

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday, 29 April 2004 at 2.00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor RF Bryant – Chairman  
Councillor Mrs MP Course – Vice-Chairman

**Councillors:** SJ Agnew, Dr DR Bard, CC Barker, RE Barrett, JD Batchelor, EW Bullman, NN Cathcart, JP Chatfield, RF Collinson, NS Davies, R Driver, G Elsbury, TJ Flanagan, CJ Gravatt, R Hall, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs JM Healey, Dr JA Heap, Mrs EM Heazell, MP Howell, Mrs J Hughes, SGM Kindersley, Mrs JE Lockwood, LCA Manning JP, RM Matthews, EL Monks, Mrs JA Muncey, Mrs CAED Murfitt, CR Nightingale, Dr JPR Orme, R Page, DL Porter, JA Quinlan, DJ Regan, Mrs DP Roberts, WH Saberton, NJ Scarr, J Shepperson, Mrs GJ Smith, RGR Smith, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, JH Stewart, PL Stroude, RT Summerfield, Mrs VM Trueman, RJ Turner, Mrs BE Waters, DALG Wherrell, LJ Wilson and AW Wyatt MBE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor JA Nicholas and Mrs LM Sutherland.

### **1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 26th February 2004 were confirmed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

**Attendance List**

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts was present

**Declarations of Interest (Minute 2)**

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith's interest was as the Chairman of a disability advice group

#### **1 (a) Matters Arising**

**Priorities and Spending Plans 2004/05-2006/07 (Minute 5.3)**

Councillor NJ Scarr reported that he had now had a full and satisfactory response from the Chief Environmental Health Officer to the question he had asked at Cabinet on 29th January.

**Notice of Motion – Stansted Airport Expansion (Minute 13.2)**

Councillor R Page referred to an article in the last South Cambs Magazine which did not reflect the motion or the views of Council. The Chairman agreed that the Magazine should reflect Council policy, but observed that the Magazine would have been in print before the motion had been discussed.

**Travellers Consultative Group (Minute 15.1)**

The Leader reported that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had now responded to the letter on travellers' issues, but had given technical reasons why a meeting could not be held with the Council. However, Yvette Cooper had since indicated to the local Members of Parliament that she would meet the Council on general issues and the MPs were pushing for such a meeting.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following interests in items before Council were declared:

**Councillor RGR Smith**

a prejudicial interest in relation to planning

	application S/1219/01/O (Development and Conservation Control Committee 3rd March 2004, minute 2 (16))
<b>Councillor SGM Kindersley</b>	a prejudicial interest in relation to St Denys Church, East Hatley
<b>Councillor DJ Regan</b>	a personal interest in relation to the Citizens' Advice Bureaux through the Legal Services Commission (Cabinet 4th March 2004, minute 8)

### 3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- this would be the last meeting at Hills Road and the last Council meeting before the elections
- a presentation of engraved vases had been made to Reception staff, who were leaving the Council
- responses were requested for the wine and cheese reception for Members and their partners on 22nd June at the new offices
- raffle tickets were still available for seats on a flight over Cambridgeshire for the Chairman's Charity
- thanks and best wishes were extended to those councillors who were retiring: Councillors Mrs MP Course, AW Wyatt, EL Monks, JP Manning, WH Saberton, PL Stroude, G Elsbury, Mrs JE Lockwood and CJ Gravatt. The Chairman gave a resume of their service with the Council, other than for Councillor Mrs Course, who would be at the next meeting. Councillor Wyatt responded with thanks for support from members and officers.

### 4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received.

### 5. RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation to Council was considered:

#### 5 (a) Food Service Plan (Cabinet 1st April 2004, Minute 3)

Council

**RESOLVED** that the Food Service Plan 2004/05 be approved.

### 6. SOUTH CAMBS COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Cabinet on 22nd April 2004 had endorsed the final Community Strategy for South Cambs. April 2003 to March 2007, for approval by Council. The draft had been approved by Council on 12th December 2003 but further development work had taken place and the Local Strategic Partnership Board had approved changes.

Councillor R Page accused the Strategy of being unrealistic and asked that it should not be accepted. He called for a realistic assessment of the current situation, what people wanted and what could be achieved. The Leader responded that the Strategy had been two years in gestation and that it was an attempt to face reality and address damage already done. Some outcomes might be unobtainable but they had to be sought or nothing would happen. This was what all the partners, including the Council, the Health Service and business were aiming for.

Other Members acknowledged the possible shortcomings of the Strategy and its inability to deal with the major national issues, but commended it as a document to work on. The Leader invited Councillor Page to attend the next meeting of the Local Strategic Partnership.

Council

**RESOLVED** that the Community Strategy for South Cambs, April 2004 to March 2007, be ratified and adopted.

## 7. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Chairman, also chairman of the Constitution Review Working Party, outlined the proposed amendments to the Constitution; the matters of substance being mainly related to petitions, questions from the public, Standards Committee, executive functions and the management structure.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts asked that the size of the Constitution be looked at again as this had been a main point of concern. The Chairman agreed that the Working Party had failed to reduce the document in size, but gave an assurance that they would continue to keep it under review and that it would be better indexed. Councillor Mrs GJ Smith commented on the CPA peer review suggestion that it was too long and asked that the main points should be incorporated into a shorter document. The Chairman agreed that the Working Party would look into this suggestion.

Councillor Mrs JE Lockwood asked that the members of the Working Party should be recorded but welcomed the proposals and complimented the information for new councillors. [These were Councillors RF Bryant (Chairman), N Davies, Mrs EM Heazell, SGM Kindersley, Mrs CAED Murfitt, Mrs DSK Spink, NN Cathcart and RT Summerfield]

The Chairman thanked the Democratic Services Officer and the Democratic Services Manager for their support in the revision process.

On the comment of Councillor MP Howell, Council

**AGREED** that the word "question" be reinstated into the first sentence of paragraph 10.7 of Appendix F, questions by the public.

Subject to that one amendment, Council

**RESOLVED** that the revisions to the Constitution as presented to the meeting and attached to these Minutes be adopted and that authority be delegated to the Chairman of the Working Party to approve consequential amendments and any necessary clarification of wording.

It was also **AGREED**

- (a) that the length of terms of office should not be specified
- (b) that the Constitution should not be more prescriptive on committee numbers
- (c) that Policy Advisory Groups should be retained, rather than Policy champions
- (d) that area groupings should not be pursued at this time but the issue be kept under review
- (e) that where possible "Cabinet" be used to refer to the whole executive
- (f) that new issues of the constitution should include an alphabetical index and side dividers
- (g) that a role profile for councillors, as set out at Appendix B to these minutes, be

adopted but not included in the Constitution.

#### 8. **PAPWORTH HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

The Leader reported on the successful persuasion of the Trust that the District Council should have a representative on the Board of Governors and Council

**RESOLVED** that the local member for Papworth be appointed as the District Council's Governor representative to the Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, currently Councillor MP Howell.

#### 9. **SIX MONTHLY REPORT FROM SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

The Leader stated that she found the report good and constructive apart from the final two paragraphs. Cabinet had taken the Scrutiny and Overview Committee's recommendations on CIP bids into account (7.3) and she refuted the accusation that Cabinet discussions could be meandering (7.4). The Chairman of the Committee was prepared to delete paragraph 7.4 but felt strongly that the Committee's work had been largely ignored, although he believed that this was mainly through Management Team, who had restructured the bids. The Leader concurred as a matter of fact.

Councillor R Page expressed surprise that the Leader was given the opportunity to comment on a Scrutiny Committee report, but Councillor Mrs Spink pointed out that she had every right to comment at Council and thanked the Chairman of the Committee for his gracious response. Councillor Kindersley pointed out that in a no overall control council, Scrutiny could only operate with the executive and he was happy to agree to the request.

#### 10. **RECORDING OF MEETINGS**

The Chairman reported that it had not been possible to give the request at the last meeting for a report on the implications of recording meetings a high priority because of the impending move, but that consideration would be given at the next meeting. Disappointment was expressed by some Members, but the position accepted.

#### 11. **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS**

No questions were received.

#### 12. **REPORTS OF MEETINGS**

The Minutes of the following meetings were **RECEIVED**, subject to the comments recorded in Minutes 13 to 16 below:

Cabinet	4th March 2004
Cabinet	25th March 2004
Cabinet	1st April 2004
New Offices Working Group	23rd February 2004
New Offices Working Group	19th March 2004
Development and Conservation Control Committee	3rd March 2004
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	12th February 2004
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	11th March 2004

#### 13. **CABINET 25TH MARCH 2004**

##### 13 (a) **Membership of Northstowe Member Steering Group (Minute 6)**

Councillor SGM Kindersley queried why the meetings of the Steering Group were not open to the public although the minutes were published on the Council' web site, and proposed that they should be open. The Chairman of the Steering Group and the Leader explained that initial discussions involved site selection and were commercially sensitive. However, recommendations were now being made on the preferred site and the Chairman of the Group saw no reason why meetings should not be open, subject to normal Access to Information rules, once that process was complete. The decision was, however, for the Steering Group to make.

#### **14. NEW OFFICES WORKING GROUP 19TH MARCH 2004**

The Leader recorded her thanks to staff, who were under enormous pressure in packing while continuing to perform their jobs.

##### **14 (a) Appointment of Bus Companies (Minute 7.3)**

In response to a query from Councillor SGM Kindersley, the Leader reported that the Chief Executive had been unable to reach agreement with the County Council on access to the park and ride sites for the Council's buses despite discussions for over a year, but that she would be taking the matter up at Member level. Councillor RT Summerfield, chairman of the Working Group, advised that it had been necessary to agree alternative pick up points for Tuesday. It was suggested that if Councillor Mrs Spink's approach was not successful, a question or petition might be submitted to the County Council.

##### **14 (b) Haul Road**

The reference to £100,000 twice in paragraph 9.4 was queried, but the Chief Executive advised that this was because the developers had suggested a different retention sum.

#### **15. DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE 3RD MARCH 2004**

##### **15 (a) Officer Statement about Cambourne and Other New Settlements (Minute 1)**

Councillor R Page challenged the statement made as, he asserted, the advice of the Head of Legal Services in connection with Cambourne and other new settlement applications had been challenged by Councillor Mrs Spink, Bourn Parish Council (who had taken the matter to the Ombudsman), Sir Anthony Grant MP and a previous local member for Coton. He stated that Bourn Parish Council had left a tape recorder running during confidential session, but the Ombudsman had refused to accept this in evidence.

#### **16. SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE 12TH FEBRUARY 2004**

##### **16 (a) Revenue and Capital Estimates for the Environmental Health Portfolio (Minute 7(C))**

Council agreed that the reference to the provision of Compost Bins should have the words "free of charge" added at the end of the last sentence.

#### **17. QUESTIONS ON JOINT MEETINGS**

No questions were received.

#### **18. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS**

The Chairman's engagements since the last meeting were **NOTED**.

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**The Meeting ended at 3.30 p.m.**

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