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15 October 2021

To: The Leader – Councillor Bridget Smith  
Deputy Leader – Councillor Neil Gough  
Members of the Cabinet – Councillors John Batchelor, Bill Handley,  
Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Peter McDonald, Brian Milnes and John Williams

Quorum: Majority of the Cabinet including the Leader or Deputy Leader

Dear Councillor

This is a supplement to the previously-published agenda for the meeting of **Cabinet** on **Tuesday, 19 October 2021**, containing those reports which had not been received by the original publication deadline.

Yours faithfully

**Liz Watts**

Chief Executive

Requests for a large print agenda must be received at least 48 hours before the meeting.

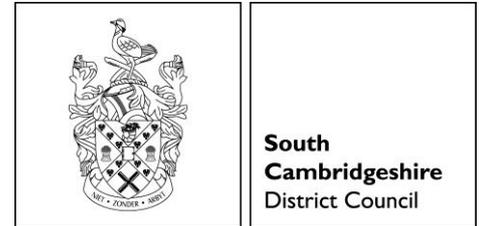
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### Agenda

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# Agenda Item 6



**Report to:** Cabinet 19 October 2021

**Lead Members:** Councillor John Williams

**From:** Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee  
Councillor Judith Rippeth, Vice-Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee

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## Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

### Purpose

This report is to inform Cabinet about the discussion among members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting on 14 October 2021.

### General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy

Members noted that an early draft of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had already been considered by Full Council as part of the new process for developing the Budget. This review by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee was another part of the process, and Members explored the following points:

- **The potential impact of inflation – especially wage inflation**  
The Head of Finance highlighted this as one of the uncertainties in developing a Strategy taking the Council through to the year 2026-27. He summarised several other challenges and said that, at a time of such financial uncertainty, various assumptions had to be made. Inflation was just one of those assumptions likely to vary over time.
- **Nature of the savings outlined in the report**
  - (a) The Head of Finance confirmed that predicted savings were one-off savings at this stage.
  - (b) Anticipated savings might be reduced in the event of enhanced levels of service provision.
  - (c) Possible over reliance on efficiency savings to make the budget work with an attempt to claim all the savings from transformation but overlook service provision. Underlying that there was the assumption that once one round of efficiency savings had been made, subsequent ones would be harder to achieve.

- **Business Rates**

- (a) The Head of Finance said that South Cambridgeshire District Council had one of the ten highest Business Rate bases in the U.K. for growth above the baseline and hence the substantial additional income the council has had from business rates in recent years.
- (b) The Head of Finance acknowledged the potential implications for the Council of the impending review of that source of local authority revenue.
- (c) In response to a request to clarify a statement in his report that "...The financial forecast assumes neither a surplus or deficit in the period to 2026/2027...", the Head of Finance said that there was a significant gap between revenue and expenditure but that the Council's Transformation Project might reduce that gap by up to 50%.
- (d) In response to a query about a deficit in the Collection Fund, the Head of Finance said that this had been identified as a one-off occurrence.
- (e) The Council's exposure to the possible abolition of Business Rates needed to be recognised and guarded against.

- **The impact of Brexit**

The Head of Finance acknowledged the possible increase in costs.

- **Covid-19 costs**

- (a) In response to a request to quantify reduced income aligned to business confidence (commercial rents, planning applications), the Head of Finance said there would be additional costs in 2022-23 and that the extent of the reduced income should become clearer in the next two to three months.
- (b) The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development said that the Greater Cambridge Planning Service was constantly looking at anticipated planning applications and revising its forecast of fees income. He said the current position was better than anticipated, but that officers were continuing to monitor matters and engage with developers, especially those whose applications were likely to generate higher levels of income.

- **Comparison between South Cambridgeshire District Council and other local authorities**

The Head of Finance said the challenges faced by South Cambridgeshire District Council were faced also by other local authorities: while Councils had control over Council Tax revenue, the impending review of Business Rates was a major concern.

- **Council Tax**

The Head of Finance said the figure for Council Tax was assessed on three elements

- (a) An increase of 1.99% or £5 whichever is the higher
- (b) An increased charging base
- (c) Reduced Council Tax fraud

- **Information**  
South Cambridgeshire District Council should endeavour to acquire first-hand information from Central Government rather than relying on information provided by third parties, no matter how trusted.
- **Conclusion by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee**  
The Committee applauded the work being undertaken by the Head of Finance and his team. The Chair observed that the only certainty seemed to be uncertainty!

## **In Principle Commitment to Delivery of Area Action Plan for North East Cambridge**

The Chair emphasised that this report was concerned solely with financial matters and the Council's commitment to back the project. He said that a further report would be brought before the Scrutiny and Overview Committee in December, which would focus on planning issues. Members explored the following points:

- **Purpose of the report**
  - (a) The Lead Cabinet Member for Finance said that South Cambridgeshire District Council (and Cambridge City Council) needed to approve an 'In Principle' report to show intent to landowners. However, he undertook to consider clearer report headings in future while maintaining the purpose behind using technical language.
  - (b) The Scrutiny and Overview Committee saw the process as positive, demonstrating the two Councils' commitment to the project and willingness to use all means available to carry it through.
- **Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)**  
Committee members noted that a CPO was the last resort, and that the two Councils would seek to further their ambitions first through other means.
- **Complexity of land ownership**  
The Committee recognised the need for an 'in principle' report given that various parts of the site were owned by South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council, Milton Parish Council and by private landowners.
- **Outcome at Cambridge City Council**  
In response to a question from the Chair, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee was informed that Cambridge City Council had approved a similar report.
- **Conclusion by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee**  
The Committee supported the officer recommendation to Cabinet.

**Report Author:**

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# Agenda Item 9



South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Scrutiny and Overview Committee Cabinet	14 October 2021 19 October 2021
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor John Williams – Lead Cabinet Member for Finance	
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Stephen Kelly – Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development	

## In Principle Commitment to Delivery of AAP

### Executive Summary

1. A joint Area Action Plan (AAP) is being prepared by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils for North East Cambridge that will promote future structural change in the layout and land use of parts of the area. The exciting vision for the new district includes not only high-quality new developments and the establishment of a new community, but also new strategic walking and cycling connections; residential use of Nuffield Industrial Estate; the consolidation of industrial uses around the aggregate railhead; and the relocation of incompatible uses.
2. Delivering on the full potential of the site including new streets and open spaces set out in the emerging vision will nevertheless require a comprehensive approach to site and plot development. In addition to landowners, developers, and other delivery partners, securing that objective may require that the councils play a role in land assembly across parts of the site. Depending on the circumstances and delivery options available, this may include the acquisition or disposal of land through use of compulsory purchase order powers.
3. To take the AAP to its next formal stage, the councils must be able to demonstrate that the exciting vision set out in the AAP is ‘deliverable’, including ensuring any required land assembly or relocations to achieve key site wide objectives will be delivered. An ‘in principle’ commitment to delivery of the AAP is therefore sought from both councils to satisfy this requirement ahead of the respective authority’s consideration of the Regulation 19 draft of the Plan programmed for December 2021 – January 2022.
4. This is a not key decision as this report seeks to establish an ‘in principle’ commitment to deliver the AAP; a decision to acquire or dispose of a specific parcel of land, or to use compulsory purchase order (CPO) powers, would be subject to a separate report to outline the specific circumstances, the case for Council intervention, and resource implications. With respect to the use of CPO, regard would also need to be had to Council’s adopted [Compulsory Purchase Policy](#) (September 2020), which sets out the approach, circumstances and conditions under which the Council will consider the use of compulsory purchase powers.

## Key Decision

5. No

## Recommendations

6. To note that the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan is contingent upon the separate Development Control Order being undertaken by Anglian Water for the relocation of the Waste Water Treatment Plant being approved;
7. Subject to (6), agree that the Council is committed to the delivery of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, including land disposal or assembly, and subject to formal adoption of the Area Action Plan in due course, to use its Compulsory Purchase Orders powers if required.

## Reasons for Recommendations

8. To demonstrate the Council's commitment to the delivery of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan.

## Details

9. A draft Area Action Plan for the North East Cambridge Area, outlining an exciting vision for the site, is being prepared on the basis that the separate Development Consent Order process for the relocation of Anglian Water's Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) will be granted.
10. Through the preparation of a joint Area Action Plan for the North East Cambridge, the councils are promoting significant transformational change to the area. The future vision for the area seeks "*the creation of an inclusive, walkable, low-carbon new city district with a lively mix of homes, workplaces, services and social spaces, fully integrated with surrounding neighbourhoods.*"
11. While the proposed layout of the new city district has had regard to existing land use, there are areas of the plan area where the vision is at odds with the existing land uses or where key new strategic infrastructure, such as new streets and open spaces is required. In such circumstances, the plan seeks to secure the relocation of incompatible use to a more suitable location either within or outside of the AAP area or the need to "assemble" a number of parcels of land together to enable the creation of new spaces and links.
12. In the majority of these cases, it will be for the future developer of a site to facilitate the relocation of the existing land use through normal market processes or to secure the necessary land interests to facilitate new infrastructure. However, this may not be applicable in all instances. For example, where there is no developer interest or the existing or neighbouring landowner/occupier is unwilling to bring the site forward for redevelopment.

13. Without positive intervention from the Council, in the form of a willingness to facilitate land assembly or relocation, the barriers to delivery could have potentially limiting consequences for the vision and lead to a less successful and less integrated development. Across North East Cambridge as a whole, such consequences could depress the efficient use of land, inhibit movement and connectivity, and undermine delivery of the Plan's vision and objectives.
14. This item, which includes the same recommendations, therefore seeks to secure the Council's commitment to facilitate land assembly in order to realise the full potential of the area. Given the extent of the sites reach, across Administrative Boundaries, the proposal has also been considered and agreed by Cambridge City Council's Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021. The Regulation 19 draft of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan is to be reported to the Joint Local Planning Advisory Group meeting of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 before going through the respective committees of both councils.

## **Options**

15. The option of not providing an 'in principle' commitment to delivery of the AAP is not considered to be appropriate. In jointly preparing the AAP, the Council is setting out an ambitious vision for how it sees North East Cambridge coming forward in the future which requires a comprehensive approach being taken to the sites development and delivery. It has consulted on these proposals with residents, businesses and stakeholders, and must have confidence that its planning strategy for the future of this area is deliverable.
16. At this time, it is not possible to be certain if barriers to delivery will arise and what these may be. However, given the role of the Local Authority is to secure the proper planning of its area, the Council must be willing to intervene, where necessary and justified to secure this.

## **Implications**

17. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

### **Financial**

18. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. A decision to acquire or dispose of land, or to use compulsory purchase order powers, would be subject to a separate report to Cabinet that would provide full details of the financial consequences of the intervention required.

## **Legal**

19. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 grants the Council a General Power of Competence where a Local Authority has the power to do anything that individuals generally do, including acquiring or disposing of land for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area.

## **Risks/Opportunities**

20. There are no risks or opportunities from the Council agreeing 'in principle' that it is committed to the delivery of the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan.

## **Equality and Diversity**

21. The 'in principle' commitment to delivery of the AAP has no direct relevance to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, promote good relations and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

## **Climate Change**

22. There are no climate change or environmental implications directly arising from the report although delivery of the NECAAP will bring forward highly sustainable development on an urban brownfield site with excellent accessibility by sustainable transport means with policies to ensure high environmental standards in construction.

## **Alignment with Council Priority Areas**

### **Growing local businesses and economies**

23. The Area Action Plan promotes intensification of existing employment and business use, new retail and leisure uses, retention of industrial floorspace, as well as housing, creating new jobs and opportunities near to where people live and supporting the local economy.

### **Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in**

24. The Area Action Plan proposes a vibrant new city district in a highly sustainable location, where residents and workers will have good access to facilities and transport links. The Area Action Plan also proposes significant new housing of high quality and sustainability, with 40% of all homes to be affordable.

## **Being green to our core**

25. The Area Action Plan prioritises sustainable travel and sets ambitious targets for sustainability. It also seeks a minimum of 10% net biodiversity gain through redevelopment of the area.

## **A modern and caring Council**

26. The in principle commitment to delivery of the AAP provides transparency about the Council's willingness to intervene, where required, to achieve the outcomes sought through the AAP.

## **Background Papers**

None

## **Appendices**

None

## **Report Author:**

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