

## South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on  
Monday, 20 March 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)  
Councillor Brian Milnes (Deputy Leader)

Councillors:	Henry Batchelor	Lead Cabinet Member for Environment
	John Batchelor	Lead Cabinet Member for Housing
	Bill Handley	Lead Cabinet Member for Communities
	Dr. Tumi Hawkins	Lead Cabinet Member for Planning
	Peter McDonald	Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development
	John Williams	Lead Cabinet Member for Resources

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Andrew Francis	Elections and Democratic Services Manager
Peter Maddock	Head of Finance
Jonathan Malton	Cabinet Support Officer
Keira Mbye	Democratic Services Officer
Jeff Membery	Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services
Rory McKenna	Monitoring Officer
Liz Watts	Chief Executive

Officers in attendance remotely for all or part of the meeting:

Anne Ainsworth	Chief Operating Officer
Heather Jones	Assistant Director Planning and Building Quality GCSP & 3CBC
Lesley McFarlane	Development Officer, Health Specialist
Duncan Vessey	Head of Ermine Street Housing

Councillor Anna Bradnam was in attendance in the Council Chamber:

Councillor Dr. Richard Williams was in attendance remotely.:

### 1. **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### 2. **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

### 3. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Cabinet authorised the Leader to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 6 February 2023.

#### **5. Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

#### **6. Issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee**

Councillor Anna Bradnam, Scrutiny and Overview Committee member expressed concerns raised at Scrutiny regarding the data on dry recycling and composting in the Shared Waste and Environment (ES418) report.

It was noted, Councillor Henry Batchelor, Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing would raise the above concerns with Shared Waste and Environment.

#### **7. Quarter 3 Performance Report**

Cabinet received the Performance Report for quarter three of 2022-2023.

Councillor Brian Milnes, Deputy Leader and Lead Cabinet Member for the Environment presented the report and thanked the Senior Policy and Performance Officer for their work.

After a short discussion, Cabinet, reviewed the KPI results and comments on Appendix A. No recommendations for actions were made.

#### **8. Cost of Living - Options to Continue Support**

Cabinet received the Cost of Living Support next steps report.

Councillor Bill Handley, Lead Cabinet Member for Communities introduced the report and thanked the Project Officer for Cost of Living and all officers in the Community Team for their effective delivery of the report and project.

It was noted, the current package of support for the cost-of-living crisis was due to end by the end of March 2023 whilst the cost of living continued to have a major impact on residents, hence the proposals set out in the report to extend a range of support to residents in the district.

Councillor Anna Bradnam noted Scrutiny had been provided with the requested evidence and was happy to support the proposal.

Cabinet **approved** the priorities and funding set out in paragraphs 29 – 36, and £206,000 funding set out in paragraph 38 to continue to support South Cambridgeshire communities during the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

## 9. **Compliance Policy**

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning introduced the report and thanked officers for their work.

It was noted, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City compliance policy had been combined which would improve how breaches were reported and managed.

Members and officers were encouraged to read through the register of enforcement action available through the public access system.

Councillor Henry Batchelor noted the policy had been taken to Planning Committees at both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City and changes had been made to the original draft.

Councillor Anna Bradnam asked if it had been brought to the attention of Joint Development Control Committee, the Assistant Director Planning and Building Quality confirmed it had not been to the Committee but emphasised it had been sent to every member.

It was confirmed that the new policy would be circulated to Parish Councils.

Cabinet **approved** the recommendations that South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted the unified Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Compliance Policy.

## 10. **Confirming Arrangements for the Four-Day Week Trial and Next Steps**

Councillor John Williams, Lead Cabinet Member for Resources introduced the report.

Councillor Anna Bradnam enquired how members communications were being monitored, the Chief Executive, confirmed that phone contacts were monitored through the relevant customer contact centre performance indicators, but explained that emails had not been monitored previously as it was difficult to do so. Officers were required to provide an alternative contact on their out of office emails, to which there had been positive feedback from members.

It was confirmed that, two reports had been presented to each of the Employee and Staffing Committee, and Strategy and Resources Committee in Cambridge City, with a third going to the Strategy and Resources Committee next week.

Cabinet confirmed the arrangements for consideration of the Four-Day Week Trial as set out in the report.

#### 11. **2022/2023 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring (Quarter 3)**

Cabinet received the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring report for quarter three 2022-2023.

Councillor John Williams introduced the report and thanked the officers for keeping in line with the budget and noted the outcome was expected to be in line with the forecast.

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of Council, thanked the officers and the Finance team for their hard work and.

Cabinet

(a) **Noted** the 2022/23 revenue position against the revised revenue budget to date and the action taken to address the underlying issues.

(b) **Noted** the latest Capital Programme 2022/23 position.

#### 12. **Investment Strategy**

Cabinet received the Investment Strategy report.

Councillor John Williams introduced the report and explained the reason for the changes were because of a change to borrowing rules which resulted in the council having to refocus the Investment Strategy to exclude borrowing for commercial purposes alone.

It was noted, the revised Investment Strategy would help continue to deliver growth within the district and ensure the council continued to receive income to support essential front-line services.

Cllr Williams corrected a recent statement he had heard relating to the Council's debt interest repayment levels and noted that the vast majority of these payments related to the Housing Revenue Account. The total cost of borrowing apart from this was approximately £0.5m and Cllr Williams noted that South Cambridgeshire District Council had acted in a prudent and cautious way and made good investments over the years which had enabled them to receive a good income from Ermine Street and commercial investments.

Councillor Bridget Smith thanked Councillor John Williams for the clarification on the misinformation on what was spent on servicing loans.

Councillor Peter McDonald, Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development

commented that the loan to value ratio was good and residents should feel assured.

Councillor Anna Bradnam raised an anomaly in the table 8.4.1 - Debt to Net Service Expenditure (NSE) Ratio on Page 132.

The Head of Finance clarified that the table should read £22.865m and the ratio should read 24.8%.

Scrutiny and Overview requested training for members on Investments and Cabinet confirmed that this would be very useful

Councillor Bridget Smith thanked the Head of Finance and the Chief Operating Officer for the report.

Cabinet **Considered** the report and, **recommended** the updated Investment Strategy attached at **Appendix A** to Council.

**13. South Cambs Limited t/a Ermine Street Housing Business Plan Update 2022/23 - 2031/32**

Cabinet received the South Cambs Limited trading as Ermine Street Housing: Review of Business Plan 2022/2023 to 2031/2032 report.

Councillor John Batchelor introduced the report and noted the social value that Ermine Street added to the organisation, emphasising their work with the Housing Service, vulnerable groups, refugees and asylum seekers.

Cabinet was reminded of the original objective to deliver 500 homes over a 5-year period, 2016/2017 to 2020/2021, noting the achievement in 2021/2022 within the £100 million budget.

Councillor John Williams supported the work of the company to ensure it contributed to the council's housing strategy.

Councillor Bridget Smith thanked the Head of Ermine Street Housing, the team at Ermine Street Housing and Councillor John Batchelor for providing social and environmental value and pride.

Cabinet was satisfied with the request and **noted** their capacity as shareholder, the Ermine Street Business Plan for the period 2022/2023 to 2031/2032.

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**The Meeting ended at  
10.40 a.m.**

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