

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday, 14 April 2011 at 2.00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Charles Nightingale – Chairman  
Councillor Tony Orgee – Vice-Chairman

**Councillors:** Frances Amrani, David Bard, Val Barrett, John Batchelor, Trisha Bear, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Jonathan Chatfield, Pippa Corney, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Roger Hall, Steve Harangozo, Lynda Harford, Sally Hatton, Liz Heazell, Mark Hersom, James Hockney, Mark Howell, Clayton Hudson, Mrs PE Jarvis, Sebastian Kindersley, Janet Lockwood, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mike Mason, Raymond Matthews, David McCraith, Cicely Murfitt, Alex Riley, Deborah Roberts, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Surinder Soond, Jim Stewart, Peter Topping, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, John F Williams, John G Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

**Officers:**

Holly Adams	Democratic Services Team Leader
Alex Colyer	Executive Director, Corporate Services
Susan Gardner Craig	Human Resources Manager
Steve Hampson	Executive Director, Operational Services
Jean Hunter	Chief Executive
Fiona McMillan	Legal & Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Richard Barrett, David Bird, Douglas de Lacey, Jaime Dipple, Jose Hales, Tumi Hawkins, Peter Johnson, Lorraine Morgan, Neil Scarr and Edd Stonham.

### **PRESENTATION**

The Chairman presented to Councillor Mark Howell, Equality and Diversity Champion, the certificate recognising the Council's attainment of the Achieving Level of the Equality Framework for Local Government following a successful peer challenge organised by Local Government Improvement and Development and carried out during October 2010. Councillor Howell paid tribute to the efforts made by members and officers to achieve the award.

### **92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following interests were declared:  
Councillor John Batchelor

Personal, non-prejudicial interest in items 94, Announcements, and 100, Questions on Joint Meetings, as a member of the Cambridgeshire Police Authority, whose Neighbourhood Panels were mentioned. He remained in the meeting room during the announcements.

Councillors David Bard, Tom Bygott, Liz Heazell, Charlie Nightingale, Ben Shelton and John F Williams

Personal, non-prejudicial interests in item 98, Joint Development Control Committees: Amendments to Terms of Reference, as members of the Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control Committee. They remained in the meeting room and participated in the

Councillors Brian Burling, Simon Edwards, Lynda Harford, David McCraith, Hazel Smith and Tim Wotherspoon	debate and vote. Personal, non-prejudicial interests in item 98, Joint Development Control Committees: Amendments to Terms of Reference, as members of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee. They remained in the meeting room and participated in the debate and vote.
Councillor Tony Orgee	Personal, non-prejudicial interests in item 98, Joint Development Control Committees: Amendments to Terms of Reference, as a Cambridgeshire County Council member of the Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control Committee. He remained in the meeting room and participated in the debate and vote.
Councillors Brian Burling, Simon Edwards, Lynda Harford, David McCraith, Hazel Smith and Tim Wotherspoon	Personal, non-prejudicial interests in item 103(a), Motion standing in the names of Councillor Sebastian Kindersley and Jonathan Chatfield, as members of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee: each member made it clear that any views expressed during the debate would not have any bearing on how they would determine any future planning application, as they would keep an open mind and give full consideration to all the issues before them at the time before reaching any decision. They remained in the meeting room and participated in the debate and vote.
Councillors Frances Amrani, David Bard, Lynda Harford, James Hockney and Mark Howell	Personal, non-prejudicial interests in item 106, Job Evaluation Project, as members of unions. They remained in the meeting room and participated in the debate and vote.
Councillor Sebastian Kindersley	Personal, non-prejudicial interest in any planning and development issues in South Cambridgeshire and the Cambridge City Fringes. He remained in the room and participated in debates and votes throughout the meeting.

### 93. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the 24 February 2011 meeting as a correct record.

### 94. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman recognised the contribution of retiring councillors David Bird, Jaime Dipple, Lorraine Morgan and John F Williams and wished them well in the future. Councillor John F Williams made a farewell speech to members and officers, saying that he would look back fondly on his time on the Council. The Chairman wished good luck

to those members facing elections in May.

Council applauded the achievements of Mr Edward Dodson of Chesterton, who had raised nearly £4,000 for a motor neuron disease charity in tribute to former Councillor Janice Guest.

The Leader updated members on recent meetings he, the Chief Executive and other members of the Cabinet had had with various bodies and government ministers, drawing particular attention to the new Communities and Local Government consultation on planning for Traveller sites.

**95. PETITIONS**

None received.

**96. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**96 (a) Member Development Strategy 2011-2014 (Environmental Services Portfolio Holder, 10 March 2011)**

Councillor Sue Ellington, Champion for Member Development, seconded by Councillor Ray Manning, commended the revised Member Development Strategy to Council. She clarified that members should undertake to help other councillors to improve their performance, and highlighted the increased attendance rates for training and development events. Members felt that having training delivered internally ensured that presentations and materials were directly relevant to the District.

Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the Member Development Strategy 2011-14.

**96 (b) Risk Management Strategy and Strategic Risk Register 2011/12 (Corporate Governance Committee, 28 March 2011 and Northstowe Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Peter Topping, Corporate Governance Committee Chairman, seconded by Councillor Tim Wotherspoon, lead member for Risk Management, commended the Risk Management Strategy and Strategic Risk Register 2011/12. Councillor Topping explained that the Corporate Governance Committee had declined to accept advice from internal auditors which would have increased the complexity of the Strategic Risk Register.

Council **RESOLVED** to endorse the Risk Management Strategy and to approve the Strategic Risk Register 2011/12.

**96 (c) Minor Amendments to Executive Procedure Rules (Part 4) (Constitution Review Working Party, 24 March 2011)**

Councillor Charlie Nightingale, Constitution Review Working Party Chairman, moved the proposal, seconded by Councillor Jim Stewart, and Council **RESOLVED** to adopt minor amendments to Executive Procedure Rules 1.6 (a) and (b) and 3.1 to enable the Leader to make decisions on behalf of a Portfolio Holder in situations where there could be a perceived conflict of interests on the part of the Portfolio Holder.

**96 (d) Definitions of Key Decisions (Constitution Review Working Party, 24 March 2011)**

Councillor Charlie Nightingale, Constitution Review Working Party Chairman, moved the proposal, seconded by Councillor Jim Stewart. The Legal and Democratic Services

Manager undertook to confirm whether or not departure planning applications would constitute key decisions under the new definitions.

Council **RESOLVED** to include the following additional definitions of key decisions in Part 1 of the Council's Constitution, Definitions:

- Decisions which comprise or include the making, approval or publication of a draft or final scheme which may require, either directly or in the event of objections, the approval of a Minister of the Crown;
- Decisions which require the passage of local legislation.

**96 (e) Resourcing additional work on the Local Development Framework (Cabinet, 31 March 2011)**

The New Communities team had been reduced in the previous year due to the decrease in business as a result of the economic downturn, and Councillor David Bard, New Communities Portfolio Holder, proposed that it was now time to expand the team temporarily in response to resurgence in business. The Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) was due to be refreshed and the separate documents of the previous LDF would be combined into one, requiring only one Examination in Public and reducing the fees to be paid to the Planning Inspectorate. The Portfolio Holder emphasised that these new posts would be part of the Council's establishment and would not be consultants. Councillor Nick Wright seconded the proposal.

Council **RESOLVED** that two fixed-term contract appointments be made to the Planning Policy team for a period of 2 years to be funded from efficiency and other savings of £158,500 from within the Planning Policy budget over the next three years and £30,255 from general reserves (on the assumption that the appointments be made to the mid-point pay scales for the two posts).

**97. ABOLITION OF CAMBRIDGE CITY FRINGES JOINT COMMITTEE (S29)**

Councillor David Bard, New Communities Portfolio Holder, moved the proposal, seconded by Councillor Ray Manning. The previous Government had provided nearly £750,000 to the District, City and County Councils for joint planning work and associated officer posts, one of the requirements for which was the establishment of this Joint Committee. The funding having now been withdrawn, it was felt by all joint partners that to continue the Committee would be an unnecessary drain on resources. Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council had already resolved to abolish the Joint Committee.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of the Cambridge City Fringes Joint Committee and to request the Secretary of State to abolish the said Joint Committee.

**98. JOINT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEES (CAMBRIDGE FRINGES AND NORTHSTOWE): AMENDMENTS TO TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Councillor David Bard moved the proposal, seconded by Councillor Nick Wright, which would adopt Memoranda of Understanding between the partners on the two Joint Development Control Committees to set out the scope of responsibilities for the lead planning officers following the retirement of the Joint Director of Planning on 31 March 2011. In response to requests from members, the Chief Executive undertook to speak to her counterparts at the other local authorities about training arrangements for members of the Joint Development Control Committees.

Council **RESOLVED** to:

- (a) approve the draft Memorandum of Understanding between South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council regarding the provision of planning advice to Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control;
- (b) approve the draft Memorandum of Understanding between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council regarding the provision of planning advice to the Northstowe Joint Development Control.

## 99. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION - ARTICLE 9 - THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Councillor Tony Orgee, seconded by Councillor Cicely Murfitt, moved the proposal which reflected forthcoming retirements of existing parish council representatives on the Standards Committee. Given the uncertainty about the future of the standards regime and the review of the Committee's composition, it was felt that the amendment would enable the Standards Committee to continue to operate.

Council paid special tribute to Bob Bryant, who would be retiring from Orwell Parish Council and from the Standards Committee, and the Chairman undertook to thank Mr Bryant on behalf of the District Council for his dedication to serving his community.

Council **RESOLVED** to amend article 9.02 of the Constitution as follows, to enable the Standards Committee to remain quorate:

### 9.02 Composition

- (a) **Membership.** The Standards Committee will be composed of:
  - ...
  - at least 3 2 members of parish councils in the Council's area; (Parish Members).

## 100. QUESTIONS ON JOINT MEETINGS

### ***South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership***

The next meeting was on 26 April at which the Partnership would consider amendments to Neighbourhood Panel arrangements.

### ***Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)***

The LSP was pleased to receive the reward grant from the government and was now addressing its distribution amongst the councils. There had been questions raised about the future of the LSP, but the voluntary sector representatives had been particularly keen for it to continue. The Leader recognised the superb parish plan presented to the LSP by residents of Horningsea.

### ***Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes***

The only South Cambridgeshire item on recent agendas concerned a farm gate at Hauxton Road.

## 101. UPDATES FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Mike Mason, one the Council's representatives on Internal Drainage Boards (IDB), undertook to provide a written report to Council on the impact on waterways of a recent Planning Committee decision about photovoltaic installations at Chittering. Councillor James Hockney, local member for Chittering, explained that, although consultation had been undertaken inadvertently with the IDB for a different area, the same resident engineer worked for both IDBs and had been able to respond on behalf of

the IDB covering Chittering.

## **102. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

### **102 (a) From Cllr James Hockney to the Leader of the Council**

At the start of the item Councillor Lynda Harford raised a point of order about Standing Order 11.6, which allowed the Chairman to reject a question which was substantially the same as a question which had been put to Council in the past six months, on the grounds that the proposed question was similar to one she had asked at the February 2011 Council meeting. The Legal and Democratic Services Manager, as proper officer advising the Chairman, explained that the question referred to was not judged to be sufficiently similar and that the Chairman's ruling was final. The Chairman confirmed that he would allow the question to be put.

Councillor James Hockney explained that his question had not been directed at any one member but sought to establish the Council's current position and future plans. He asked the Leader, "There have been statements by some Cllrs and also recent stories in the Press that the delayed Gypsy and Traveller Plan is causing this Council to lose Planning Appeals. It is also claimed that it will severely weaken the Council's ability to prevent further unauthorised sites. Could the Leader comment on this?"

The Leader explained that he had wanted to clarify the situation, knowing that it was of concern to a number of villages, his own included, and referred the question to Councillor David Bard, New Communities Portfolio Holder. Councillor Bard assured members that the Council was not disadvantaged by the delayed Plan. He referred to the new Communities and Local Government consultation paper on planning for Traveller sites, which did not appear to be a significant change from Planning Circular 1/2006, and assured members that the Council would make strong representations, encouraging members to bring their views forward to help form the Council's response.

### **102 (b) From Cllr Peter Topping to the Leader of the Council**

Concerns having been raised about the wording of the original question, Councillor Peter Topping, with the permission of the Chairman, asked a revised question, "Could the Leader comment on the claim made by the Leader of the Opposition in the *Cambridge News* that, in reference to what a resident described as a 'council tax shambles', the mistake had been caused by officers having been 'decimated' by staff cuts? How many posts have been lost and is he confident that the present high collection rate will be sustained?"

The Leader expressed his concerns about the implications in the article that the Council was failing in its collection rates, and referred the question to Councillor Simon Edwards, Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder. Councillor Edwards explained that the error had arisen when the printers had not changed the template from the previous year, accepted that the mistake should have been noticed, and emphasised that it was an error. He disagreed that the department had been 'decimated', having been reduced by only one post, and commended the work of the Revenues and Benefits teams with collection rates among the highest in the country. He was confident that these rates would be sustained, noting that the department had continued to improve year-on-year despite already being close to 100%.

### **102 (c) From Cllr Frances Amrani to the Leader of the Council**

Councillor Frances Amrani asked, "What kind of consultation with Parish Councils has

taken place (or is planned) with regard to the removal of existing glass, carton and can banks and the introduction of alternative banks for different materials?" She explained that her question had arisen from discussions with her Parish Council.

The Leader referred the question to Councillor Sue Ellington, Environmental Services Portfolio Holder, who explained that all parish councils had been e-mailed in February 2011 with details of the review, and that many had been happy with the proposals for the removal. She confirmed that all parish councils had been contacted.

Councillor Amrani asked, as her supplementary question, whether funding would be available for removal of the concrete bases beneath the recycling banks. Councillor Ellington undertook to supply all members with a written response, and to discuss the matter with the parish councils concerned.

### **103. NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **103 (a) Standing in the names of Councillors Sebastian Kindersley and Jonathan Chatfield**

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley, seconded by Councillor Jonathan Chatfield, moved that "Council note the cancellation of the A14 project by Government with no alternative plan in place and further notes Northstowe cannot progress until the A14 issue is resolved. With no prospect of this happening in the foreseeable future and in the interest of value for money for South Cambridgeshire citizens this Council resolves to suspend any further use of Council resources in relation to Northstowe; such resources to be redirected to core tasks of the Council such as planning and strategic housing development." Councillor Kindersley noted that the lack of development progress at Northstowe was included in the Strategic Risk Register. Councillor Chatfield felt that the absence of the A14 upgrades and the delay to the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway meant that further resources dedicated to Northstowe would not be money well spent and should be reallocated elsewhere.

Councillors debated the motion at length, noting that:

- The adopted Northstowe Area Action Plan did not require the A14 upgrade before the trigger point of 2,000 homes;
- Dwellings at Northstowe would qualify for New Homes Bonus;
- The need for new homes in South Cambridgeshire continued even though housing targets had been removed;
- Suspension of work at Northstowe would lead to developers applying to re-open other sites such as Hanley Grange;
- The Northstowe developers were proposing to review the Masterplan: if the Council withdrew from further work, it would lose its chance to have input and to influence the Masterplan;
- The parish councils of the villages most affected by the Northstowe development had not been consulted about the motion and were very concerned that, if it were approved, they would lose their opportunities for input through the Northstowe Planning Forum;
- The resources involved had been approximately £15,000 per year;
- The motion asked for a suspension of further use of Council resources for Northstowe, not a cancellation.

Councillor Kindersley explained that his motion was intended to send a strong message to the Government, hopefully with the support of the developers and the local parish councils, that plans for the full A14 upgrade must be reinstated, and to the County Council that the Guided Busway must open.

At the request of more than six councillors a recorded vote was held and, with 14 in favour, 29 against and 2 abstentions the motion to suspend any further use of Council resources in relation to Northstowe was declared **LOST**.

Voting was as follows:

**For the motion (14)**

Cllr Frances Amrani	Cllr Mark Hersom	Cllr Hazel Smith
Cllr John Batchelor	Cllr Pauline Jarvis	Cllr Surinder Soond
Cllr Jonathan Chatfield	Cllr Sebastian Kindersley	Cllr Jim Stewart
Cllr Steve Harangozo	Cllr Janet Lockwood	Cllr John F Williams
Cllr Liz Heazell	Cllr Bridget Smith	

**Against the motion (29)**

Cllr David Bard	Cllr Roger Hall	Cllr Tony Orgee
Cllr Valerie Barrett	Cllr Sally Hatton	Cllr Alex Riley
Cllr Trisha Bear	Cllr James Hockney	Cllr Deborah Roberts
Cllr Francis Burkitt	Cllr Mark Howell	Cllr Ben Shelton
Cllr Brian Burling	Cllr Clayton Hudson	Cllr Peter Topping
Cllr Tom Bygott	Cllr Mervyn Loynes	Cllr Robert Turner
Cllr Nigel Cathcart	Cllr Ray Manning	Cllr Bunty Waters
Cllr Pippa Corney	Cllr Raymond Matthews	Cllr Tim Wotherspoon
Cllr Simon Edwards	Cllr David McCraith	Cllr Nick Wright
Cllr Sue Ellington	Cllr Charlie Nightingale	

**Abstain (2)**

Cllr Lynda Harford	Cllr Mike Mason
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**103 (b) Standing in the name of Councillor Liz Heazell**

Councillor Liz Heazell **WITHDREW** her motion as the Housing Portfolio Holder would be receiving at his next meeting a report on the process for Tenant Participation Group elections and the possible establishment of a Housing Management Board.

**104. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS**

The Chairman's engagements were **NOTED**.

**105. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

On the proposal of Councillor Mark Howell, seconded by Councillor Ray Manning, Council **RESOLVED** to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting during the consideration of the following item 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 paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

**106. JOB EVALUATION PROJECT**

*Present in the meeting room during discussion of this item were:*

*Councillors Frances Amrani, David Bard, Val Barrett, John Batchelor, Trisha Bear, Francis Burkitt, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Pippa Corney, Simon Edwards, Roger Hall, Lynda Harford, Sally Hatton, Liz Heazell, Mark Hersom, James Hockney, Mark Howell, Clayton Hudson, Pauline Jarvis, Sebastian Kindersley, Janet Lockwood, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mike Mason, Raymond Matthews, David McCraith, Cicely Murfitt, Charlie*



*Nightingale, Alex Riley, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Jim Stewart, Peter Topping, Bunty Waters, John F Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright; and Holly Adams, Democratic Services Team Leader; Alex Colyer, Executive Director (Corporate Services); Susan Gardner Craig, Human Resources Manager; Steve Hampson, Executive Director (Operational Services); Jean Hunter, Chief Executive; and Fiona McMillan, Legal and Democratic Services Manager.*

Councillor Simon Edwards, Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder, described the background to the Job Evaluation Project, which the Council had to undertake in response to changing legislation.

With no members voting against, Council **RESOLVED** to:

- (a) note the report;
- (b) approve the Single Status Agreement; and
- (c) authorise the Executive Director (Corporate Services) to finalise the clauses in relation to Annual leave, Task & Finish and Standby arrangements for insertion into the Single Status Agreement.

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**The Meeting ended at 5.12 p.m.**

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