

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Friday, 4 October 2013 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Ray Manning (Leader of the Council)
Councillor Simon Edwards (Deputy Leader of the Council, Finance and Staffing
Portfolio Holder, Vice-Chairman of Employment Committee)

Councillors:	Pippa Corney	Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder
	Mark Howell	Housing Portfolio Holder
	Mick Martin	Environmental Services Portfolio Holder
	David Whiteman-Downes	Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	Tim Wotherspoon	Northstowe Portfolio Holder
	Nick Wright	Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Alex Colyer	Executive Director, Corporate Services
Jean Hunter	Chief Executive
Fiona McMillan	Legal & Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer
Graham Aisthorpe-Watts	Democratic Services Team Leader
Jonathan Dixon	Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Keith Miles	Planning Policy Manager
Jo Mills	Planning and New Communities Director

Councillors David Bard, Val Barrett, Kevin Cuffley, Alison Elcox, Sue Ellington, Roger Hall, Tumi Hawkins, Janet Lockwood, Alex Riley, Hazel Smith and Douglas de Lacey were in attendance, by invitation.

Councillor Jason Ablewhite (Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council) and Graham Hughes (Director of Strategy and Development at Cambridgeshire County Council) were also in attendance.

Procedural Items

30. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 12 September 2013, were **AGREED** as a correct record and signed by the Leader of the Council, subject to the deletion of the words 'had the Scheme not been introduced' in the last sentence of the second paragraph under minute number 18.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Nick Wright declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in minute number 34 as the proposed route of the A14 went through farmland that he owned. Councillor Wright stated that he would address Cabinet as the local ward member for this item and leave the meeting room before any decision was made. It was noted that Councillor Wright had received a dispensation from the Council's Monitoring Officer to this effect.

32. ANNOUNCEMENTS

No announcements were made.

33. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

34. A14 IMPROVEMENTS: RESPONSE TO HIGHWAYS AGENCY CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to a report which provided Cabinet with an opportunity to agree the Council's response to the Highways Agency's consultation on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme.

It was noted that the Highways Agency had carried out appraisals of options and developed proposals for the Huntingdon to Cambridge improvement scheme. The Agency was consulting on the scheme until 13 October 2013 and intended to make a Preferred Route announcement in late 2013, followed by further public consultation. The project had been classified by the Planning Act 2008 as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and would require a Development Consent Order application, anticipated in late 2014, with construction to commence in 2016. The scheme was estimated to take three to four years to complete.

The proposed Scheme was fundamentally the same as the abandoned 2010 scheme, with some principle differences as outlined in paragraph 12 of the report. It comprised the following four key elements as set out in the report at paragraph 14: -

- Huntingdon Southern Bypass (A1 to Swavesey);
- A14 online improvement;
- Girton Interchange;
- Cambridge Northern Bypass.

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, presented the report and invited Members to consider the Council's recommended response to the consultation, emphasising that this report did not address any financial agreements as these would be considered separately by Cabinet at a later stage.

Councillor Mark Howell took this opportunity to oppose the introduction of a junction on the A1198 to the new A14 as he reported that the affected Parish Councils had objected to this proposal. He also referred to a similar consultation in 2005 when the Council recommended that a junction should not be introduced in this area. Councillor Nick Wright, speaking as local member, stated that the introduction of a major junction at St Ives, whilst retaining a junction at Swavesey, could facilitate this as well as maintain traffic flow. As a result of doing this the cost of the Scheme may also reduce as the route could be realigned to save four flyovers and follow the route of the old road for longer, meaning less de-trunking would be necessary.

Councillor Mick Martin was concerned about recommending major changes to the proposal at this stage of the process. He felt it was important that the scheme was delivered sooner rather than later and any changes at this stage could cause delays and may even add to its overall cost. Councillor Martin reflected on a recent briefing with the Highways Agency where he said it was clear that the Agency had significantly considered the options available. The proposal had been scheduled to reflect the best flow of traffic, including forecasts from the Northstowe development.

Councillor Simon Edwards was completely against the principle of tolling and local contributions for a national road, but acknowledged the unique circumstances of the A14 in this instance and the necessity for tolling and local contributions to ensure that the scheme went ahead. He added, however, that local residents in those districts where the Council had contributed towards the cost of the scheme should be exempt from tolling or have the opportunity to purchase a season ticket at marginal cost, excluding locally registered heavy goods vehicles. Councillor Edwards also suggested that the toll should be capped and lifted once the scheme had been paid for.

Councillor Nick Wright outlined the importance of including footways, cycleways and bridleways as part of the improvement scheme and referred to an email from Councillor Francis Burkitt requesting the Highways Agency paid particular attention to: -

- the provision of cyclepaths past and through Girton Interchange to improve current links and provide new links;
- the historic footpaths between Coton/Madingley and Girton, to investigate whether modifications could be made to link them back up more closely and safely.

Cabinet supported these comments, but agreed that they should apply to the whole improvement scheme rather than the specific sites referred to.

The Leader invited other Members in attendance to address Cabinet on the Council's response to the consultation, further to which the following points were discussed and noted: -

- concern should be expressed over the capacity of the local road if it was only single carriageway and inadequate facilities were provided for cyclists;
- reference to the use of non-motorised users should be made with regard to the Histon and Milton junctions;
- the wording 'in locations such as Orchard Park' in the second bullet point of paragraph 39 in the report should be replaced with 'from the Girton Interchange to Milton';
- the Highways Agency should consider the introduction of 50mph speed limits at specific sections of the A14, particularly on the Cambridge Northern Bypass near existing residential areas;
- the junction at Bar Hill would become a major junction as part of the proposed scheme, creating significant congestion in the area and adding to the traffic problems that currently exist there;
- the west and south links of the roundabout at the Milton junction should be increased to three lanes, making them consistent with other link roads and improve traffic flow;
- the Council's response should make reference to the North West Cambridge University site and major development sites identified in the Local Plan.

(Further to his declaration of interest as set out in minute number 31, Councillor Nick Wright left the meeting at this stage of proceedings).

Cabinet **AGREED** the following as a response to the Highways Agency's consultation in relation to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme, with the exact wording to be agreed by officers in consultation with the Leader of the Council: -

“Principle of the scheme

South Cambridgeshire District Council would like to highlight the importance of addressing improvements to the A14 as soon as possible. Improvements to the A14 are necessary in order to deliver the local growth agenda, protect village amenity, and improve journey times and road safety for the travelling public. The A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon is a vital route of international, national, regional and local importance, and needs to be improved urgently.

Alternative schemes

The alternative route utilising the A428/A1198 (option 6) is not supported by the Council. The A14 study shows that it would be less effective and have greater negative impacts on existing communities than the preferred option.

Tolling

With regard to the proposed tolling arrangements, local residents in Districts where the Council will be contributing towards the cost of the scheme should be exempt, or have the opportunity to purchase a season ticket at marginal cost (excluding locally registered HGVs). In effect these residents are being asked to pay twice. The toll should be capped and should be lifted once the scheme has been paid for.

The Highways Agency needs to fully consider the impact on surrounding routes such as the A428, particularly in combination with growth plans set out in the South Cambridgeshire Proposed Submission Local Plan and other emerging development plans. The Highways Agency should also consider the options for improvements to increase capacity on the A428 between Caxton Gibbet and the A1, which is also a priority. This route is already subject to regular congestion at peak times and could be worsened if used as an alternative to the toll route.

Local Access Road

Provision of a Local Access Road is important to ensure local people can access settlements in South Cambridgeshire when the A14 has fewer junctions than at present, and to improve traffic flow on the A14. The Highways Agency should make allowances to enable upgrading in the future, if the single carriageway route proves to be insufficient. The Highways Agency should include cycling, walking and horse riding provision along this route, linking into cycling improvements planned in association with Northstowe.

The Council would like to stress the importance of supporting non-motorised users, and this should be a consideration along the whole route during the design process. This includes reinstatement of historic footpaths which were severed by the A14. This will support multi modal improvements envisaged by the original CHUMMS Report.

A1198 Junction

With regard to the inclusion of west facing slips (with eastern emergency slips) at the A1198 junction, the Council will support if the modelling demonstrates they are necessary. The Highways Agency is urged to explore the impact of providing these slip roads further on traffic generation and impact on local villages, including as a result of planned developments.

Bar Hill Junction

At the Bar Hill junction, the Council supports the retention of the existing over bridge as a route for non-motorised users. This will support connections to Northstowe and the villages to the east, with the villages to the west. There is also support for the proposed improved connections for Lolworth which will improve safety, and provide opportunity to exit the village and head east which is not currently possible.

Dry Drayton Junction

The A14 improvements are important for the delivery of the Northstowe new town, and in particular for delivery of the development beyond phase 1 (the first 1500 dwellings). The Council requests that the Highways Agency continue to work with the District and County Councils and as appropriate with the Homes and Communities Agency regarding the relationship of the scheme with Northstowe through the detailed design stages.

Girton Interchange

The Girton interchange should be re-examined to provide for additional traffic movements. The A1303 between Madingley Hill and the M11 is being used by trunk road traffic causing substantial delays to local traffic. The corridor is also proposed to accommodate additional development at St Neots, Cambourne, Bourn Airfield and on the fringes of Cambridge (North West Cambridge University site). The Highways Agency should consider enabling additional traffic movements, particularly A428 to A14, and A428 to M11. Alternatively, the Highways Agency should upgrade the A1303 between the Madingley roundabout and the M11 to accommodate trunk road traffic.

The Highways Agency should also pay particular attention to the provision of cyclepaths past and through the Girton interchange, to improve current routes as well as provide new links. This should include linking up the historic footpaths between Coton/Madingley and Girton (which are currently bisected by the A14 and M11). In both cases, the Agency should consult with the Local Members for Barton Ward and Girton Ward.

Histon and Milton Junctions

The Highways Agency should consider general opportunities to improve the functions of the Histon and Milton junctions, including for traffic not using the A14. Improvements to the Histon junction should consider the needs of cyclists between Cambridge and Histon, and seek to improve safety. The route is popular for commuting between South Cambridgeshire villages and the City, and experiences high volumes of users. Consideration should also be given to designing the A10/A14 Milton interchange to accommodate traffic from the proposed Waterbeach new town. This will help traffic exiting/entering the A14 as well as traffic movement in this corridor, and further assist the delivery of the growth agenda.

Other issues

It is acknowledged that a number of issues remain to be explored through the more detailed design stage of the scheme. During this phase the Highways Agency should: -

- consider the impact of planned growth in adopted and proposed submission local plans;
- continue to work with the Council on local environmental issues such as noise, lighting, air quality, ecology, heritage, and landscape impact as the scheme

progresses. The Highways Agency is urged to fully consider impacts on existing communities, and planned developments along the route, and work with the Council to determine appropriate mitigation measures, including to mitigate impacts during the construction phase. Given that HGV traffic is likely to increase after 10pm when tolling ends, particular consideration should be given to the merits of laying a quiet road surface on the Cambridge Northern Bypass which lies close to existing residential in locations from Girton to Milton;

- fully consider the impact on non-motorised routes, and seek to maintain and improve accessibility;
- consider impact on flooding and drainage, reduce risks elsewhere where practicable and fully address maintenance of infrastructure. This includes working with the Council's Drainage Manager in relation to Award Drains;
- support recycling of materials from development sites (where they are not capable of being used onsite) e.g. the disused runways at Northstowe and Waterbeach;
- design the scheme to aid future maintenance, in particular edge of road drainage should utilise an open 'v' gully (similar to that used on A428)."

Standing Items

35. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

No issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee were reported.

36. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PARTNERSHIPS REVIEW COMMITTEE

No issues arising from the Partnerships Review Committee were reported.

37. UPDATES FROM CABINET MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Simon Edward, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing, informed Cabinet that he recently attended a meeting of the Horizon's Board on behalf of the Leader of the Council. He referred to the Board's approximate £20 million rolling fund, reflecting on the general principle that it should be a rolling fund, but felt that this could perhaps be used as a contribution towards the A14. He emphasised that this was a discussion that would need to be held at the relevant time.

38. REPORTS FROM CABINET MEMBERS ATTENDING PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

No reports on Parish Council meetings were received.

39. REPORTS FROM MEMBER CHAMPIONS

No reports from Member Champions were received.

The Meeting ended at 3.55 p.m.
