPD. Noting that Cambridgeshire County Council is the appropriate planning authority for waste planning and for the determination of related planning applications.

In response to RLW's suggestion that the SPD should contain an "anti-ransom" clause, the Council had received legal advice to the effect that RLW was not entitled to such a clause, and that such a clause was unnecessary and unreasonable. Officers' advice to Cabinet therefore was that such a clause was not appropriate.

Speaking as a member of the Planning Committee, Councillor Milnes said it would be essential to prevent development of the new town from becoming disjointed. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development set out the mechanisms available through the SPD and the planning process generally to secure comprehensive development.

Summing up, the Leader said that the Council looked forward to working with the developers to achieve a town that reflected its priorities.

Cabinet

1. noted the main issues raised in recent correspondence with the three statutory bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) and in their responses to the SPD consultation in respect of sustainability appraisal and habitats regulations and the considerations as set out in the supplementary report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development (see Appendices A and B of the Supplementary Report);
2. agreed responses to the representations received, and agreed the consequential changes to the draft SPD approved by Cabinet for consultation on 5 September 2018, as set out in the Consultation Statement;
3. adopted the Waterbeach New Town SPD, agreed by Cabinet on 5 September 2018 and as amended (see Appendices A, B and C); and
4. delegated to the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, the authority to make any editing changes prior to publication. Including to the figures and spatial framework diagram, to ensure consistency with the agreed text of the SPD.

## 8. COUNCIL TAX EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM

Cabinet considered a report on recent legislative changes allowing for an increase the Council Tax empty homes premium to act as an incentive to bring empty homes back into use.

In response to a question from Councillor Sue Ellington, the Revenues Manager said that a property owner could apply to the Valuation Office Agency to remove a property from Council Tax if deemed to be unfit for occupation.

Cabinet **recommended** that Council increases the empty homes premium on properties left empty for more than two years, as permitted in law, namely

- 1 April 2019 – 100% premium on properties left empty for two years or more

- 1 April 2020 - 200% premium on properties left empty for five years or more
- 1 April 2021 - 300% premium on properties left empty for ten years or more

## 9. BUSINESS PLAN 2019-2024

Cabinet considered a report on the Business Plan 2019-24.

Those present discussed several issues arising from the document, including air quality and an emphasis on involving smaller Parish Councils in promoting South Cambridgeshire.

Cabinet:

- (a) **Considered** the proposed Business Plan at Appendix A to the report from the Chief Executive, and recommended it for approval by Council.
- (b) **Reviewed** feedback from Scrutiny and Overview Committee in relation to the Business Plan public consultation.
- (c) **Authorised** the Chief Executive to make any minor wording changes required to the final drafts, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

## 10. BUDGET REPORT

Cabinet is considered a report on financial strategies and budgets.

- (1) Cabinet **recommended** that Council :-

### **Revenue and capital – GF**

- (a) Approve the revenue estimates for 2019-20 as shown in the **GF BSR Section 5 at Appendix 1** to this report.
- (b) Approve the precautionary items for the GF, **GF BSR Appendix B, Appendix 1** to this report.
- (c) Approve the GF revenue forecasts as set out in **GF BSR Section 6, Appendix 1** to this report.
- (d) Instruct the Executive Management Team to identify additional income / cumulative savings of £3 million for the five years from 2019-2024.
- (e) Delegate the use of the Earmarked reserve for Business Efficiency initiatives to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance, and that £1m is transferred into this reserve from the General Fund reserve. As at the end of 2017-18 financial year, the General Fund reserve stood at £7,751,000.
- (f) Authorise £500,000 of Planning Earmarked Reserves, budgeted to support the shortfall in income in the year 2018-19, but not required due to sufficient over budget income levels being achieved, to be budgeted to use towards Business Transformation programmes in Planning in 2019-20.

- (g) Approve the GF capital programme and associated funding up to the year ended 31 March 2024, as set out in **GF BSR Section 7, at Appendix 1** to this report.
- (h) Set the Council Tax Requirement for 2019-20 at £9,092,962.
- (i) Set 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 the District Council Tax for general expenses on a Band D property of £145.31 plus the relevant amounts required by the precepts of the Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire County Council, the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority, details of those precepts and their effect to be circulated with the formal resolution required at the Council meeting.

#### **Revenue – HRA**

- (j) Approve the HRA savings, increased income, unavoidable revenue pressures, bids and reduced income items, as summarised in Section 4, and detailed in **Appendix G (1) of the HRA Budget Setting Report at Appendix 2** to this report.
- (k) Approve the non-cash limit adjustments, as summarised in Section 4, and detailed in **Appendix G (1) of the HRA Budget Setting Report at Appendix 2** to this report.
- (l) Approve the resulting HRA revenue budget as shown in the HRA Summary Forecast 2018-19 to 2023-24 in **Appendix I of the HRA Budget Setting Report at Appendix 2** to this report.
- (m) Approve the retention of the balance of the 4-year efficiency savings target of £95,000 per annum from 2020-21 included as part of the 2018-19 HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy, and the corresponding Strategic Investment Fund for the same value.

#### **Review of Rents and Charges**

- (n) Approve that council dwelling rents for all social rented properties be reduced by 1% for the final year, in line with legislative requirements introduced as part of the Welfare Reform and Work Act, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.
- (o) Approve that affordable rents are reviewed in line with rent legislation, to ensure that rents charged are no more than 80% of market rent, with this figure then reduced by 1% as with social housing. Local policy is to cap affordable rents at the lower level of Local Housing Allowance, which will result in rent variations in line with any changes notified to the authority in this level, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.
- (p) Approve inflationary increases of 2.2% in garage rents for 2019-20, in line with the base rate of inflation for the year assumed in the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- (q) Approve the proposed service charges for HRA services and facilities

provided to both tenants and leaseholders, as shown in **Appendix B of the HRA Budget Setting Report, at Appendix 2** to this report.

### Housing Capital

- (r) Approve the latest budget, spend profile and funding mix for each of the schemes in the new build programme, as detailed in **Section 5 and Appendix E of the HRA Budget Setting Report at Appendix 2** to this report, recognising the most up to date information available as each scheme progresses through the design, planning, build contract and completion process.
- (s) Approve earmarking of the required level of additional funding for new build investment between 2019-20 and 2023-24 to ensure that commitments can be met in respect of the investment of all right to buy receipts currently retained or anticipated to be received by the authority for this period. This expenditure will either take the form of HRA new build, with the 70% top up met by other HRA resources, acquisition of homes on the open market, or could alternatively be a grant made to a registered provider, where the registered provider will provide the 70% top up to build new homes.
- (t) Approve the capital budget proposals, detailed in **Appendix G (2) of the HRA Budget Setting Report at Appendix 2** to this report.
- (u) Approve the capital amendments, detailed in **Appendix H of the HRA Budget Setting Report**, which include the capital proposals in **Appendix G (2) of the HRA Budget Setting Report, at Appendix 2** to this report, along-side re-profiling of investment, increase and re-allocation of resource for new build schemes.
- (v) Approve the revised Housing Capital Investment Plan as shown in **Appendix J of the HRA Budget Setting Report at Appendix 2** to this report.

### Capital and Treasury Management

- (w) Approve the Capital and Investment Strategies 2018-19 to 2022-23, **Appendix 3 and 3A**
  - (x) Approve the borrowing and lending strategies for the year to March 2020, as included in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement in **Appendix 4**.
  - (y) Approve the prudential indicators required by the Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities for the year to 31 March 2020, included in **Appendix 4**.
  - (z) Approve any unspent New Homes Bonus money allocated to the Greater Cambridge Partnership to be rolled into 2019-20.
2. Cabinet agreed, subject to Council approval of the full budget to approve the pay award for 2019-20 based on 2% uplift on all spinal column points and payment of the Joseph Rowntree living wage foundation minimum pay of £9.00 with effect

from April 2019.

3. Cabinet agreed to delegate the decision in respect of any variation in fees to be charged by the Home Improvement Agency (HIA), to the Director of Housing and Environmental Services, following agreement of the proposed level of charges by the Shared HIA Board.
4. Cabinet agreed that the Director of Housing & Environmental Services updates statutory fees as they are published by Government, GF BSR Appendix A, Appendix 1 to this report.
5. Cabinet Instructed the Head of Finance, on the basis of the proposals set out in the GF BSR, to prepare formal papers to set the council tax requirement and amount of council tax at the Council meeting on 21 February 2019.

## 11. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Cabinet considered a report outlining a revised Organisational Change policy and procedure.

The Head of People and Organisational Development said that staff would be advised of the changes to the policy.

Subject to a number of typographical, grammatical and stylistic changes, Cabinet

- (a) **Noted** the report and the changes to the policy; and
- (b) **Approved** adoption of the Organisational Change policy.

## 12. DISABILITY CONFIDENT SCHEME

Cabinet considered a report in respect of the Government's Disability Confident scheme.

In response to Councillor Sue Ellington, the Leader expressed her wish that the concept of 'disability' should be defined as broadly as possible. She added that there should be a Lead Member to oversee the process of South Cambridgeshire District Council seeking to become a disability confident employer.

Councillor Anna Bradnam recognised the existence of local expertise in the field, and urged Cabinet to take advice from such sources, where appropriate. The Deputy Monitoring Officer reminded Members that this was an Executive function.

Cabinet:

1. **Agreed** that the Council should sign up to the Disability Confident scheme and commit to achieving level 1; and
2. **Agreed** to establish a Member Task and Finish group to take forward a programme of work to enable the Council to achieve the requirements of the Disability Confident scheme.

## 13. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Cabinet resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of Minute number 14 (Cambourne High Street) in accordance with Section

100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

**14. CAMBOURNE HIGH STREET**

Cabinet **agreed** not to progress the acquisition of the development for the reasons outlined in the exempt report from the Interim Executive Director.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Cabinet noted that its next scheduled meeting was on 6 March 2019, starting at 9.30am.

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**The Meeting ended at 12.10  
p.m.**

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