



SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2004

REPORTS AND MINUTES

South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne, Cambridge
CB3 6ES

If the press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that exempt information is to be considered, it will be necessary to pass the following resolution: "That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph (quoting relevant paragraph) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act."

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

TO: The Chairman and Members of the
South Cambridgeshire District Council

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the next meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **2.00 P.M.** on

THURSDAY, 23RD SEPTEMBER 2004

and I am, therefore to summon you to attend accordingly for the transaction of the business specified below.

DATED this **15TH SEPTEMBER 2004**

GJ HARLOCK

Finance and Resources Director

AGENDA

1. **MINUTES**
To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on the 26th August 2004 as a correct record.

(Pages 1 - 10)
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive any declarations of interest from Members on matters arising in this agenda.
3. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
4. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**
None received to date.
5. **PETITIONS**
To note all petitions received since the last Council meeting.
6. **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PREFERRED OPTIONS REPORTS – REVISIONS**
The Scrutiny and Overview Committee on the 16th September 2004 is to consider the call-in of Cabinet's decision on the Northstowe paper. The action Council will be asked to take will depend on the outcome of that consideration.

There is a possibility that the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder's approval of the Cambourne Annexe Paper (supplement to the Rural Centres Preferred Options Report) will be called in after the preparation of this agenda. In view of the urgency to agree papers for public participation, similar arrangements are being made to cover this eventuality.

Members are asked to bring to the meeting the papers circulated to the Steering Group/Cabinet/Scrutiny and Overview Committee. Some paper copies will be available for Members who have not already received them.

An introductory report from the Development Services Director is attached.

(Pages 11 - 16)

7. VOTE RECORDING

As there appears to be some uncertainty about the way votes individually recorded electronically will be used, and votes are automatically recorded when the system is turned on, Council is asked to determine:

1. The principles by which meetings will have individual votes recorded electronically
e.g. all public meetings
by request before the meeting
all meetings unless there is agreement to the contrary
each "committee" to decide on its own procedure

Cabinet currently records numbers voting but not names, in the interests of collective responsibility

2. On what occasions votes should not be recorded
e.g. for exempt (confidential) items
where Members might be subject to illegal acts as a result
on appointments
recording in the minutes of votes on appointments is already precluded by the constitution

3. Who should have access to the information
e.g. Members only
any member of the public on request (on payment?)
made available through the Web site

The Freedom of Information Act will require that if the record exists it must be made available on request (other than where exempted for confidentiality)

4. How long the information should be kept, i.e. is it regarded as temporary only or part of the public record?

Minutes, agenda and reports must be kept accessible for 6 years after the meeting; background papers for 4 years

When the Council agreed on 13th January 2004 that the system should be purchased, it had the views of the Constitution Review Working Party, which expected that constituents would be able to see how their local member voted and that the names would be available on request. It was not, however, the intention that names should be recorded in the minutes unless a request for a recorded vote was made and agreed.

Council is invited to confirm that names are recorded in the minutes only when a specific request has been made; and to clarify the issues set out above.

TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE FOLLOWIING MEETINGS

(* indicates that the minutes have already been confirmed as a correct record)

8. **CABINET 9TH SEPTEMBER 2004** (Pages 17 - 26)
9. **DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE 4TH AUGUST 2004** (Pages 27 - 34)
10. **LICENSING COMMITTEE 6TH SEPTEMBER 2004** (Pages 35 - 38)
11. **NORTHSTOWE MEMBER STEERING GROUP 6TH SEPTEMBER 2004**

Given the length of time until the Steering Group is likely to meet again, members of the Group (only) are asked to confirm the minutes as a correct record.

(Pages 39 - 46)

To Receive Questions on Joint Meetings

12. **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AREA JOINT COMMITTEE**
The decision notice of the meeting of the 10th September 2004 are being circulated with the weekly bulletin of the 15th September 2004.
13. **CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS**
To note the Chairman's engagements since the last Council meeting:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Other remarks</u>
04/09/04	Duxford Air Show	
08/09/04	Funding Fair – Comberton	
15/09/04	Sawston Village College – Opening of Arts Facility	
15/09/04	Hundred Housing AGM	
19/09/04	Godmanchester Civic Service	
19/09/04	FAFA Battle of Britain Service – St Mary's Ely	Attended by Cllr Mrs Murfitt
22/09/04	Presentation of Housing Certificates - Granchester	
22/09/04	Crossroads – Caring for Carers	

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 26 August 2004 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor RF Bryant – Chairman
Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: SJ Agnew, Dr DR Bard, RE Barrett, EW Bullman, BR Burling, NN Cathcart, JP Chatfield, Mrs PS Corney, Ms SJO Doggett, SM Edwards, Mrs A Elsby, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs JM Healey, Dr JA Heap, Mrs EM Heazell, JA Hockney, MP Howell, Mrs CA Hunt, SGM Kindersley, RMA Manning, RB Martlew, MJ Mason, Mrs JA Muncey, CR Nightingale, R Page, EJ Pateman, A Riley, Mrs DP Roberts, NJ Scarr, J Shepperson, Mrs GJ Smith, Mrs HM Smith, RGR Smith, Mrs DSK Spink MBE, JH Stewart, RT Summerfield, Mrs BE Waters, DALG Wherrell, Dr JR Williamson, NIC Wright and SS Ziaian-Gillan

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors JD Batchelor, R Hall, Dr SA Harangozo, HC Hurrell, Mrs HF Kember, DC McCraith, DH Morgan, Dr JPR Orme, JA Quinlan, Mrs VM Trueman, RJ Turner, Dr SEK van de Ven and TJ Wotherspoon.

VOTE RECORDING

The new vote recording system was explained. Some members had expected all votes to be recorded in the Minutes, but it was generally agreed that this had not been the intention, but that votes could be revealed when needed. It was emphasised that its use was not compulsory but, when the system was activated, voting was possible only by use of the voting cards.

It was noted that the system could be programmed to indicate those waiting to speak.

LAYOUT OF COUNCIL CHAMBER

Comments were invited on the revised layout of the Council Chamber and Members agreed that it was an improvement.

Some views were, however, expressed on the need for reviewing the Chamber, particularly for windows and for a platform for the Chairman.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on the 22nd July 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. The following matters were raised on Minute 2:

Declarations of Interest

Members were advised that a note from the Monitoring Officer on declarations of interest was available in members' pigeon holes.

CASCADE Update

In response to Councillor JA Hockney, the Chief Executive advised that the programme of improvements at the Contact Centre was proceeding but would take some time. The major issue was insufficient staff to answer the telephones, but more should be in post at the beginning of September. There would be no way of meeting e-government targets without the Contact Centre. The Housing Portfolio Holder added that housing staff had been helping at busy times.

Scrutiny and Overview

The Chairman reported that the investigation into the withdrawal of a called-in item would be reported to the Committee at its next meeting on the 16th September.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman's charity for this year would be Cam Mind, a local charity for mental health. Anyone wishing to donate was asked to contact the Chairman's secretary.

Responses to the invitations to the Chairman's reception were requested.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received.

5. DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2003-2004

The draft Statement of Accounts was before Council for approval, and amended pages were circulated. The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder apologised for the errors which had necessitated the amendments, but pointed out that the accounts had had to be completed a month earlier this year (and the deadline was a month earlier still over the next two years). Councillor Summerfield thanked the 5 Members who had asked questions of the Finance and Resources Director. The answers had been sent by email to those members and the Director read out the questions and answers, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes.

Questions/comments raised at the meeting and the answers given were:

Increasing development could make predicting the Council Tax base and consequently the required Band D Council Tax difficult for parish councils in determining their precept
The difference between estimated and actual Council Tax base figures for Histon and Impington were only 4 and 5 respectively

What was the reason for the increase in uncollectible Council Tax?

The figures given in the answer to Q 17 were for provision made for bad debts rather than actual bad debts; 2003/04 was unusual as all relevant ICT systems were replaced in that year and recovery was now back on track. A drastic improvement should be seen in the 2004/05 Accounts. The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder monitored the arrears position monthly.

Was there any provision for any future wide-scale withholding of Council Tax ?

No, the debt was still payable even if payment was delayed.

Why did the Council not make loans for local infrastructure projects?

The Council only invested where there was certainty of return, which would not be the case on individual projects. Nevertheless, this was a matter of policy rather than the accounts and could be raised at a future date.

Council then

RESOLVED that the draft Statement of Accounts 2003-2004 be approved as amended.

6. RECORDING OF MEETINGS

The Chairman commended the report on the costs and implications of recording debates and responded to Councillor MJ Mason, who asked for referral to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, that Council itself had asked for such a report earlier in the year.

In debate the following points were raised:

- Problems were being created which did not exist; most people were not interested in the detail
- The present system of minutes was perfectly satisfactory
- It would be necessary to speak clearly
- There would be staff implications

- As issues became more complex people did want to go back to the detail of what was said
- Parliament was recorded
- Aspects of what was said were not always included
- Advice was not always accurate – if a query arose later it would be possible to check what was said and whether the recollection was correct
- Recording was not expensive, was quick and easy and took little storage space
- The record would prevent misrepresentation
- If transcripts were requested only when needed there should not be a need for more staff
- Recording would give an opportunity to make a defence against accusations
- There were times when minutes were not enough, for example if a Member was called before the Standards Board
- Recording could assist the conduct of a meeting
- Most queries were about what was left out of minutes: short minutes were not a problem; the problem came when someone later challenged what was said

Web casting was indicated as a possible option but, although there was some support this was not overwhelming. Comments made were:

- There should be a demonstration first
- Web casting could be advantageous as people would be aware how they came over, but this was a step further than current considerations
- It would be easier to follow than voice only recording
- Greater Broadband availability was needed before pursuing web casting
- Councillor SM Edwards asked if a live feed to the Internet using sound only had been considered.

Councillor Dr JA Heap asked which meetings would be recorded, to which the Chairman responded that this meeting was just trying to decide whether to record or not; details were for later debate. Councillor Page suggested that recording should just be of meetings to which the public was invited.

On the proposal of Councillor R Page, seconded by Councillors Mrs SJO Doggett and Mrs SA Hatton, Council

AGREED that sound recording, in the form of an MP3 player attached to the microphone system, at a cost of up to £1,000, be pursued.

7. APPOINTMENTS**Duxford Airfield Management Liaison Committee**

Noting that the terms of reference allowed for only one member representative from the Council, that no communication had been received from Councillor Quinlan, and that most of the activity occurred in Duxford parish, Council voted and

AGREED that Councillor RGR Smith be appointed as the Council's representative on the Duxford Airfield Management Committee.

Sawston Village College Sports Users' Committee

Noting that the College was willing to accept as many representatives as the Council wished to send, Council

AGREED that the councillors from the catchment area of Sawston Village College be appointed representatives to the Sports Users' Committee (unless they wish to withdraw):

Dr DR Bard
Mrs SA Hatton
HR Hurrell
Mrs HF Kember
CR Nightingale
Dr JPR Orme
JA Quinlan
RGR Smith
SS Ziaian-Gillan

The following, arising from appointments made on the 24th June 2004, were **NOTED**

The Junction	Two observers on the Board of Management acceptable
Cambridgeshire ACRE (Local Agenda 21)	No longer exists
Great Ouse Area Environment Group	No longer exists
Old West Internal Drainage Board	Happy to retain the services of both Mr Manning and Mr Wyatt
North Herts Citizens' Advice Bureau	Two representatives acceptable

8. SUSPENSION OF CALL-IN

Council **NOTED** advance warning of agreement by the Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee that, in view of the urgency of beginning public consultation, the call-in procedure would not apply to approval of a draft Licensing Policy. The decision was due to be taken on 6th September and the final policy had to be approved and distributed before 7th February 2005.

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder thanked the Chairmen for their agreement and asked Members to read the draft policy carefully as it would affect every village and they would be expected to give their views on all licensed premises. Councillor Mrs DSK Spink asked the Portfolio Holder to monitor the cost to the Council of operating the new policies.

9. PLANNING FOR NORTHSTOWE

The Chairman allowed, as an additional item, a report from a briefing that morning on the future programme for the planning of Northstowe.

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder stated that it was not the intention to subvert the decision of Council, but that this had caused some problems, especially of timing. As work at Northstowe had to start in 2006, a decision was needed by mid 2005.

He continued that the procedure with the Northstowe Steering Group was a bit leisurely and, as Council needed to be happy with the outcome, it was proposed that the Steering Group should be suspended and all Northstowe decisions after the public participation be dealt with directly by Council. This would require in the region of 8 special meetings between mid January and mid April 2005.

Councillor Dr Bard asked that Council agree to the timetable in principle. A more detailed timetable was expected to be ready in September, following negotiations with GO-East. He was anxious to keep the development within the control of the Council, which it could lose if the timetable were seen to slip significantly.

The Steering Group meeting on the 6th September was to go ahead as planned, but the Group would be suspended from that date. An invitation was extended to all councillors to attend the site visit and meeting, while noting that Licensing Committee had to go ahead in the morning. In response to a request from Councillor A Riley, Councillor Dr Bard agreed that he expected the Council meetings on Northstowe to be for that purpose only.

It was considered sensible to keep the public participation on Northstowe and that on the rest of the Local Development Framework running together as there was only a modest advantage in separating them. The participation was now planned to run from 1st October to 12th November 2004.

Councillor SM Edwards asked if the local Members could have time to reflect on the proposed new arrangements as the Steering Group was well informed and committed and a small group could get through more business. Councillor Dr Bard stated that in an ideal world he would agree, but that the compressed timetable meant that running the Steering Group would add to the already considerable pressure on Members and officers.

It was suggested by Councillor Mrs DP Roberts that once the LDF had been agreed, the Steering Group could come back into operation to look at more detailed matters.

10. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

The Minutes of the following meetings were **RECEIVED**, subject to the comments recorded in Minutes 11 to 14 below :

Cabinet	24th June 2004
Cabinet	20th July 2004
Development and Conservation Control Committee	7th July 2004
Licensing Committee	5th July 2004
Standards Committee	21st July 2004
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	24th June 2004
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	15th July 2004
Audit Panel	14th July 2004

11. CABINET 20TH JULY 20042004-05 Pay Award (Minute 4)

It was **NOTED** that, for future clarity, Cabinet would be invited to amend the Minute to make plain that the accumulation of flexi-leave referred to in paragraph (d) meant flexi-leave above the levels allowed in paragraph (c).

12. DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE 7TH JULY 2004Attendance

Councillor Dr JR Williamson reported that she had been present during the first part of the meeting.

Planning Application S/0951/04/F Histon (Minute 23)

Councillor MJ Mason reported that he had had taken no part in the discussion on this application at the Parish Council meeting.

13. STANDARDS COMMITTEE 21ST JULY 2004Appointment of Vice-Chairman (Minute 3)

It was **NOTED** that Councillor Mrs Trueman was elected Vice-Chairman.

Case Tribunal Reports and References made to Ethical Standards Officers
(Minute 6(d))

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts commented on instructions received from the Standards Board that the record of an interview with her "should not be disclosed for any other purposes" (other than confirmation of accuracy) as she considered that she ought not to be prevented from talking to the councillors involved in the relevant case. She asked that the Standards Committee ask the Standards Board why it had such draconian rules, but the Chairman suggested that this was not a matter for the Committee but might be discussed with the Head of Legal Services. Other Members commented on their experience of the Standards Board and the Chief Executive added that its operation had been a matter of national concern. It was noted that names had not been given in the cases reported.

The handling of complaints and investigations by the Ombudsman (Minute 6(g))

It was noted that where complaints were made anonymously no further action could be taken.

14. AUDIT PANEL 14TH JULY 2004Attendance

Councillor SGM Kindersley reported that he had been present.

Declaration of Interests (Minute 2)

It was noted that Councillor Summerfield had been a partner of Touche Ross.

Interim Audit of Accounts 2003-04, Pensions (Minute 7)

It was noted that the figure quoted for the shortfall in the pension fund was incorrect. Amended wording which would be recommended to the Audit Panel was presented.

Interim Audit of Accounts 2003-04, Grants Co-ordination (Minute 7)

In response to a query, the Chief Executive stated that this recommendation from the Auditors had been referred back to them for clarification as there were conflicting explanations.

15. QUESTIONS ON JOINT MEETINGS

Questions were invited but none received on the minutes of the:

- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, 23rd July 2004
- South Cambridgeshire Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee 28th June 2004
- Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Environment and Transport Joint Strategic Forum, 18th July 2004

Councillor CR Nightingale was invited to make a statement on crime and disorder and asked that Council agree that law and order were a joke, that anti-social behaviour was getting worse, and that the law must be changed in favour of the police and the law abiding. The statement was noted.

16. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS

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

QUESTIONS ON THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The following are the questions raised by Members in advance of the meeting, and the respective answers, as read by the Finance and Resources Director.

1. Page 19 "Consolidated Revenue Account"

Q Why has the expenditure on Private Sector Housing renewal varied from £5.2 million in 2002/03 to £811,000 in 2003/04?

A In 2002/03 the Council was taking full advantage of the LASHG Scheme and during the year in question invested £4.3 million in various social housing schemes. With the ending of the very attractive LASHG arrangements (we no longer obtain a refund of our investment) Members decided to curtail such investment.

2. Page 24 "Audit Costs"

Q Why the large increase in fees between 2002/03 and 2003/04 for auditing the accounts?

A The figures have been included in the accounts on a cash payments basis. i.e. the accounts reflect the year in which the payments were made, rather than the year to which the expenditure necessarily relates. External Audit have been asked for clarification on their billing arrangements to achieve a more accurate apportionment. The situation has been exacerbated by the Audit Commission realigning the accounting periods for external auditors.

3. Page 9 "Table of variance between original estimates and actuals" Q What is the £94,000 expenditure on Miscellaneous?

A Housing General Fund miscellaneous expenditure. There was a significant increase in officer time allocated to the "Strategic Housing Function" during 2003/04 perhaps stimulated by the transfer of the related service to the Development Services Department and providing greater clarity of function. For next year I have asked the Chief Accountant to give Strategic Housing Advice its own cost centre, which will leave the miscellaneous heading covering the various small grants etc

4. Page 26 "Council Tax"

Q What is the impact on the reduced income due to variations in tax base and rate of collection at parish level?

A The calculation of the tax base is completed in December/January each year and is our best "guesstimate" of what number of Band D equivalent properties will exist in each parish during the forthcoming financial year, adjusted for various reliefs, occupation levels and the anticipated rate of collection. It takes as its starting point the actual figures at as the 1st of December each year and then my officers and I, together with other staff from the Council try and predict levels of development etc. Whilst any shortfall in collection has to be borne by the major precepting bodies, Parish Councils receive their precepts in full regardless of actual collections made. I am happy to make available the detailed calculation at individual parish level upon request.

5. Page 39 "Debtors"

Q Why the large increase in debtors for "Council Tax" and "Sundry Debtors" for 2003/04 compared with 2002/03?

A During 2003/04 the software relating to all the principal financial systems of the Council were replaced and I have to accept that associated staffing demands meant this had an adverse impact on our ability to pursue debts to our normal standards. My staff and I are already aware of an error that has crept in to the Statement of Accounts which has led to the level of Sundry Debtors and Creditors being overstated. Compliance with the requirement to close the accounts within a truncated timescale meant that the time available for "variance analysis " was virtually non-existent and only after the draft accounts had been printed was the error identified. I will be discussing with Cllr

Summerfield how we report the mistake to Council.

6. Page 39 "Debtors"

Q How is the Provision for Doubtful Debts calculated?

A It is a formulaic approach reflecting an aged analysis of debts. ie the older the debt the greater the provision.

7. Page 39 "Investments"

Q. Why no provision for loss of principal?

A This authority like most others is very risk averse and places greater emphasis on security than maximising the rate of return. The Treasury Management policy in restricting investments to the major financial institutions (and even then within predefined limits) seeks to minimise associated risk.

8. Page 34 . 'Reconciliation of Balance sheet to Liquid Resources

Q. What is the purpose of this reconciliation?

A The reconciliation seeks to show the Movement in cash during the year in question and reconciles to the Cash Flow Statement (page 3)

9. Page 30 "Impairment"

Q What is impairment and where are the two sites referred to?

A Impairment is the writing down of an asset(s) to more accurately represent its realistic value. The two sites in question are at Russell Close, Steeple Morden and Streetly End West Wickham.

10. Page 9 "Housing Revenue Account"

Q Where are bad debts written off in the accounts?

A They do not show as such but will have been netted off against the rents and charges figure of £18.910m

11. Page 11 "Council Tax and Collection Fund" Q Which is the highest Shire District?

A Newark and Sherwood

12. Page 16 "Stock and Work in Progress" Q Lower of cost and net realisable value?

A Should read "lower of cost or realisable value"

13 Page 21 "Accounting for publicity"

Q Why the increase in expenditure on staff recruitment

A 2003/04 saw a higher than "normal" number of vacancies justifying wider advertisement costs often involving national newspapers e.g. Housing and Environmental Services Director, Asst Director ICT, Head of Policy and Communications etc.

14. Page 23 "Building Control" Q. Deficit both years?

A Yes- report on a financial strategy for building control going to next meeting of Cabinet

15. Page 23 "Employee's remuneration"

Q What was the percentage increase in pay for the 12 employees paid over £50,000 per annum?

A 2003/04 saw the implementation of the results of the Pay and Grading Review, IN PART retrospective to April 2002. In accordance with the accounting code of practice, for reporting the disclosure note on employees' remuneration you have to show what was actually paid during the year in question, not charge it to the year to which it relates. Therefore an extra year's "arrears" were charged to the 2003/04 accounts that for ease of understanding should have been excluded or charged to the previous year. This "false" basis results in pay increases for one year compared to the other of between 14 and 23

percent. However, arrears apart and using the Chief Accountant's salary as an example (one of the 12 referred to above his pay actually increased by a more acceptable 6%

16. Page 25 "The Collection Fund"

*Q When SCDC is growing as it is, why the reduction in the income from business rates?
A The debit (amount collectable) has in fact increased by 8.5%. However, during the year in question there were a large number of successful appeals to the Valuation agency which saw us giving back over £6m in refunds. These are chargeable to the year in which the payment is made, even if the refund relates to a number of earlier years. Mandatory (enforced) relief against the payment of rates also increased during the year by more than £1 m.*

17. Page 25 "The Collection Fund"

*Q How does the amount of uncollectable Council Tax compare with previous years?
A The provision for bad and doubtful debts is calculated by reference to outstanding debts; see 6 above. Compared to the previous years the provision has increased as follows: 2000/01 £17,668 2001/02 £25,698 2002/03 £35, 797 2003/04 £87, 150
Although these figures may at first glance give cause for concern, they must be judged against an increasing tax liability; the amount collected over the same period has increased from £37.3m to £51.5m and it follows that some increase in write offs and doubtful debts would flow through.*

18. Page 39. "Debtors"

*Q Does the large amount of Council Tax outstanding at 31st March 2004 imply a further rise in uncollectable tax this year and how much of the £1.2 m has been collected?
A In calculating the current provision for doubtful debts we have taken account of the £1.2m. Only if the arrears increase further will the provision need to be increased. Cllr Summerfield at his portfolio holder meetings receives monthly monitoring and performance management reports on the collection of all income owing to the authority. £694,000 of the £1.2m outstanding at the 31st March remains outstanding. Summonses were issued in June for recovery of these arrears, plus anything unpaid for this year and liability orders have been granted in appropriate circumstances.*

The Meeting ended at 4.50 p.m.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council 23 September 2004
AUTHOR/S: Development Services Director

Local Development Framework

Local Development Framework Preferred Options Reports - Revisions

Purpose

1. To consider the decision of Scrutiny and Overview Committee of 16th September regarding the call-in of the decision relating to the Northstowe Preferred Options report made by Cabinet at its meeting of 9th September. There are two possible scenarios for Council depending on that decision:
 - a. if Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends any changes to the Northstowe Preferred Options report, Council is asked to decide the final wording of the report so that it can be subject to public participation alongside the other Local Development Framework Preferred Options reports, as previously agreed by Council, starting on 1 October.
 - b. if Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends that no changes be made to the Northstowe Preferred Options report, no further action is required by Council.

2. If the decision of the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder relating to the Cambourne Technical Appendix to the Rural Centres Preferred Options report is called in and considered by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 16th September (the deadline for call-in is after this agenda went to print), there are also two scenarios for Council:
 - a. if Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends any changes to the Cambourne Technical Appendix to the Rural Centres Preferred Options report, Council is asked to decide the final wording of the report so that it can be subject to public participation alongside the other Local Development Framework Preferred Options reports, as previously agreed by Council, starting on 1st October.
 - b. if Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends that no changes be made to the Cambourne Technical Appendix to the Rural Centres Preferred Options report, no further action is required by Council.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

3. Quality, Accessible Services	As a new town, there will be a major opportunity at Northstowe to incorporate the infrastructure for broadband and other information technologies into the development.
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Village Life	<p>The development of Northstowe provides the opportunity secure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Council's targets for the delivery of affordable homes 2. to develop layouts which mitigate against criminal activity 3. promote healthy lifestyles by being pedestrian and cycle friendly, and provide access to the surrounding countryside; and 4. which include a range of public and private services and facilities. 5. Ensure that the majority of South Cambridgeshire's villages are not called upon to accommodate the high levels of housing growth proposed for the Cambridge Sub-Region.
Sustainability	<p>Northstowe will be developed as an example of high quality sustainable development. To ensure that this objective is achieved, the plans have and will be subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment/ Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA).</p>
Partnership	<p>Planning and delivering a new town of between 8,000 and 10,000 dwellings will require the Council to work in partnership with a whole host of services and infrastructure providers as well as local authorities and government agencies. The scale of development including that at Northstowe has already resulted in the establishment of the Infrastructure Partnership – recently renamed Cambridgeshire Horizons.</p>

Background

4. Council on 22nd July agreed Preferred Options reports for all the Local Development Framework documents currently in preparation, subject to changes to the Northstowe Preferred Options report to accord with the following decisions:
 - i. That no decision be made on the site selection for Northstowe until the green separation for Longstanton and Oakington has been decided.
 - ii. That all references to “double counting” in the land use budget and possible uses of the green separation in the Northstowe Preferred Options Report be deleted
 - iii. That Council present the three site location options for Northstowe as equal options A, B and C, in order that that the public may be consulted in a fair and unbiased way.

5. Council also agreed that a Technical Appendix be prepared to the Rural Centres paper relating to the way that an additional 700 dwellings could be accommodated at Cambourne.

6. The work required to the Northstowe Preferred Options report by those decisions was considered by the Northstowe Member Steering Group at its meeting of 6th September to which all Members of Cabinet who are not already members of the Steering Group were invited. A site visit to assist the meeting was also held. The Member Steering Group recommended to Cabinet that the officers’ recommendations be agreed, subject to certain changes. (Members may find it helpful to bring with them their copies of the Member Steering Group agenda papers. If you do not have a copy already,

please contact Democratic Services. The Steering Group's recommendations were sent to all Members on the 8th September for Cabinet on the 9th.)

7. Council delegated to the Planning Portfolio Holder the power to decide whether the amendments required by Council have been made. The Planning Portfolio Holder requested that Cabinet assist in making this decision having regard to the recommendations of the 6th September meeting of the Northstowe Member Steering Group.
8. Cabinet considered this issue at its meeting of 9th September and resolved to agree the Preferred Options report, as amended by the Member Steering Group. Cabinet decisions were sent to all Members on the 10th September and the full (draft) minutes are attached to the Council agenda.
9. The decision of Cabinet was called-in by the Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and will be considered as an emergency item at the meeting of 16th September. The Committee's decision and any recommendations will be reported to this meeting of Council.
10. With regard to the preparation of a Cambourne Technical Appendix to the Rural Centres Preferred Options report agreed in principle by Council, this was agreed by the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder following consultation with local Members. The appendix makes no changes of substance to the reports already agreed by Council, but amplifies the implications. The call-in for that Portfolio decision expires after the Council papers go to print and it is therefore included in this report to allow for the event that it is called in and any changes are recommended by Scrutiny and Overview Committee who, it is understood, will consider any call in as an emergency item at its meeting of 16th September.
11. The timetable for preparing the Local Development Framework in order that it can be adopted during 2006 and meet the government's objective for the first houses at Northstowe to be ready for occupation during 2007 means that the Council will need to maintain momentum in preparing the plan and consulting with the community. Council's decision on 22nd July has introduced an additional round of drafting before public participation can begin and has caused a review of the Council's working arrangements in order to ensure that the whole Council can be more involved in plan-making before agreeing the Local Development Framework documents.
12. The timetable for preparing the Local Development Framework (LDF) is now as follows:

LDF STAGES	TIMETABLE	NOTES
Public Participation	1 st October to 12 th November 2004	Exhibitions and general publicity for 6 weeks
Agree outline of the LDF	Mid January to end February 2005	4 joint meetings of the Planning Policy Advisory Group & Development and Conservation Control Committee
Agree policies and proposals of the LDF	End February to mid April 2005	4 Special Meetings of Council
Submit LDF to the Secretary of State	Mid June 2005	6 week period for making representations

LDF STAGES	TIMETABLE	NOTES
Public objection sites for public comment	October and November 2005	6 weeks
Public Examination	January to March 2006	Duration determined by number of objections and format of inquiry
Receive binding Inspector's Report	October 2006	Approximately 6 months after close of Examination
Council adopts LDF	November 2006	

Options

13. Following the resolution of Council of 22nd July, a considerable amount of work has been done on the issue of green separation between Northstowe and the villages of Longstanton and Oakington. This has been agreed, with a small number of changes, by both the Northstowe Member Steering Group and Cabinet. Work has also taken place on a Technical paper to the Rural Centres report, which has been agreed by the Portfolio Holder. The findings of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee will also be before Council.
14. It is crucial to regain momentum in the preparation of the Local Development Framework in order for the Council to be able to demonstrate that an LDF can reach the point where an outline planning application could be determined which would allow development at Northstowe to start in 2006 as required by the Structure Plan. If the Council fails to achieve this, there is every possibility that the way in which Northstowe is developed will be determined either by plan-making powers being passed from the Council to another body or through the development control appeal process. The Council has already received a letter from GO-East expressing concerns that the delay in the timetable resultant from the July meeting of Council "could have a significantly adverse effect on meeting the 2006 start date" and drawing attention to the provision of £20M of Growth Area Delivery Grant and other monies from Government which has been given to assist the delivery and early implementation of the development strategy. I am advised that these concerns from GO-East have been brought to the attention of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. It is understood that Lord Rooker has asked to be updated on the position.
15. It is important that a decision on the Northstowe and Rural Centres Preferred Options reports is made by Council at this meeting. Not only could there be significant implications for the future operation of the Council if the timetable were to slip further, but the public participation exercise would be complicated by Northstowe and Rural Centres being on a different timetable to all the other Preferred Options reports which would cause significant confusion to the general public. Delivery of the LDF is also important for a number of the Council's corporate objectives.

Financial Implications

21. The Directorate of Development Services budget includes provision for public participation on Preferred Options.

Legal Implications

22. The Government Office for the Eastern of England has been closely consulted on the preparation of the Local Development Framework prior to commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Staffing Implications

23. Continued involvement of the Planning Policy Team and officers from a number of the Council's departments who will have a role in the implementation of development.

Risk Management Implications

24. The programme for the preparation and adoption of the LDF is very challenging but the timely delivery of the Local Development Framework is crucial to the delivery of a number of the Council's Corporate Objectives. If a decision is not made at Council there would be unfortunate consequential problems with the forthcoming public participation.

Consultations

25. Responses to the Statutory Bodies Consultation are set out in each of the Preferred Options Reports. The main purpose of publication of the Preferred Options Paper is to enable consultation with the public and stakeholders before Council agrees the content of the plan for submission to the Secretary of State in June 2005.

Recommendations

26. For the avoidance of doubt, Council is not being asked to agree the content of the Northstowe Area Action Plan or the Rural Centres Development Plan Document at this stage. Those documents will be drafted with the benefit of the results of the public participation to be carried out in October/November. The Development Plan Documents will subsequently be considered by Members during January and February 2005 and will be the subject of recommendations to Council meetings from the end of February to mid April.
27. It is **RECOMMENDED** that,
 - a. if Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends that changes be made to the Northstowe Preferred Options report, Council **DECIDES** the final form of the report for public participation, also having regard to the decision of Cabinet on 9th September.
 - b. if Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends that changes be made to the Cambourne Technical Appendix to the Rural Centres Preferred Options report, Council **DECIDES** the final form of the report for public participation.
 - c. If Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends that no change be made to either of the Preferred Options report, that decision is **NOTED**.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Regional Planning Guidance 6
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (2003)
- Local Transport Plan (2004-11)
- Cambridgeshire Strategic Open Space Study Initial Report 2004
- South Cambridgeshire Housing Needs Study 2002
- Cambridge Area Key Worker and Affordable Housing Study 2002
- Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Needs Survey 2003
- Draft Regional Planning Guidance 14 for the East of England
- A number of other publications including Government PPGs.

Contact Officer: Keith Miles – Planning Policy Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713181

CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Thursday, 9 September 2004

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Leader of Council)

Councillors:	Dr DR Bard	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	JD Batchelor	Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	Mrs JM Healey	Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell	Housing Portfolio Holder
	SGM Kindersley	Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
	Mrs DP Roberts	Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant, Mrs A Elsby, Mrs SA Hatton, Dr JA Heap, Mrs CAED Murfitt, A Riley, Mrs GJ Smith and Dr SEK van de Ven were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor RT Summerfield.

Procedural Items

1. MINUTES

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2004, subject to the following amendment:

2004-05 Pay Award (Minute 4)

That paragraphs (c) and (d) be transposed and the words “beyond the above levels” be inserted into recommendation (d) as follows:

(c) that all flexi-leave provision be capped at:

- 2004/05 – 8 days
- 2005/06 – 6 days
- 2006/07 – 4 days

(d) that the accumulation of flexi-leave *beyond the above levels* be granted only in exceptional circumstances, subject to Chief Officer approval.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were received:

Councillor Dr DR Bard In Item 13, Dual Use Arts Review / Strategy, a personal interest as a governor of Sawston Village College

Councillor JD Batchelor In Item 13, Dual Use Arts Review / Strategy, a personal interest as a governor of Linton Village College and as a board member of the Broadening Education Trust.

Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information

3. NORTHSTOWE PREFERRED OPTIONS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PAPER

The revised Northstowe Preferred Options Public Participation Paper had been the subject of extensive debate on Monday 6th September at the Northstowe Member Steering Group and the Group's recommendations were presented to Cabinet. With public consultation scheduled to begin on 1st October, the call-in process had been accelerated, with the agreement of the Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

It was clarified that the decision summary from the Northstowe Member Steering Group was not a final set of minutes but record of decisions only. Councillor A Riley, who had declared a prejudicial interest and withdrawn from the Steering Group meeting, had e-mailed all members querying the wording of the proposal on Green Separation at St Michael's Mount. The wording of the proposal that was put to a vote was confirmed as correct by those members present at Cabinet who had attended the Monday meeting. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder corrected a statement in a paper Councillor Riley had distributed to members at the Cabinet meeting: discussion on Monday regarding Rampton Drift had been curtailed until after Councillor Riley had returned to the Steering Group meeting.

Councillor SGM Kindersley, referring to the Council's Corporate Objective to preserve and enhance villages, queried whether a resolution could be worded to afford additional separation for the Conservation Area at St Michael's Mount, Longstanton. Councillor Kindersley also asked that, given their special circumstances, the residents of Rampton Drift should be consulted specifically on the effects of the Northstowe proposals on their area. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder agreed with the latter request and asked that this should be arranged. The problem with the former was finding a form of words which would apply generally.

Members debated the need to ensure protection of the buildings at St Michael's Mount and conservation areas generally and whether differences between built and open areas were material. The Development Services Director advised that good planning required good policies which could be defended. The Planning Policy Officer (Transport) then explained that the Northstowe Member Steering Group had worked hard to apply a consistent approach and consistency of treatment of the village frameworks and conservation areas. If a 200-metre separation were applied to all conservation area boundaries, the remaining land available would not allow the Northstowe settlement to be a viable proposition. Members who had visited the site on Monday had concluded that a 50-metre separation was sufficient at Long Lane to preserve the character of the adjacent open part of the Conservation Area, and also that the amenity and setting of the property at St Michael's Mount in the Conservation Area, with around 100 metres' separation, could be enhanced with suitable treatment such as dense tree planting, reflecting the existing landscape character. He confirmed that the developable area lost through a greater separation area at Michael's Mount would not be critical.

Councillor Kindersley, seconded by Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, considered that the presence of buildings in the conservation area was the crucial factor and proposed that:

“in order to preserve and / or enhance the designated conservation areas and the dwellings therein, a 200 metre separation belt will be imposed, measured from the curtilages of the dwellings therein”.

This proposal was put to the vote and with 2 in favour and 4 against was **LOST**.

Cabinet therefore

RESOLVED

that the revised Northstowe Preferred Options Paper as presented to the Northstowe Member Steering Group on 6th September 2004 and to this meeting be approved for publication for the purpose of public participation, subject to the findings of Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment, with the following amendments agreed by the Steering Group:

- (1)
 - The green areas shown on Appendix C are revised to distinguish between areas performing different functions by using different notations. Appendix C to be amended for consultation to show these different areas in separate notations as follows:
 - Green Separation – between Northstowe and the villages of Longstanton and Oakington
 - Landscape buffers – to outlying development and edges of the new town
 - Special landscape treatment - surrounding Rampton Drift.
 - Appendix A (Green Separation at Northstowe) to be amended as follows;
Page 34 Outlying areas, first bullet point to read:
"Rampton Drift is an area that lies within all the site options proposed for Northstowe. It will therefore need a specific special landscape treatment as it will be surrounded by urban uses which allows it to be sensitively integrated into the town whilst ensuring that an adequate buffer is provided in order to maintain its residential amenity. This is likely to be best achieved by a tree belt supplementing the existing nearby mature trees"
- (2) (~~Building on recent experience at Cambourne, the buffer zone should be 50m in depth in order to be effective~~)
- (3) The principles contained in the report on Green Separation, Appendix A (including Annex A & B but excluding the Addendum on Green Separation Guidelines) and Appendix C (subject to changes agreed above) be agreed for the purpose of public participation.
- (4) Incorporation of the following additional amendments in the Preferred Options Report:
 - (a) Page 65/2.4 Remove the words "which performs less well in the evaluation"
 - (b) Page 65/2.4 Remove the words "which performs poorly"
 - (c) Page 65/2/5 Remove bullet point 4 completely
 - (d) Page 65 Move Paragraph 2.4 and 2.5 to a more appropriate place within the text.

- (e) Page 67/2.10 Clarify in the text that the “1,000 or 2,000 dwellings” relate to site options B and C respectively
- (f) Page 75 Replace the word “discourage” with “prevent” in the penultimate bullet point
- (g) Page 75 Remove the last bullet point
- (h) Page 87/8.2 Remove the last sentence where “it states that densities of less than 30 dph will not be acceptable”
- (i) Page 96/10.8 Remove the word “police” as they are not a commercially provided service and re-add if appropriate.
- (j) Page 101/17A Remove the word “restrict” and replace with “discourage”
- (k) Page 103/NS30c Remove the word “all” and replace with “any”
- (l) Page 103 Add reference to Willingham Parish Council seeking a bypass for Willingham and the Highways Authority advice that if a bypass were justified, it would be by traffic passing to and from the fens and not just by the development of Northstowe.
- (m) Page 131/17.6 Add the word “west” to read “*and the A14 to the North West of Dry Drayton Road.*”
- (n) Page 132 Add “*NS82 Alleviating Flood Risk at Oakington – Option D*”. Add new option to show a possibility of alleviating flooding by modifications to the Bar Hill balancing pond.
- (o) Page 140/20.7 Amend the last sentence to read “*for the developers to maintain the landscaping and replace dead stock...*”
- (p) Page 142/NS97 Add “*which would not be located closer than 200 metres to any existing domestic properties*” to the end of the policy statement
- (q) Page 142/NS99 Replace the word “would” with “may” with regard to granting temporary planning permission.

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder **CONFIRMED** that an area-specific consultation letter would be delivered to all residents of Rampton Drift, in light of their special circumstances.

4. CPA IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Chief Executive explained that the Council needed to develop an improvement plan based on the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Inspectors’ report, through which the Council had achieved a “Fair” rating, only three points away from a “Good” rating. A round table meeting had been scheduled for 29 September to discuss priorities with the Audit Commission Relationship Manager, external audit and senior

representatives of the Council. From this meeting an improvement programme would begin, after which the Council would determine milestones for measuring improvement and who would deliver each stage.

Members discussed:

- the priorities in the report were improvement priorities, not the Council's service priorities, which were the subject of public consultation;
- members need to be seen to be leading on priorities;
- the "Fair" rating in the report was the result of the CPA inspection, not the Council's self-assessment; and
- the Council was aiming for at least a "Good" rating on the next CPA inspection.

Cabinet **AGREED**

- (a) to request the improvement plan to be prepared to achieve an improvement in the Council's CPA category to at least "Good" by 2006;
- (b) to approve the following draft proposals as the Council's top priorities for improvement for discussion at the round table meeting with inspectors and auditors:

Service Outcome Priorities

1. To achieve a high level of customer service
2. To achieve successful, sustainable new communities at Northstowe and around Cambridge
3. To maximise the number of affordable houses available in South Cambridgeshire

Corporate Improvement / Capacity Priorities

4. To improve prioritisation
 5. To improve performance management
 6. To enhance future plans
- (c) to support the view that future best value reviews should focus on enabling the Council to make savings through efficiencies or clarifying the objectives / standards of services and that future reviews should be conducted in a way which is cost effective and targeted; and
 - (d) to support the following proposals as areas where inspection and audit could support the Council's achievement of its improvement priorities:
 - the identification of best practice and means of financing affordable housing in the context of the current housing finance regime; and
 - the identification of best practice and effective models of District Council community leadership in relation to the Community Strategy and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

5. RENEWABLE ENERGY

The Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder commended the synopsis of the report's findings to members and encouraged all to read the complete report. She emphasised the importance of informing and educating people about renewable energy and the statutory targets which the Council must observe and meet.

Comments raised during discussion included:

- the new office building was an example of how the Council could lead on green issues
- the need to include power, gas and water supplies with infrastructure in new settlements;
- the need to encourage energy efficiency all housing policies, not just market

housing, and to search for affordable ways to adapt existing housing stock to take advantage of new technologies;

- the incorporation of photo-voltaic cells in Circle 33 housing at Cambourne, reducing residents' electricity bills;
- that sustainability was a mainstream issue vital to all Council work; and
- it was also important to educate residents about conserving energy, as energy consumption was growing.

Cabinet **AGREED** to endorse the synopsis of the report's findings.

6. RECOMMENDATION FROM LICENSING COMMITTEE

The current conditions used by the Council addressed general requirements for licensing standard vehicles under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, but did not provide for more specialised vehicles such as stretch limousines.

Cabinet, therefore, **AGREED** that a new paragraph be introduced to the Vehicle Licence Conditions for Private Hire Vehicles and Hackney Carriages (1999-Edition (1)), entitled "Stretch Limousines" and that the following conditions be introduced as additional to those currently in place for normal vehicles. These conditions will be read as:

- (a) All stretch limousines should meet the QVM (Quality Vehicle Modifier) issued by the Ford Motor Company or the CMC (Cadillac Mastercoach Builder) or have relevant approval documentation of the originating chassis supplier approving the conversion as presented for licensing.
- (b) No vehicle will be licensed if that part of the vehicle converted exceeds a length of 10' in part or whole.
- (c) Passenger capacity will be determined by how many forward or rear-facing seatbelts are within the vehicle. (Side-facing seatbelts will not be considered for licensing purposes.)
- (d) Correct tyres as recommended by the manufacturer must be fitted to include appropriate weight loading of the converted vehicle.
- (e) That no stretch limousine over 6 years of age from the date of its first registration shall be licensed.
- (f) The maximum weight of any converted vehicle shall not exceed 7,100 lbs (3,200 Kg).

7. HOUSING ADAPTATION AND IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder explained the current situation regarding housing adaptation and improvement grants handled by the Home Improvement Agency and the current year's budgetary position. The following clarifications and corrections were made to the report:

- Paragraph 9: it was unlikely that the Council would receive a contribution from GO-East, but the final response would not be known until the end of the financial year;
- Paragraph 10: a response from the South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) was awaited;
- Paragraph 13: the amount already spent or committed against the total budget was now £678,000, with approximately £107,000 of discretionary grant money still available;
- Paragraph 22c: should refer to capital receipts, not Housing Capital Receipts;
- Paragraph 25: should read "affect" rather than "effect"; and
- Paragraph 28, recommendation (b)(ii): delete all words after General Fund Balances.

Members expressed concern about the need to assist residents within the current budgetary framework and service priorities:

- improvement grants increased the value of private homes, with the Council making a long-term investment without a realistic return of taxpayers' money as any loans over and above £25,000 were charged on the property and not realised until the property were sold;
- the number of cases needing assistance from the Home Improvement Agency was the result of the backlog of referrals by Occupational Therapists over recent years, a situation which had since been remedied. The PCT had acknowledged the backlog had now moved to the District Council and officers were encouraged that further discussion with the PCT could yield additional resources, although this would likely be on a match-funding basis;
- postponing any grants at this time would move the backlog into the next financial year as a large part of the award was mandatory, rather than discretionary;
- the Home Improvement Agency already recommended that residents move to more suitable accommodation, but it was possible that this recommendation could be introduced earlier in the process.

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder appealed to Cabinet to approve the recommendations in the report, which it was hoped would address the backlog in the current financial year. If the recommendations were deferred, a moratorium on approvals would begin immediately. The Finance and Resources Director reminded members that the medium-term financial strategy would be presented to Cabinet in October and would give members a clearer position of the overall budgetary context.

Cabinet **DEFERRED** a decision pending receipt of the Council's medium-term financial strategy and a response from the South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust.

8. BUILDING CONTROL FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder introduced the report and reminded Cabinet that the Building Control service now had to compete with the private sector and was trying to raise its profile through advertisement. Officers were also investigating partnership working with other local authorities and members raised the possibility of extending the investigations to include the private sector.

Councillor SGM Kindersley expressed reservations about the service, preferring to see a review of the service as a whole, a view to which Cabinet was sympathetic. It was confirmed that the Council was obliged to ensure that the service was provided, but not necessarily to provide the service itself.

Cabinet **NOTED** the report and

AGREED to authorise the investigation of partnership working with adjacent Building Control authorities.

9. BENEFITS SURVEY RESULTS

The 2003 Benefits Survey was a national survey of Housing and / or Council Tax benefits claimants who had pursued a new or renewal claim during two sampling windows in 2003. Councillor Mrs EM Heazell expressed concern that only 78% of respondents had agreed that they could speak to someone in private, and felt that all financial discussions should be held in private. The Chief Executive explained that

many people declined private interviews as a matter of personal choice. Councillor Dr DR Bard queried the security of staff in private interview rooms and was advised that officers were investigating ways of improving staff security, such as relocating the panic buttons.

Cabinet **NOTED** the results of the 2003 Benefits Survey and

- AGREED**
- (a) to approve the following steps to improve satisfaction with documentation:
 - conduct a focus group of benefit claimants to explore in more detail how the documentation could be improved
 - commission the person who helped to edit the Council Tax leaflet to advise on how the benefits documentation could be made more user friendly
 - (b) to confirm proposals to undertake more frequent satisfaction surveys through the issue of satisfaction cards with benefits decisions during certain "sampling windows" each year; and
 - (c) to request the benefits service to agree and publish customer care standards, based on the corporate standards to be developed as part of a current corporate project.

10. PLANNING SURVEY RESULTS

Cabinet considered the Council's results from a national survey of planning applicants or agents of applicants, conducted in August 2003. The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder commended the recommendations to Cabinet.

Councillor Mrs EM Heazell approved of the idea of customer satisfaction cards for on-going feedback, but noted that respondents would be self-selecting. She queried whether six-monthly agents' forum meetings would be useful, as planning agents were usually able to demand the service they required, and asked that a survey of Parish Councils and individual applicants be considered instead. Councillor SGM Kindersley suggested that the Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils (CALC) could be requested to include a planning service review as part of their annual meeting of Parish Councils. It was clarified that any review focussed on the planning service, not on planning decisions.

The Development Services Director confirmed that officers took great care in discussions with applicants and that notes of meetings were maintained.

Cabinet **NOTED** the results of the 2003 Planning Survey and

- AGREED**
- (a) to initiate more regular customer satisfaction feedback through:
 - issuing a customer satisfaction card to applicants and others who come into contact with the development control service, the results of which would be regularly analysed to enable managers to track satisfaction levels;
 - establish an agents' forum and hold six-monthly meetings to provide regular users of the planning service an opportunity to feed back to the Council on how satisfaction is changing; and

- requesting that the Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils (CALC) ask South Cambridgeshire Parish Councils for feedback on the planning **service** (not planning decisions) as part of CALC's annual meeting
- (b) to support the plans referred to in paragraph 13 to use ICT to improve customer service; and
- (c) to request the development control service to agree and publish customer care standards, based on the corporate standards to be developed as part of a current corporate project.

11. APPOINTMENTS

Housing Options Appraisal Working Group

Councillor Mrs EM Heazell explained that Councillor Mrs HF Kember had originally received training as a tenant member prior to her election to the District Council, as a result of which the number of tenant members dropped from six to five. As it had proven impossible to find another Councillor to volunteer for the Group, it had been agreed that there would be five Councillors and five tenant representatives.

Cabinet **CONFIRMED** the appointment of the following members to the Housing Options Appraisal Working Group:

Mrs A Elsby
 Mrs HF Kember
 EJ Pateman
 NJ Scarr
 Mrs DSK Spink
 (Mrs EM Heazell attends as Housing Portfolio Holder)

Member Training Advisory Group

Cabinet **AGREED** the appointment of Councillor Dr SEK van de Ven to the Member Training Advisory Group.

12. ARTS DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP

The Scrutiny and Overview Committee, at its 12 February 2004 meeting, recommended the establishment of an Arts Development Advisory Group, which was likely to meet a maximum of three times before January 2005, to inform the next District Arts Strategy 2005-2010. Membership consisted of the Community Development Portfolio Holder and those Councillors who had been nominated as observers on the governing bodies of arts organisations funded by the Council.

Cabinet **AGREED** the following appointments to the Arts Development Advisory Group:

Mrs PS Corney
 Dr SA Harangozo
 JA Hockney
 Mrs JA Muncey
 JA Quinlan
 Mrs GJ Smith
 Mrs DSK Spink
 (Mrs DP Roberts attends as Community Development Portfolio Holder)

Operational Items

13. HOUSING RESPONSE REPAIRS CONTRACT AWARD

The Housing Portfolio Holder explained that interviews for the three area-based contracts had been conducted on 7th September, and an additional paper was circulated with the results of those interviews. She noted that contracts had been awarded to the lowest-tendering contractor in each case, which therefore did not need Cabinet approval but was presented to Cabinet for information.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, the Head of Shire Homes explained that the review of the Shire Homes organisational structure was being conducted to streamline processes under new legislation and to improve effectiveness under new partnership agreements.

Cabinet **NOTED** the intention of the Housing and Environmental Services Director to:

- (a) award the East area housing responsive repairs contract to the Council's Direct Labour Organisation
- (b) award the West area housing responsive repairs contract to the Council's Direct Labour Organisation
- (c) award the South area housing responsive repairs contract to Cambridge City Council's City Services

in line with the evaluation of tenders carried out by the Housing responsive repairs contract evaluation panel.

14. ARTS DUAL USE REVIEW

The Community Development Portfolio Holder presented the update on the Dual Use Arts Strategy pilot scheme as approved by Cabinet on 27 March 2003 and expressed her pleasure that Linton Village College was now participating. Members commended the scheme as an excellent service for a reasonable amount of money.

Cabinet **NOTED** the findings of the Dual Use Arts Review.

15. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The Finance and Resources Director presented the excellent results of the treasury management performance and drew members' attention to the fact that the Council was outperforming comparable and overall groups, yielding additional interest of over £210,000. Cabinet congratulated staff on the performance.

It was clarified that ethical investment was regularly discussed, but was not a strong issue as the Council was aiming for the highest rate of return. The Council did invest with major institutions, banks and building societies whose policies were widely known.

Cabinet **NOTED** the performance of the treasury management function.

The Meeting ended at 1.00 p.m.

DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE

At a meeting held on Wednesday, 4 August 2004 at 10.00 a.m..

PRESENT: Councillor RGR Smith– Chairman
Councillor Dr JPR Orme – Vice-Chairman

Councillors	Dr DR Bard	RE Barrett
	JD Batchelor	RF Bryant
	SM Edwards	R Hall
	Mrs SA Hatton	Mrs EM Heazell
	Mrs CA Hunt	HC Hurrell
	SGM Kindersley	RB Martlew
	MJ Mason	DH Morgan
	Mrs JA Muncey	Mrs CAED Murfitt
	CR Nightingale	EJ Pateman
	A Riley	Mrs DP Roberts
	NJ Scarr	Mrs DSK Spink MBE
	RJ Turner	

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs PS Corney, Mrs J Dixon, Mrs A Elsby, Mrs JM Healey, JH Stewart, Dr JR Williamson, TJ Wotherspoon and SS Ziaian-Gillan.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1. **S/1090/04/LB & S/1091/04/F - GREAT WILBRAHAM**
Erection of single storey rear extension, 15 Angle End, Great Wilbraham for Mr and Mrs Ryan
REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services.
RESOLVED to issue an Enforcement Notice to remove the single-storey rear extension.
2. **S/1310/04/F - GREAT WILBRAHAM**
Erection of a Dwelling on Land to the Rear of Rookery Farm, Frog End, Great Wilbraham for Wilbraham Estates Trustees
REFUSED for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services.
3. **S/1119/04/F - WATERBEACH**
Erection of Building to provide 8 Guest Rooms "Travellers Rest" Public House, Ely Road, Chittering for C. Crickmore
DELEGATED APPROVAL, subject to the receipt of satisfactory amended plans detailing proposals permanently to stop-up the existing access to and from the A10 Ely Road, and ensuring that all vehicular traffic accesses the site from School Lane, and subject also to drainage concerns being addressed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
4. **S/1217/04/F - WATERBEACH**
Redevelopment of Existing Caravan Park to Comprise 39 Touring Pitches, New Toilet / Shower / Laundry Block, Reception Building and Internal Road. Extension to Season to 11 Months from 6th February to 5th January. "Travellers Rest" Caravan Park, Chittering for C. Crickmore
DEFERRED to enable officers to explore, with the applicant, a number of outstanding issues, including drainage and visibility splays and conditions on the length of stay of caravans.
5. **S/0249/04/F - THRILOW**
Erection of 2 Dwellings and Garages Following Demolition of Existing Dwelling and

Outbuildings at 42 Church Street for David Reed Homes

APPROVAL, as amended by drawing nos. 04001-02A (x2) and 04001-03A date stamped 26th May 2004, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services and to the Conditions referred to therein.

Councillor RGR Smith declared a personal interest in this item as having been a part-owner of the land until late 2003.

6. S/1232/04/F - THRIFLOW

Conversion of one Dwelling into two Dwellings at 15 Woburn Place For T & J Ryan
APPROVAL, in accordance with the amended recommendation of the Director of Development Services following the receipt of amended plans showing existing and proposed window and door openings, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services and subject to the deletion of Condition 1 therein, to Condition 2 becoming Condition 1, and to Condition 3 becoming Condition 2 and being reworded to the effect that, within three months of planning consent being granted, or such other timescale as may be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the parking will be provided in accordance with the amended plan and thereafter maintained.

7. S/0983/04/F - WHITTLESFORD

Extension – 16 Royston Road For Mr & Mrs Blackburne-Maze

APPROVED for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to the Conditions referred to therein, and an additional Condition requiring appropriate boundary treatment.

8. S/0103/04/F - WILLINGHAM

Erection of two houses, Land at 3, Fen End for Black Silk Ltd

APPROVAL, as amended by plans date-stamped 22nd June 2004, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to the Conditions referred to therein.

9. S/1253/04/F - BABRAHAM

Erection of House and Garage Following Demolition of Village Hall – Village Hall Site, High Street for M Winter

Erection of House and Garage following demolition of Village Hall – Village Hall Site, High Street for M Winter

DELEGATED APPROVAL, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, on the casting vote of the Chairman, following the receipt of amended plans but subject to the applicant agreeing to re-locate the garage to an area behind the existing Village Hall. Approval would be subject to there being no material objections from the Trees and Landscape Officer, to the Conditions referred to in the report from the Director of Development Services, and to two additional Conditions requiring the frontage wall to be protected during construction work and the removal of permitted development rights. **Delegated refusal if the applicant does not agree to re-locate the garage on the grounds of the adverse impact on the amenity of the occupiers of Ember House.**

DELEGATED REFUSAL if the applicant does not agree to re-locate the garage on the grounds of the adverse impact on the amenity of the occupiers of Ember House.

10. S/1278/04/F - CROXTON

Change of Use to Hand Wash and Security Fencing (Retrospective) at Former Q8 Petrol Filling Station, Cambridge Road (A428), Croxton for T. Mason

REFUSED, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Members expressed concern about highway safety and the appearance of the proposed security fencing.

11. S/1061/04/F - CASTLE CAMPS

Dwelling on land to the rear of The Shrubbery, High Street for C Wenham

REFUSED, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Having visited the site, Members raised concerns about the size, design and location of the proposed dwelling and the necessary surfacing of the access in terms of the resulting adverse effect on the character of the village in general and the amenity of the occupiers of Pear Tree Cottage and Serena in particular, and the desirability of protecting Green Lane for the benefit of the entire village.

12. S/0511/04/F - FOWLMERE

Extension and Conversion of Buildings into a Dwelling and Erection of Garage / Carport, Mill Farm, Fowlmere Road, Melbourn, for Plum Developments

DEFERRED for a site visit.

13. S/1294/04/F - FULBOURN

Erection of extensions, 9 Haggis Gap, Fulbourn for Mrs S.J. Doggett

DELEGATED APPROVAL subject either to the prior completion of a Section 106 Legal Agreement or to an addendum to the existing Agreement referred to in paragraph 18 of the report from the Director of Development Services, for the reasons set out, and subject to the Condition referred to, therein.

Councillor NJ Scarr declared a prejudicial interest in this item, due to the applicant being his partner, and withdrew from the Chamber.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts declared a personal interest, as a close friend of the applicant, and withdrew from the Chamber.

14. S/1302/04/F - GAMLINGAY

Variation of Condition 1 of Planning Permission S/1737/01/O to Allow a Further Period of 3 Years for the Submission of Reserved Matters for Industrial Development (Class B1 and B2), Land South of Station Road for Merton College

APPROVAL of a variation of Condition 1 of planning permission S/1737/01/O but for a lesser period of one year to encourage the early submission of a Reserved Matters application, subject to the Conditions previously imposed.

Councillor Mrs DSK Spink declared a personal interest in this item as a Governor of Gamlingay Village College, but remained in the Chamber and contributed to the debate.

15. S/1018/04/F - GREAT SHELFORD

Relocation of Mobile Home to House Temporary Staff Together with Siting of Portacabin – 144 Cambridge Road for Shelford Lodge Ltd

DELEGATED APPROVAL subject to confirmation that the portacabin is to be included in the application; the receipt of a plan which shows the mobile home on the existing hardstanding and as close as possible to the adjacent planted area between the hardstanding and the main building whilst still allowing the mobile home doors to face the main building and be opened; and the relocation of the portacabin to a position on the grassed area between the main building and the planted area but not adjacent to the boundary to No.138 Cambridge Road. Conditions referred to in the report plus a fifth condition stating that the portacabin shall only be used for the storage of those items listed in the applicant's letter.

Councillor Dr DR Bard declared a prejudicial interest in this item, due to a close relative having once been a resident in the Home, and withdrew from the Chamber.

16. S/1078/04/F - HIGHFIELDS CALDECOTE

Erection of House, Land Between 62 & 66 West Drive for I G M Construction
DELEGATED APPROVAL, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to the receipt of satisfactory details relating to finished height and to the Conditions referred to in the report.

17. S/1065/04/O - HASLINGFIELD

Erection Of An Additional Dwelling And Change of Use of Land from Residential to Public House Use, 2 Badcock Road and Land Adjoining Road, for J A Jessop
DELEGATED APPROVAL for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to there being no new material objections as a result of further consultation with neighbours not previously carded, and to the Conditions set out in the report.

18. S/0844/04/F - HISTON

Erection of rear extension and conversion into 8 flats, 3-5 Station Road for Mr J and Mrs A Gordon
APPROVAL, as amended by letters dated 20th May 2004 and 1st June 2004 and plans date-stamped 9th June 2004, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, and subject to the Conditions set out therein (with Condition 6 being strengthened) and an additional Condition requiring details of surface water drainage from the car park.

Councillor DH Morgan declared a personal interest in this item, due to significant family connections with Histon, and withdrew from the Chamber.

19. S/1159/04/F - LITTLE SHELFORD

Erection of Dwelling Following Demolition of Existing Dwelling at 40 High Street for Mr & Mrs D Munro
DEFERRED for a site visit.

20. S/1066/04/F - LONGSTANTON

Erection of Fence and Gate and Change of Use of Land to Domestic Garden at 4 Magdalene Close, Longstanton for R Hinde
REFUSED contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Having visited the site, and taken into account both the character of the estate and planning policy, including Policy P1/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003, Members took the view that the proposal would have an adverse effect on the estate as a whole and that, as a result, the land subject of this application should remain as amenity land.

Councillor A Riley declared a personal interest in this item because he had contributed to the debate at Longstanton Parish Council. Although he also contributed to the debate at the current meeting, he did not vote.

21. S/1127/04/F - LONGSTANTON

Extension at 90 Thornhill Place, for Mr and Mrs Abbott
APPROVAL for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to the Conditions referred to therein.

Councillor A Riley declared a personal interest in this item because he had contributed to the debate at Longstanton Parish Council. Although he also contributed to the debate at

the current meeting, he did not vote.

22. S/1172/04/CIRCULAR 18/84 - LONGSTANTON

Continuation of Use of Land And Buildings as an Immigration Centre for a Further Temporary Period to 31st December 2006, Oakington Barracks, for The Home Office **RESOLVED** that, subject to no new material adverse comments being made by Longstanton Parish Council, officers be authorised to inform the Home Office that South Cambridgeshire District Council has no objection to the use of Oakington Barracks as an immigration centre for an additional period up to 31st December 2006, for the reasons set out in the report from the Director of Development Services and subject to the Conditions stated therein. Should the Parish Council come forward with new material adverse comments, this issue would be reported back to a future meeting of the Development and Conservation Control Committee for further consideration.

Councillor A Riley declared a personal interest in this item because he had contributed to the debate at Longstanton Parish Council. Although he also contributed to the debate at the current meeting, he did not vote.

23. S/1118/04/O - MELDRETH

24 Affordable Dwellings, Land adj. West Way, for Mr and Mrs M Sole
Having visited the site, Members were **MINDED TO APPROVE** the application, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services, subject to it being advertised as a departure from the Development Plan, referred to the Secretary of State, and not being called in by him for determination. Prior to such advertisement and referral, the applicants would be required to undertake that they would enter into a Section 106 Legal Agreement requiring that the affordable housing be for rental only, that that status would continue in perpetuity, and that public open space and a children's play area would be provided. In addition matters of visibility, health and safety and flood risk should be resolved prior to referral to the Secretary of State.

The local Member, Councillor Dr S van de Ven sent apologies for not being able to attend this meeting, although she was not a member of the committee.

24. S/1080/04/F - ORWELL

Extension to Bungalow to Form Two Storey Extension, 27 Hillside, for Mr Heffernan **DELEGATED APPROVAL** subject to the submission of revised plans showing increased projection of screens and methods and materials of construction, contrary to the recommendation contained in the report from the Director of Development Services. Having visited the site, and taken into account Policy P1/2 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and Policies HG12 and HG13 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004, Members did not consider the proposal to have any significant adverse effect on the immediate locality.

APPEALS AND STATISTICS

25. APPEALS AGAINST PLANNING DECISIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ACTION

The Committee **NOTED** the following from the report prepared by the Director of Development Services:

- Decisions notified by the Secretary of State
- Summaries of recent decisions of interest
- Appeals received
- Local Inquiry and Informal Hearing dates scheduled before the next meeting of the

Committee on 1st September 2004

- Appeals withdrawn or postponed
- Advance notification of future local inquiry and Informal Hearing dates (subject to postponement or cancellation)

26. APPLICATIONS AWAITING DECISIONS FOR MORE THAN 13 WEEKS

Members **RECEIVED** and discussed a list of applications over 13 weeks old awaiting decision as at 23rd July 2004.

27. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Members **NOTED** performance criteria for the three-month period ended 31st March 2004.

28. GRAPHICAL DATA

Members **NOTED** graphs in respect of:

- Total decisions issued quarterly by South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Planning Decisions for the period from January to March 2004
- Planning Decisions for the year ended 31st March 2004
- Percentage of applications determined within eight weeks
- Planning Decisions by development type and speed of evaluation for the three-month period and year ended 31st March 2004

STANDING ITEM

29. CAMBOURNE SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENT - FACILITIES AND TIMING OF PROVISION

The Committee received a further report on progress being made by the Developers of Cambourne in complying with their obligations under the Section 106 Legal Agreement dated 20th April 1994. The New Village Senior Planning Officer gave a verbal update which included the following:

- the requirement for a new planning application in respect of amendments to the design of the proposed cricket pavilion at Lower Cambourne
- A letter from the LTA sent to the Cambourne Consortium requiring changes to the Tennis Courts at the MUGA
- The playing fields to be completed September 05
- The Council await a report from ROSPA as to the fitness of the Skateboard park.

Members raised the following issues:

- the need to ensure proper maintenance
- the need for tennis courts to be amended at the developers' expense
- soil preparation at the burial ground
- outstanding cost implications
- staffing implications
- the determination of trigger points
- the need for Cambourne Parish Council to become free-standing
- Ongoing discussions aimed at providing a sprung floor for the Community Centre

Councillors DH Morgan and Mrs DSK Spink (local Members) thanked officers for their

significant efforts in spearheading the District Council's stance to date.

RESOLVED that the Council reaffirm its stance in relation to seeking substantial compliance with the Section 106 Legal Agreement dated 20th April 1994, and that the Development and Conservation Control Committee request a further update at its next meeting on 1st September 2004, specifying a date on which it would reimpose its embargo on planning consents for market housing should the improvement in compliance with the Section 106 Agreement not continue.

The Meeting ended at 4.13 p.m.

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SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on
Monday, 6 September 2004

PRESENT: Councillor RE Barrett – Chairman
Councillor EW Bullman – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	Mrs A Elsby	Mrs SA Hatton
	Mrs HF Kember	Mrs JA Muncey
	Mrs CAED Murfitt	J Shepperson
	DALG Wherrell	Dr JR Williamson

Councillors SGM Kindersley were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Hall, JA Hockney, Dr JPR Orme and A Riley.

1. MINUTES

The Committee authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2004.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received .

3. REQUEST FOR CONSENT STREETS - PAMPISFORD

Pampisford Parish Council had requested that certain streets in the Parish be designated as Consent Streets in order that trading could be controlled. A Notice of Intention was published in the local press on 26th July and no objections were received. The Committee

RESOLVED to designate the following streets in Pampisford as Consent Streets under the terms of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, namely Beech Lane, Brewery Road, Church Lane, High Street, London Road and Town Lane and proceed to advertise the Resolution to take effect from 13th October 2004.

4. LICENSING ACT 2003 - OPEN SPACES

The Committee, having considered the inclusion of licensing open spaces within the draft licensing policy as detailed in the covering report,

RECOMMEND to the Environmental Health Portfolio Holder that a chapter on the licensing of Open Spaces be included in the Draft Licensing Policy and circulated for consultation. The wording to be:

“South Cambridgeshire District Council will consider where appropriate, the licensing of public open spaces for events that are not covered by temporary event notices”

5. LICENSING POLICY - DRAFT

Consideration was given to the Draft Licensing Policy statement as contained in the agenda and it was particularly noted that due to the restricted timescale involved, the Chairman of Scrutiny and Overview Committee and the Chairman of Council had agreed that this item would not be subject to the call-in procedure. The Committee, having considered the contents of the policy document, agreed that the following amendments be made:

Para 5 - Licensing Hours – 2nd paragraph – **insert** the word *generally* between the words *are* and *open* and **replace** *general provisions and the store is generally accessible to the public with other items*.

Para 7 – Children and Cinemas - Additional paragraph to be included as follows:

In the case of premises licensed for the exhibition of films, conditions will be imposed in line with any limitations imposed by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). In such cases where an exhibition of a film does not hold a BBFC certificate, the venue operator will be expected to self regulate the film in line with the BBFC classification system. In specific and exceptional cases a certificate may be issued by the Council to promote one or more of the Licensing objectives.

Para 13 – Temporary Event Notices – 3rd para, 3rd line down - replace the word *events* with *premises*.

Annex C – Table of Delegations in respect of the Licensing Functions – The last five categories in the 'Matter to be dealt with' column relating to 'If a police representation is made' and 'All Cases' should be moved from the 'Full Committee' column into the 'Sub Committee' column and the addition of 'All other cases' into the 'Officers' column relating to 'Application to review premises licence/club premises certificate'

Subject to the above amendments, the Committee

RECOMMEND to the Environmental Health Portfolio Holder that the Draft Licensing Policy document be approved for consultation purposes.

The Committee were subsequently informed that mock hearings for Members to practice different scenarios would take place during November and decision forms would be devised for approving or refusing licensing applications.

Decision by Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
Following a recommendation from the Licensing Committee, the Environmental
Health Portfolio Holder

APPROVED the Draft Licensing Policy for consultation purposes.

The Meeting ended at 11.00 a.m.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTHSTOWE MEMBERS STEERING GROUP**

At a meeting held at South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne on Monday 6th September 2004 at 2pm

PRESENT:	Cllr David Bard*	Chairman
	Cllr Jane Healey*	Vice-Chairman
	Cllr Jenny Bailey*	Cambridge City Council
	Cllr John Batchelor	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Bob Bryant	South Cambridgeshire District Council (Chairman)
	Cllr Brian Burling*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Stephen Catchpole*	Chief Executive, Infrastructure Partnership
	Cllr Pippa Corney*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Jacky Dixon*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Simon Edwards*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Ann Elsby	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Roger Hall*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Mark Howell	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Caroline Hunt	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Sebastian Kindersley	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Victor Lucas*	Cambridgeshire County Councillor
	Cllr Ray Manning*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Robin Martlew	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Cicely Murfitt	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	John Onslow*	Infrastructure Partnership
	Cllr John Reynolds*	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Cllr Alex Riley*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr John Shepperson	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Hazel Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Joan Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Robert Smith*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Daphne Spink*	South Cambridgeshire District Council (Leader)
	Mark Vigor*	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Cllr Bunty Waters*	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Jane Williamson	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr Tim Wotherspoon*	South Cambridgeshire District Council

* = Members of the Northstowe Member Steering Group

APOLOGIES:	Cllr Deborah Roberts	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr David Wherrell	South Cambridgeshire District Council
	Cllr John Reynolds	Cambridgeshire County Councillor
	Cllr Sally Hatton	South Cambridgeshire District Council

1. INTRODUCTION

Councillor David Bard explained that due to Council's decision of the 22nd of July there was a very tight timetable for decision-making with regard to Northstowe and the LDF. Working arrangements with Members had been reviewed.

The Northstowe Member Steering Group will be temporarily suspended and decisions will be made directly by full Council. The Members of the Steering Group who are not South Cambridgeshire District Councillors will be invited to attend but will not be able to vote at these meetings.

There would need to be 8 meetings between January and April 2005 to agree the LDF for submission to the Secretary of State in June 2005. Following the decision of Council on 22 July, the Council was now committed to treating all three site options equally and for determining green separation before a site preference was made.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alex Riley declared a personal interest in green separation definitions as his property is in St Michaels Mount, Longstanton and close to the edge of Northstowe.

He also declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 3 Paragraph 3.12 regarding the Conservation Area at St Michaels Mount as the property owner of the property in question.

Councillor Simon Edwards declared a personal interest as a property and landowner in Oakington.

Principal Planning Officer, Michael Monk, advised Members that he is a Parish Councillor for the Stukeleys Parish Council in Huntingdonshire but this would not influence his professional advice and therefore considered that there was no conflict of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last meeting held on the 5th of July 2004 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISINGPage 3 Paragraph 6.2

Councillor Daphne Spink reported that she had attended the recent conference on funding for social housing and the lack of funding from central government had been raised by many of the attendees. There were no easy answers to the funding crisis but increasing pressure and lobbying activity was taking place by many local authorities.

Page 5 Proposed changes to the options report

Mark Vigor was asked to comment if any new research regarding the viability of public transport was available. Mark would send new information to the relevant officers within the next 2 weeks.

MV

5. APPENDIX A – GREEN SEPARATION

The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport) introduced Appendix A, the report on Green Separation. He advised that the Council's aspirations have to take into account guidance from central government. There are no standard criteria provided to Local Authorities by which they can define green separation.

The officers' report suggests that there are 2 ways to define village character:

- a) Tangible physical and visual attributes such as urban form, architecture of the buildings and the prevailing uses of an area for example
- b) Less discernable social and perceived attributes such as the way the community functions, activities that take place within the village and local services and facilities.

A team of planning policy, conservation and landscape officers had drawn up the report. It concluded that the village framework was the appropriate point from which to measure green separation in order to maintain village character. Other development outside the village framework, especially sporadic and unconsolidated development related more to the surrounding countryside. This approach had been embodied in successive Local Plans and had been supported by Government Inspectors.

The report also concluded that a minimum green separation of 200 metres was necessary between the village framework and Northstowe in order to maintain village character as required by the Structure Plan. This was the distance that would allow appropriate landscaping treatment to achieve a real perception of separation. The landscaping treatment would need to be appropriate for the local landscape character as identified in the report. Robust planning is required for all buffering and separation treatments.

The report also considered outlying areas of development outside the village frameworks and whilst these would not receive green separation, recommended suitable landscape treatments for these different areas.

Addendum on Green Separation

The Planning Policy Manager introduced an Addendum on Green Separation Guidelines that had been circulated in addition to the agenda. The addendum was based on rules suggested by Longstanton Parish Council and had been discussed with the Local Member. It proposed additional amendments to policy NS37 to include general principles for defining green separation applicable to all three site options. All three site options would be capable of meeting the Structure Plan objectives if these guidelines were applied.

Councillor Riley commented that Longstanton Parish Council had several issues with the officer interpretation of the its green separation guidelines. The Parish Council rules had been designed to be applied to any new development not just Northstowe. Longstanton has a unique sprawling style with 2 village envelopes, 2 conservation areas and 25% of the total housing lying outside of the village frameworks. He considered that the Addendum had not taken this into account adequately.

Councillor Riley proposed that the Longstanton Parish Council rules be adopted instead of the officers' addendum but with no seconder the proposal **FELL**.

Home Farm Development

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley asked why the Home Farm development had been considered as an integral part of the village framework when building was not complete. The separation gap near this development could be reduced.

Councillor Bard commented that the Separation gap around the Home Farm development had been put in specifically as in time it would become a major and integral part of the village and would include facilities that would alter the perceived centre of the village. Members could decide to reduce this gap but should consider protecting the future residents of Longstanton as much as existing ones.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer (Housing) advised that where housing allocations were made adjoining the built up areas of villages, the village frameworks were consistently drawn to include those allocations on the basis that they would become part of the village once built.

Landscape buffers on option north of railway line

Members asked why site Option C included 50m landscape buffers around the northern and eastern boundaries of area north of the railway.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that officer advice was not to cross the railway line when defining a site due to a lack of distinctive boundary features by which to define a site. The Council decision of the 22nd of July requires a third option (option C) to be equally presented for public participation. The only suitable definable feature on the ground is Stanton Mere Way. Most other features on the map in this area are drainage ditches. The area to the east lies in the flood plain. The Planning Policy Manager advised that if a site were chosen which crossed the railway line, it would be difficult to justify not identifying a town of 10,000 dwellings. In order to draw a third option site plan with enough land to achieve this, the gap to Rampton had to be altered to less than the 1 kilometre distance that was used to guide separation from Willingham and Rampton. It was important that the views of the town from those villages were mitigated by landscape buffers. It was recommended that 50m would be sufficient for this purpose in this location. Policy PPG3, to maximise use of previously developed land also anchors the site towards the Oakington Airfield.

Councillor Tim Wotherspoon asked where the Rampton Parish Boundary fell within Option C and could Option C site be extended?

Councillor Bard explained that the eastern part of option C is within Rampton Parish. The Planning Policy Manager advised that Stanton Mere Way provided the only clear boundary to the north and that any extension to the east would result in an inappropriate shape of land to provide a sustainable form of development

Landscape buffers along the railway line

Councillor Robert Smith queried the varying width of the landscape buffers shown on Appendix C alongside the railway line, in option A, it was 200 metres along its entire length, for option B west of Station Road it was 50 metres.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the landscape buffer alongside the railway line would have different purposes east and west of Station Road. To the east in option A, as well as landscaping the buffer would contain attenuation lakes to address surface water run-off. This would create an attractive edge to the town and provide for informal recreation. The option responds to the slope of the land down towards the railway that would assist surface water run-off. These uses required an area that would average 100m but could vary in width along its length. West of Station Road in option B, drainage would be dealt with differently and the landscape buffer could therefore be reduced to 50m.

Councillor Joan Smith asked why there was no separation gap identified along the north of the railway line within option C.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that the report addresses landscape treatment at outlying properties and on the outer boundaries of the town. The gap illustrated to the south of the railway line is specifically there for dealing with attenuation but if Option C were pursued, extensive landscaping along both sides of the railway line would be required as part of the internal landscaping within the town.

Separation Gap at St Michael's Mount

Councillor Riley declared a prejudicial interest in this item and left the chamber.

Councillor J Smith stated that she felt the proposed separation gap at St Michael's Mount was inadequate following the site visit.

Councillor Roger Hall stated that he had sympathy with the occupants of St Michael's Mount but felt that the view from the Northstowe site had shown that the existing wooded area and the proposed dense planting of trees and shrubs would provide suitable screening to St Michael's Mount.

Councillor Daphne Spink asked Members to consider if they were making the decision based on the owner of the property or in an unbiased way that they would then apply equally to all conservation areas shown on the map.

Councillor Wotherspoon expressed concern that low separation gaps near conservation areas may impede free circulation of public access in the open areas around Northstowe.

Councillor Edwards advised Members to be mindful of officers' advice that a decision regarding separation at St Michael's Mount would need to be applied consistently to all conservation areas such as Westwick.

Councillor Liz Hezell warned Members against making a decision taking into account ownership and that a decision on separation from a specific conservation area would then need to be applied to all conservation areas. She commented that there were many examples of separation between settlements in South Cambridgeshire of less than 200 metres.

Councillor Kindersley commented that he felt it was not possible to impose a consistent separation principle to all 3 of the villages concerned. Each village should have separation decided on its own merits. A more flexible approach was needed. He reminded Members that they were agreeing a document for public participation not agreeing a final decision on what the site would look like.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer explained that Appendix A recommends an appropriate degree of separation and landscape treatment for different parts of Longstanton and Oakington, which reflects each individual village's character.

Councillor Wotherspoon proposed seconded by Councillor Ray Manning that the green separation gap at St Michaels Mount is extended to 200 metres from the edge of the Conservation area and not from the village envelope as shown on Appendix C.

Present	13	
For	6	
Against	7	Proposal FELL

Councillor Riley rejoined the room

Rampton Drift

Councillor Manning proposed, seconded by Councillor R Smith that *Rampton Drift be incorporated into Northstowe at an appropriate and strategic time and at a set trigger point*. He also proposed *the removal of the 50-metre buffer zone shown on Appendix A as surrounding Rampton Drift*.

Councillor Manning then amended the proposal, agreed by the seconder Councillor R Smith, to add the words “with suitable boundary treatment” following *the removal of the 50 metre buffer zone shown on Appendix A as surrounding Rampton Drift*.

Councillor Riley commented that this was unfair on the occupants of Rampton Drift who have already been guaranteed a 50 metre green separation gap by Gallaghers.

Councillor Spink warned against decisions being made on the back of developers promises based on recent experience at Cambourne. The site options and treatment of separation gaps and landscape buffers was the responsibility of South Cambridgeshire District Council and should fit our master plan.

The Development Services Director explained to Members that this had been the point of the site visit, to enable Members to decide for themselves the best distance and treatment for each area. He expressed concern that Members were too concerned with detail at each area for this stage in the planning process. He echoed Councillor Kindersley’s comments that Members were agreeing a document for consultation not agreeing a final decision on what the site would look like in detail.

The Planning Policy Manager drew Members attention to the section on Rampton Drift on page 34, Appendix A, Green Separation for Northstowe that showed that Rampton Drift had always planned to be incorporated into Northstowe with sensitive integration and adequate buffers provided.

Following the discussion, Councillor Manning withdrew his proposal with the agreement of the seconder, Councillor R Smith.

Councillor Tim Wotherspoon proposed, seconded by Councillor Robert Smith that:

- The green areas shown on Appendix C are revised to distinguish between areas performing different functions by using different notations. Appendix C would be amended for consultation to show these different areas in separate notations as follows:
 - Green Separation – between Northstowe and the villages of Longstanton and Oakington
 - Landscape buffers – to outlying development and edges of the new town
 - Special landscape treatment - surrounding Rampton Drift.

- Appendix A (Green Separation at Northstowe) would be amended as follows;
Page 34 Outlying areas, first bullet point to read:
*"Rampton Drift is an area that lies within all the site options proposed for Northstowe. It will therefore need a ~~specific~~ **special landscape** treatment as it will be surrounded by urban uses which allows it to be sensitively integrated into the town whilst ensuring that an adequate buffer is provided in order to maintain its residential amenity. This is likely to be best achieved by a tree belt supplementing the existing nearby mature trees"*

(Delete "~~Building on recent experience at Cambourne, the buffer zone should be 50m in depth in order to be effective~~")

Present	13	
For	12	
Against	1 (Councillor Alex Riley)	Proposals ACCEPTED

Recommendation:

The Steering Group **AGREES** that pursuant to the resolution of Council on 22nd July 2004, the principles contained in the report on Green Separation, Appendix A and Annex A&B (without considering the Addendum on Green Separation Guidelines) and Appendix C (subject to changes agreed above) be agreed for the purpose of public participation.

Present	13	
For	12	
Against	1 (Councillor Alex Riley)	AGREED

The Northstowe Member Steering Group decided to continue the meeting despite it having run for more than 4 hours. **AGREED**

7 PREFERRED OPTIONS REPORT

The Planning Policy Manager introduced the Draft Preferred Options report that had been amended in light of Council's decision to present all three-site options equally. The initial report had identified a preferred site, as a result of the Council decision a number of consequential changes have been made. Members are asked to review and accept these changes in order that the document can be used for public participation.

Councillor Tim Wotherspoon, seconded by Councillor Pippa Corney proposed that the addendum on green separation guidelines be rejected entirely.

Present	11	
For	10	
Abstention	1 (Councillor Alex Riley)	AGREED

The Steering Group then discussed Council's requirement to present the three site location options for Northstowe as equal options A, B and C, in order that that the public may be consulted in a fair and unbiased way. They also considered any other consequential amendments to the draft Preferred Options Report that had been made to date and made the following additional amendments:

- a) Page 65/2.4 Remove the words “which performs less well in the evaluation”
- b) Page 65/2.4 Remove the words “which performs poorly”
- c) Page 65/2/5 Remove bullet point 4 completely
- d) Page 65 Move Paragraph 2.4 and 2.5 to a more appropriate place within the text.
- e) Page 67/2.10 Clarify in the text that the “1,000 or 2,000 dwellings” relate to site options B and C respectively
- f) Page 75 Replace the word “discourage” with “prevent” in the penultimate bullet point
- g) Page 75 Remove the last bullet point
- h) Page 87/8.2 Remove the last sentence where “it states that densities of less than 30 dph will not be acceptable”
- i) Page 96/10.8 Remove the word “police” as they are not a commercially provided service and re-add if appropriate.
- j) Page 101/17A Remove the word “restrict” and replace with “discourage”
- k) Page 103/NS30c Remove the word “all” and replace with “any”
- l) Page 103 Add reference to Willingham Parish Council seeking a bypass for Willingham and the Highways Authority advice that if a bypass were justified, it would be by traffic passing to and from the fens and not just by the development of Northstowe.
- m) Page 131/17.6 Add the word “west” to read “*and the A14 to the North West of Dry Drayton Road.*”
- n) Page 132 Add “*NS82 Alleviating Flood Risk at Oakington – Option D*”. Add new option to show a possibility of alleviating flooding by modifications to the Bar Hill balancing pond. Councillor Roger Hall asked that Bar Hill Parish Council be consulted with regard to this as some issues are already being addressed. He was advised that this would take place through the Preferred Options public participation
- o) Page 140/20.7 Amend the last sentence to read “*for the developers to maintain the landscaping and replace dead stock...*”
- p) Page 142/NS97 Councillor Alex Riley declared a personal interest in this item as a local property owner. It was noted that normal environmental health legislation regarding noise from commercial premises would also apply. Add “*which would not be located closer than 200 metres to any existing domestic properties*” to the end of the policy statement
- q) Page 142/NS99 Replace the word “would” with “may” with regard to granting temporary planning permission.

The Steering Group **AGREES** that pursuant to the resolution of Council on 22nd July 2004, the revised draft Preferred Options Report subject to the inclusion of amendments at page 109 relating to the issue of green separation as agreed by the Steering Group and also the amendments a-q as detailed above and **RECOMMENDS** to Cabinet that the revised draft Preferred Options Report be agreed for the purpose of public participation, subject to the findings of Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Councillors Wotherspoon and Edwards thanked all the officers from Planning Policy for organising a very useful site visit and for all the hard work that had been done in recent weeks to revise the preferred options report in order that all 3 site options could be presented equally to the public. They also thanked the Democratic Services Officer for the coffee and biscuits that had been provided during the site visit.

Meeting closed at 6.50 pm

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