

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 22 February 2007 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt – Chairman
Councillor JH Stewart – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Dr DR Bard, RE Barrett, JD Batchelor, Mrs PM Bear, NCF Bolitho, RF Bryant, EW Bullman, BR Burling, JP Chatfield, Mrs PS Corney, NS Davies, Mrs SJO Doggett, SM Edwards, Mrs SM Ellington, Mrs A Elsby, Mrs VG Ford, Mrs JM Guest, R Hall, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs EM Heazell, JA Hockney, MP Howell, Mrs CA Hunt, Mrs HF Kember, SGM Kindersley, Mrs JE Lockwood, RMA Manning, RB Martlew, MJ Mason, RM Matthews, DC McCraith, DH Morgan, CR Nightingale, AG Orgee, A Riley, Mrs DP Roberts, NJ Scarr, Mrs HM Smith, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, RT Summerfield, Mrs VM Trueman, Dr SEK van de Ven, Mrs BE Waters, JF Williams and NIC Wright

Officers:	Steve Hampson	Executive Director
	Greg Harlock	Chief Executive
	Richard May	Democratic Services Manager
	Fiona McMillan	Assistant Solicitor

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors AN Berent, TD Bygott, NN Cathcart, Dr SA Harangozo, PT Johnson, JA Quinlan, RJ Turner and TJ Wotherspoon.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 25 January 2007 and 2 February 2007 (Extraordinary Meeting) be confirmed as correct records subject to the following amendments:

25 January 2007

Minute 3 – Refer to Councillor SGM Kindersley (Typographical error).

Minute 3 – Councillors RT Summerfield and Mrs HM Smith were Members of the Community Centre and Grounds Committee not the Countryside, Recreation and Grounds Committee.

Minute 6 – Reference should be to Melbourn not Meldreth Parish Council.

2 February 2007 (Extraordinary Meeting)

Include Councillor A Riley in the list of Members present.

Minute 2, page 18: Deletion of the word 'to' from Resolution (7) (Typographical error).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors JD Batchelor, SGM Kindersley, DC McCraith and AG Orgee declared personal non-prejudicial interests as elected Cambridgeshire County Councillors.

Councillor Mrs HF Kember declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda items 7b (Hostel charges, Housing rents and service charges) and 9 (Corporate Governance Inspection) as a Council tenant. Councillor Mrs Kember advised that she would leave the room during consideration of this item and take no part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor Mrs SM Ellington declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 8 (Swavesey Byeways Rate) on the basis that she was a member of the Swavesey Byeways Committee and resident of Swavesey but did not pay the byeways rate. Notwithstanding this interest, Councillor Mrs Ellington advised she would remain in the room during consideration of this item and take part in the discussions and voting.

Councillor BR Burling declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in Agenda item 8 (Swavesey Byeways Rate) as a ratepayer. Councillor Burling advised that he would remain in the meeting during consideration of this item but would not take part in the vote.

Councillors MP Howell and NJ Scarr declared personal non-prejudicial interests in Agenda Item 7c (Discretionary Compensation Regulations) as members of UNISON. Notwithstanding these interests Councillors Howell and Scarr remained in the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts advised that she would leave the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 7(e) (Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document).

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced the resignation of Councillor EJ Pateman from the Council, thanking Councillor Pateman for his contribution as a district and parish councillor over many years. With the Chairman's permission, Councillors RMA Manning, JD Batchelor, Mrs DSK Spink MBE and DH Morgan made statements on the matter.

The Chairman welcomed Richard Hales, the new Sustainability Officer to the Council.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the Charity Concert taking place on 28 April 2007. The Cambridge and Peterborough Youth Choir would be providing entertainment and Members were encouraged to support this event, the proceeds of which would go to the Children's Hospice at Milton. Tickets would shortly be available from the Chief Executive's Personal Assistant.

4. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from Councillors and the public.

5. PETITIONS

No petitions had been received since the last Council meeting.

6. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

6 (a) Capital and Revenue Estimates, Council Tax and Prudential Indicators (Cabinet, 8 February 2007)

Councillor SM Edwards, Resources, Staffing, Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder, presented 2007-2008 Revenue Estimates, the capital programme up to

the year ending 31 March 2010, and the Council Tax and Prudential Indicators to the Council. In respect of the capital programme he advised that action would be required to address an anticipated 40% reduction in capital receipts by 2010-2011. In respect of revenue estimates for 2007-2008, the General Fund expenditure was lower than expected due to higher interest on balances. The objective for reserves to reach £1.5 million by 2016 was dependent on the achievement of savings arising from the Business Process Reviews and the ongoing effects of fluctuating interest rates. There remained a budgetary deficit of £1 million per year from 2010-2011. Council was advised that the proposed District Council Tax increase of 4.9% was the equivalent to £5 per year on a Band D property.

Following a short debate on the proposals Council **RESOLVED** that:

- (1) the capital programme up to the year ending 31 March 2010 be approved as submitted, which includes the sum of £33.285 million to be spent on affordable housing for the years from 2007/08 to 2009/10;
- (2) the increase in staffing costs due to an approved saving no longer being achieved be reviewed in September 2007;
- (3) the revised revenue estimates for the year 2006/07 and the revenue estimates for 2007/08 be approved as submitted, incorporating the decision made at (2);
- (4) the District Council demand for general expenses for 2007/08 be £5.798 million;
- (5) that the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2007-08 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
 - (a) **£65,897,369** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act (gross expenditure including parish precepts, the Housing Revenue Account and additions to reserves)
 - (b) **£49,334,380** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act (gross income including the Housing Revenue Account and use of reserves)
 - (c) **£16,562,989** being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year (net expenditure) being the district amount of £13,370,580 and the parish precepts of £3,192,409
 - (d) **£7,573,050** being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates and revenue support grant increased/decreased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from/to its collection fund to/from its

general fund in accordance with Section 97(3) (Council Tax transactions) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988

- (e) **£158.57** being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average Council Tax for a band D property for the District including parishes)
- (f) **£3,192,409** being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (parish precepts)
- (g) **£102.26** being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates (average Council Tax for a Band D property for the District excluding parishes), the amounts being for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£ 68.17	£ 79.54	£ 90.90	£ 102.26	£ 124.98	£ 147.71	£ 170.43	£ 204.52

- (h) In accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, the basic amounts of council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a special item relates are shown by adding the amounts for band D in paragraph (g) and **Appendix 'A' (attached)**
- (i) In accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands are shown by adding the amounts for each band in paragraph (g) and **Appendix 'A' (attached)**.
- (j) that it be noted that for the year 2007-08 the Cambridgeshire County Council and the Cambridgeshire Police and Fire Authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands - County Council

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£ 621.66	£ 725.27	£ 828.88	£ 932.49	£ 1,139.71	£ 1,346.93	£ 1,554.15	£ 1,864.98

Valuation Bands - Police Authority

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£ 99.60	£ 116.20	£ 132.80	£ 149.40	£ 182.60	£ 215.80	£ 249.00	£ 298.80

Valuation Bands – Fire Authority

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£ 34.92	£ 40.74	£ 46.56	£ 52.38	£ 64.02	£ 75.66	£ 87.30	£ 104.76

and

- (k) that the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts set out in **Appendix 'B' (attached)** as the amounts of council tax for the year 2007-08 for each of the categories of dwellings shown in **Appendix 'B' (attached)**.

- (6) The prudential indicators in Part 3 of the Cabinet report be approved.

6 (b) Hostel Charges, Housing Rents and Service Charges (Cabinet, 8 February 2007)

Councillor Mrs HF Kember left the meeting during consideration of this item and took no part in the discussions and voting, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest at the start of the meeting (See Minute 3 above).

Council **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) from the first week in April 2007, rents be increased by an average of 5%, based on an inflationary increase of 4.1%, plus or minus a maximum of £0.65 towards the phasing in of rent restructuring;
- (b) permission be granted to Hereward Housing to increase hostel rents by £11.06 per week, in addition to 4.1% for inflation, from April 2007; and
- (c) charges for services and facilities be increased as outlined in the following table:

Service or facility	Current charge p.w.	Proposed Charge p.w.	Increase
	£	£	% (£)
Sheltered Housing Charges			
<i>Tenants</i>			
- <i>support element</i>			
- those in residence prior to 01/04/2003	11.04	12.37	12.0 (1.33)
- Other tenants	14.13	14.48	2.5 (0.35)
- Communal Facilities	6.04	6.29	4.1 (0.25)
Equity Shareholders			
<i>Schemes with Communal Facilities</i>			
- Those in residence prior to 01/04/2003	20.58	22.16	7.7 (1.58)
- Other shareholders	23.67	24.27	2.5 (0.60)

- schemes without communal facilities			
- those in residence prior to 01/04/03	14.54 current p.w.	15.87 proposed p.w.	Increase 9.3% (£1.33)
- other shareholders	17.63	17.98	2.0 (0.35)
Alarm System Service Charges			
Individual alarms	3.28	3.36	2.5 (0.08)
- Those not in receipt of benefit			
- where the Council supplies the alarm	3.61	3.70	2.5 (0.09)
- where the user supplies the alarm	2.92	2.99	2.5 (0.07)
- Those in receipt of benefit			
- Where the Council supplies the alarm	2.30	2.70	17.4 (0.40)
- Where the user supplies the alarm	1.63	2.00	22.7 (0.37)
Group alarms	3.28	3.36	2.5 (0.08)
Garage rents			
Garages rented to a Council tenant or leaseholder (NB In excess of garages will be subject to VAT)	6.11	6.36	4.1 (0.25)
Other garages (subject to VAT)	8.43	8.78	4.1 (0.35)

6 (c) Discretionary Compensation Regulations (Cabinet, 8 February 2007)

Council **RESOLVED** that the following discretionary compensation policy be adopted:

- (a) **General policy**
- (i) The revised policy should seek to minimise any adverse impact on the terms and conditions of employment for Council employees.
 - (ii) The Council should continue not to seek to use the LGPS augmentation provisions due to the costs and complexities this would entail.
 - (iii) The revised policy should be applied consistently to all, regardless of age.
 - (iv) The revised policy should be reviewed after six months of operation in order to manage any potential risks and issues arising.
- (b) **Transitional protection**
- (i) The Council should continue to use the discretions it currently applies under the 2000 regulations to award Compensatory Added Years (CAY) for any protected employees made redundant / subject to Premature Retirement in the Interest of the Efficient Exercise of the Authority's Functions (PRIIEAF) before 1 April 2007
- (c) **Redundancy policy**
- (i) Redundancy should remain calculated on actual week's pay, rather than statutory redundancy provisions.
 - (ii) All local government service, even if broken, should continue to count for the purposes of redundancy payment calculations; however, no period of employment should count twice, i.e., where the employee concerned has previously received compensation, only the remaining, un-compensated, service should be counted;
 - (iii) The revised redundancy policy for all employees should be to award an overall lump sum of 1 1/2 times the redundancy payment to employees with two or more years' continuous employment within local government

(or a public sector company recognised by Modification Order), regardless of their membership of the LGPS, with effect from 1 April 2007. (Note: The overall lump sum so awarded would include the statutory redundancy payment due.)

(d) **PRIEEAF policy**

- (i) The revised PRIEEAF policy for the Council should be a flexible approach to award a lump sum of up to 104 weeks' pay.

6 (d) Joint Planning Services Arrangement (Cabinet, 8 February 2007)

Council **RESOLVED** that, having due consideration for sections 19 (Discharge of functions of and by another local authority) and 20 (Joint exercise of functions) of the Local Government Act 2000:

- (a) The joint working arrangements set out in Appendices 1-3 of the report, including the creation of the Joint Strategic growth Implementation Committee, Northstowe Development Control Committee and Fringe Sites Development Control Committee, be approved subject to agreement of detailed operational arrangements and adequate financial resources being made available by the Minister;
- (b) Subject to the relevant provisions being made, the following appointments to the joint committees be made,
- (i) Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee – 2 Members of the Conservative Group and 1 Member of the Liberal Democrat Group, including the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder
- (ii) Northstowe Development Control Committee – 6 Councillors, in accordance with the rules of political balance; and
- (iii) Fringe Sites Development Control Committee – 6 Councillors, in accordance with the rules of political balance;
- (c) Subject to the relevant provisions being made, that the planning powers listed in Annex 1 to Appendix 1e of the report, be delegated to the joint development control committees, with the Constitution being amended accordingly, subject to a detailed scheme of delegation to Officers being prepared for subsequent approval by Council; and
- (d) The Chief Executive be authorised to make any further minor or consequential amendments to the scheme as may be from time to time required.

The voting on this Resolution was recorded as follows:

FOR: (39)

Dr DR Bard	RE Barrett	JD Batchelor
Mrs PM Bear	NCF Bolitho	RF Bryant
EW Bullman	BR Burling	Mrs PS Corney
NS Davies	SM Edwards	Mrs SM Ellington
Mrs A Elsby	Mrs VG Ford	Mrs JM Guest
R Hall	Mrs EM Heazell	JA Hockney
MP Howell	Mrs CA Hunt	Mrs HF Kember
SGM Kindersley	Mrs JE Lockwood	RMA Manning
RB Martlew	RM Matthews	DC McCraith
DH Morgan	CR Nightingale	AG Orgee
A Riley	Mrs HM Smith	Mrs DSK Spink MBE
JH Stewart	RT Summerfield	Dr SEK van de Ven
Mrs BE Waters	JF Williams	NIC Wright

AGAINST: (4)

Mrs SJO Doggett
NJ Scarr

Mrs SA Hatton

Mrs DP Roberts

ABSTAINED: (2)

JP Chatfield

MJ Mason

6 (e) Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document (GTDPD) (GTDPD Member Reference Group, 15 February 2007)

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Dr DR Bard, Planning and Economic Development Holder, presented the recommendations of the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document Member Reference Group to Council. Details of minor amendments to Appendices 2-4 agreed by the working party were tabled.

Councillor A Riley proposed and Councillor SM Edwards seconded an amendment deleting 'wherever possible' from policies GT13, 14, 15C, 16A and 17A. Councillor SM Edwards raised further concerns regarding the following issues:

- the need to establish a maximum number of pitches per site;
- consideration of the density of adjoining settlements;
- consideration of pitch size;
- changes to the scoring matrix since the reference group meetings.

In response to these concerns Council was advised that the issues raised would be picked up through the delegation of authority to the Corporate Manager for Planning and Sustainable Communities and to the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder to make minor and material changes.

Councillor A Riley withdrew his amendment.

Council **RESOLVED** that, subject to the alterations tabled at the meeting,

- (a) The responses to representations on the GTDPD Issues and Options 1 Report and the Sustainability Appraisal at Appendix 3 be agreed.
- (b) The list of Preferred Options at Appendix 2 be approved in order for stage 2, the site options search to begin.
- (c) The actions put forward in Appendix 1 and summarised in Appendix 2 be addressed and taken forward into stage 2 of the Issues and Options process (Site options selection).
- (d) The three-tier scoring matrix at Appendix 4 be used in the next stage of the GTDPD Issues and Options process.
- (e) Authority be delegated to the Corporate Manager for Planning and Sustainable Communities, to make any minor editing changes necessary to the responses as set out in Appendices 1 and 3 with any which involve a material change being delegated to the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder.

7. SWAVESEY BYEWAYS RATE

Council **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the current level of bye-way maintenance be maintained for the period 2007/08; and
- (b) a rate of 90 pence be levied to fund the required maintenance for the period 2007-2008.

8. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE INSPECTION (CGI) - TOWARDS AN IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Councillor RMA Manning, Leader of the Council, presented recommendations to the Council setting out proposed next steps in responding to the CGI report and requesting additional resources for this purpose.

Council supported the recommendations, resolving further that the Independent Remuneration Panel be requested to consider the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Leader of the Opposition.

Council **RESOLVED**, with no votes against that:

- (a) The Council's acceptance of the findings and conclusions of the CGI report, and its determination to address the recommendations of the report as a matter of urgency, be confirmed.
- (b) That the establishment of an Improvement Board with terms of reference and membership set out in the Appendix to the report be approved.
- (c) That Cabinet be requested to take the lead in the development and delivery of an Improvement Plan (subject to approval of the Plan by Council) and to recognize the valuable contribution that all Members can make to the improvement process and involve them accordingly.
- (d) The Transformation Committee be disbanded and that its powers be transferred to the Cabinet to enable a co-ordinated approach to be taken to the implementation of the Transformation Project and Improvement Plan.
- (e) That the addition of up to £300,000 per annum from 2007/08 be approved (to be divided appropriately between the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account) for posts to strengthen the Council's capacity to respond to the CGI recommendations, with the expenditure being financed initially by the use of reserves and reviewed as part of the next revision of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- (f) That Cabinet be requested to place a standard item on the agenda for all its meetings on the Improvement Plan, ensure a regular briefing on progress to all Members and to identify areas where the Scrutiny and Overview Committee can contribute to the process.
- (g) That the support so far given to the Council by external agencies be welcomed and that the Chief Executive be requested to continue to work with partners to attract further capacity to support the improvement programme.
- (h) That the Independent Remuneration Panel be requested to consider the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Leader of the Opposition.

9. APPOINTMENT TO VACANCY ON THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Council received the nomination of the Independent Group to appoint Councillor Mrs DP Roberts to fill the vacancy on the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

In light of the recent Standards Board for England case and Corporate Governance Inspection, Councillor RMA Manning, Leader of the Council, called upon Councillor Mrs Roberts not to accept the nomination as to do so would be detrimental to the Council's reputation at the present time. Notwithstanding this request, Councillor Mrs Roberts replied that she intended to accept her group's nomination.

10. UPDATES FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor RB Martlew advised that he had attended the last meeting of the Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) Executive. The organization had recently moved into new

accommodation incorporating an advice hub together with capacity for a variety of other advisory and support organisations. The CAB welcomed the Council's commitment to funding on a 3-year basis.

Councillor RE Barrett advised that he had attended the last meeting of the County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee. He reported that principal services at Hinchinbrooke Hospital were continuing but that there would be significant changes. The trust retained a sizeable deficit.

Councillor R Hall advised that he had attended the last meeting of the County Archives and Local Studies Group. He reported that Huntingdon Library would open in 2008, whilst the Cambridgeshire Collection was available at the Milton Road library and also via Cottenham Library and the Norfolk Record Office. It was hoped that the Central Library in Cambridge would reopen in 2008.

Councillor MJ Mason advised that he had attended the last meeting of the Waterbeach Internal Drainage Board at which technical issues in respect of the Cambridge Lakes planning application had been discussed.

Councillor NIC Wright advised that he had attended the last meeting of the Swavesey Internal Drainage Board at which concerns were expressed in response to a proposal by Anglian Water to use Webb's Hole sluice for the Northstowe development. In particular, there were serious problems with the operation of this sluice.

Councillor Dr SEK van de Ven advised members that, at a recent meeting of the Royston CAB, it had been revealed that South Cambridgeshire District Councillors were using the resource far less than their counterparts in North Hertfordshire. Councillor Dr van de Ven reminded Members that the CAB was a valuable resource in helping to deal with enquiries from residents.

11. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS

Council noted the list of engagements attended by the Chairman since the last meeting.

The Meeting ended at 5.00 p.m.
