

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on  
Thursday, 8 May 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ray Manning (Leader of the Council)  
Councillor Simon Edwards (Deputy Leader of the Council, Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder)

**Councillors:** Pippa Corney Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder  
Mark Howell Housing Portfolio Holder  
Mick Martin Environmental 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:

Graham Aisthorpe-Watts	Democratic Services Team Leader
Gemma Barron	Partnerships Manager & Interim Sustainable Communities Team Leader
Alex Colyer	Executive Director, Corporate Services
Jonathan Dixon	Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Stephen Hills	Affordable Homes Director
Jean Hunter	Chief Executive
Fiona McMillan	Legal & Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

Councillors Trisha Bear, Kevin Cuffley, Sue Ellington, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith and Bunty Waters were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Whiteman-Downes.

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### **Procedural Items**

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#### **87. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **88. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Nick Wright declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in minute number 92 as he owned land that would be affected by the proposed route of the new A14 as part of the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme. Councillor Wright reported that he had received a dispensation which enabled him to take part in Cabinet items relating to the A14, but not participate in any vote. He therefore remained in the meeting and spoke on the item, but did not take part in any vote.

#### **89. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No announcements were made.

**90. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No public questions had been received.

**91. SOUTH CAMBS LTD: APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, presented a report which sought a recommendation from Cabinet to Full Council for the re-appointment of the Council's Director of Housing as the Director of South Cambs Ltd. The report also identified conflicts of interest and sought Cabinet approval to authorise him to act in the best interests of the company and to indemnify him in relation to his work as company Director.

Councillor Howell highlighted that without pre-authorised permission from the Council on the issue of conflicts of interest, the Director could find himself in a position where he could not continue to act to the potential detriment of both the Council and South Cambs Ltd. By authorising him to act in the best interests of the company the Council would be agreeing not to take action against him where he was required to act contrary to the interests of the Council due to his role as company Director. An indemnity would protect him from any liabilities in relation to his role as company Director, which he would be asked to assume in addition to his Council role as Director of Housing.

Councillor Howell referred Cabinet to paragraph 13 of the report, which outlined a Director's general duties to a company as defined in the Companies Act 2006.

With regard to officers' remuneration, it was made clear to Cabinet that it was a criminal offence for an officer to accept anything other than their proper remuneration and so an officer may not accept payment from the company for their services as Director, unless the Council agreed that the additional payment would form part of their proper remuneration. The Council's Director of Housing would not, therefore, receive any additional remuneration for acting in his role as Director of South Cambs Ltd.

Cabinet:

- (a) **RECOMMENDED** to Full Council approval of the re-appointment of Stephen Hills as Director of South Cambs Ltd for a further 12 months alongside his role as Director of Housing for the Council.
- (b) **NOTED** the potential for conflicts of interests to arise due to the requirement in company law for a director to act in the best interests of the company.
- (c) **AUTHORISED** Stephen Hills to take whatever action is necessary in order to fulfil his duties as a Director.
- (d) **AGREED** to Stephen Hills continuing to act as a Director of the company despite potential conflicts.
- (e) **AGREED** to indemnify Stephen Hills under the Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 in relation to him acting in his capacity as director of the company.

**92. A14 IMPROVEMENTS: RESPONSE TO HIGHWAYS AGENCY CONSULTATION**

Cabinet considered a report which provided Members with an opportunity to agree the Council's response to the Highways Agency Development Consent Order Pre-Application Statutory Consultation on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme.

In presenting the report, Councillor Wotherspoon, Portfolio Holder for Northstowe, referred to paragraph 8 which set out a brief summary of the history of the A14 improvement scheme. Members were reminded that the project had been classified by the Planning Act 2008 as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project which would require a Development Consent Order application, anticipated in autumn 2014. There would be an opportunity for the Council to comment on the application at the pre-examination stage and it was anticipated that construction of the scheme would commence in late 2016, taking three to four years to complete.

Councillor Wotherspoon informed Cabinet that the proposed improvement scheme remained similar to that of the version subject to consultation in 2013 but some key differences, including the removal of tolling, were listed in paragraph 12 of the report.

In terms of modelling, Councillor Wotherspoon reported that the core transport modelling used to test the impacts of the proposed scheme took account of developments defined as 'near certain' or 'more than likely' according to Department of Transport guidelines. This meant that only the first 1,500 dwellings featured in phase one of the Northstowe development had been included in the modelling, and other emerging developments such as those included in the Submission Local Plan had not been included in this forecast. The Council's draft response insisted that the A14 improvement scheme should support the delivery of Northstowe. It reminded the Highways Agency that by the time the A14 improvement scheme was under construction, phase two of Northstowe would also be underway so it was important that the A14 was constructed to accommodate it. In addition, the draft response stated that traffic modelling should include the developments identified in the Submission Local Plan at Bourn Airfield, Cambourne West and Waterbeach, with the design and implementation of the proposed scheme being coordinated with these planned developments.

An email was circulated at the meeting from Councillor Francis Burkitt, suggesting some amendments to the Council's draft response, namely in relation to non-motorised user provision. Cabinet agreed with the principle of Councillor Burkitt's email regarding his request for the scheme to include a high standard of non-motorised user provision, particularly relating to minimum widths for cycleways, physical separations and hard surfacing. It was agreed that these points would be strengthened in the Council's final response to the consultation, although Members noted that hard surfacing would not always be appropriate, for example, in areas where there were countryside bridleways.

Councillor Burkitt also referred to the A1307 Huntingdon Road immediately southwest of the Girton Interchange, highlighting that it would not be safe or easy for pedestrians or cyclists to cross it at this point. He questioned whether the Highways Agency could address this problem with the introduction of a pedestrian and cycleway across the Huntingdon Road. It was reported that a toucan crossing was due to be installed in very close proximity to this location as part of a separate scheme relating to the Cambridge North West development. The need for the two schemes to be coordinated was highlighted.

Councillor Aiden van de Weyer presented a briefing note which included path specifications for non-motorised users, specific proposals relating to the Bar Hill junction, proposals for local road roundabouts and information on Dry Drayton bridge, together with examples of good practice relating to the location and design of non-motorised user routes. He felt that the Highways Agency was missing the opportunity to implement an exemplary project of non-motorised user provision, particularly in view of South Cambridgeshire having the highest cycling rate of any other rural district in the country by a very high margin. Councillor Van de Weyer wanted to see the scheme encourage cycling and other modes of sustainable transport, which should not only comply to national standards but exceed them and be right for the local context. He added that the Council in its response should be pressing for provision of the highest quality in this respect. Cabinet agreed to strengthen the wording of the Council's response in terms of the highest quality of provision for non-motorised users in light of Councillor Van de Weyer's comments.

The following further points were made by Cabinet and other Members of the Council in attendance:

- the draft response in paragraph 16 of the report indicated that the Council supported the detrunking of the route between Fen Drayton and the A1. This would leave the County Council with full maintenance responsibilities for the detrunked road thereby imposing an extra cost to the authority, when it was felt that this cost should be met by the Highways Agency. It was noted that the County Council had supported this aspect of the improvement scheme, which Cabinet Members could not understand. It was agreed that the words "and detrunking of the route between Fen Drayton and the A1" be removed from the Council's response to the consultation at paragraph 16 of the report;
- in terms of standards and quality of non-motorised user provision, the Council had to be cautious when specifically requesting minimum standards and should be looking for the best possible standards in each respective case;
- the Jane Coston Cycle Bridge in Milton and the Guided Bus Way were cited as examples of excellent practice for non-motorised user provision;
- if sub-standard provision was put in place for non-motorised users, people would simply not use it;
- from the perspective of non-motorised users, the proposed route at Bar Hill did not make much sense and could result in main roads being used instead. It was important to keep non-motorised users off the main roads as part of the improvement scheme, so their design was very important and would need to take account of where users were likely to be travelling from and to;
- it was very disappointing that only the first phase of Northstowe had been included in the modelling for the improvement scheme. The second phase at Northstowe would be in the process of being constructed at the same time as the A14 was being developed, so it was unrealistic not to consider this as part of the modelling. Cabinet agreed that this message needed to be made very clear in the Council's response;
- the mitigation for villages and wildlife in this revised improvement scheme was much better than in the previous version;
- a condition should be put in place as robustly as possible to ensure that borrow pits were returned to agricultural use.

**Cabinet AGREED:**

- (a) the response to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme set out in paragraphs 15-17, 20-22, 26-28, 32, 34, 38-39, 41 and 43-47 of the report, subject to a number of amendments as reflected in the minutes.
- (b) that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and New Communities in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Northstowe, to finalise the response to the Highways Agency in line with the amendments agreed and comments raised at the meeting, as reflected in the minutes.

**93. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND LINTON AND HILDERSHAM AREA DESIGNATION**

Councillor Pippa Corney, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Localism, presented a report which provided Cabinet with an opportunity to consider the process for supporting the development of Neighbourhood Development Plans in South Cambridgeshire. Cabinet was also asked to make a decision regarding the application to designate the parishes of Linton and Hildersham as a Neighbourhood Area.

Councillor Corney reported that no applications had been received from parishes to become Neighbourhood Areas since neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Government in 2012, as parishes had taken advantage of the opportunity to go through the Council's Local Plan process. Since the Council made the decision earlier this year to submit its Local Plan to the Secretary of State, an application had been received from Linton and Hildersham to become a Neighbourhood Area in order that they could prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Consultation on the area application was undertaken by the District Council, as required, the results of which were set out in paragraph 21 of the report. 44 representations were received within the timescale, with 42 in support of the area designation and 2 against.

In answer to a question regarding the cost of Neighbourhood Development Plans, it was noted that for all areas the basic level of funding per Plan was £30,000 which would be paid as follows:

- designation of the Neighbourhood Area - £5,000;
- publication of the final pre-examination version of the Plan, prior to examination - £5,000;
- successful completion of the neighbourhood planning examination (£20,000).

Members welcomed the application by Linton and Hildersham, together with any further applications from other parishes in the future.

**Cabinet:**

- (a) **APPROVED** the process for supporting the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plans, as set out in the report at paragraphs 10 and 12 (producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan) and paragraph 14 (area designation), and the proposed consultation methods to be used drawn from those set out in Appendix A as appropriate to each case.

- (b) **APPROVED** the application to designate Linton and Hildersham as a Neighbourhood Area.
- (c) **AGREED** that future decisions on Neighbourhood Planning matters be delegated to the Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder.

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### Standing Items

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

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

#### **95. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PARTNERSHIPS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Councillor Ben Shelton, Chairman of the Partnerships Review Committee, reported that the last meeting of the Committee focussed on policing, crime and disorder and had been very useful.

#### **96. UPDATES FROM CABINET MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Councillor Nick Wright, Portfolio Holder for Housing, reported that approval was very close to being granted for the move of General Papworth Hospital to Cambridge University's Biomedical Campus. It was anticipated that the actual move would take place in 2017.

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, had recently attended a Drainage Board meeting and reported that its rates would be increasing. This was due to the requirement for a machine to be purchased to clear weed and debris from pumping lets at a cost of £85,000. The lets used to be cleared manually but this could not continue on health and safety grounds. Additionally, bypasses and over-boards also needed to be introduced at a cost of £45,000.

#### **97. REPORTS FROM CABINET MEMBERS ATTENDING PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, reported that he had recently attended a meeting of Dry Drayton Parish Council.

#### **98. REPORTS FROM MEMBER CHAMPIONS**

Councillor Sue Ellington, Champion for Health and Wellbeing, provided Cabinet with an update in relation to the Clinical Commissioning Group's strategic direction for the provision of Health Care over the next five years. Councillor Ellington reported that Price Waterhouse Cooper had carried out an independent study which indicated there would be a £250 million shortfall by 2020 if services continued to be provided using the current funding model. She envisaged any growth in the health and wellbeing economy being created within the community services, but there was a real concern about how funding could be found in the first instance to support this growth, especially since it was now unclear as to the availability of the Better Care Fund. The current funding model could mean that one of the hospitals in the Cambridgeshire area would be unsustainable, however, there had also been a significant growth in the local population resulting in 16,700 new registrations with a General Practitioner in 2013, so there was a need to lobby Government for this to be reflected in funding.

**99. SOUTH CAMBS LTD UPDATE: TRANSFER OF LEASEHOLD GENERAL FUND PROPERTIES**

Cabinet **AGREED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act).

Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, presented the exempt report.

Cabinet **AGREED** the recommendations as set out in the report.

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**The Meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.**

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