



# SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING  
THURSDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2010

AGENDA AND REPORTS

South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne, Cambridge  
CB23 6EA

### **OUR VISION**

- We will make South Cambridgeshire a safe and healthy place where residents are proud to live and where there will be opportunities for employment, enterprise and world-leading innovation.
- We will be a listening Council, providing a voice for rural life and first-class services accessible to all.

### **OUR VALUES**

We will demonstrate our corporate values in all our actions. These are:

- Trust
- Mutual respect
- A commitment to improving services
- Customer service

The law allows Councils to consider a limited range of issues in private session without members of the Press and public being present. Typically, such issues relate to personal details, financial and business affairs, legal privilege and so on. In every case, the public interest in excluding the Press and Public from the meeting room must outweigh the public interest in having the information disclosed to them. The following statement will be proposed, seconded and voted upon.

"I propose that the Press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item number(s) ..... in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) ..... of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended)."

If exempt (confidential) information has been provided as part of the agenda, the Press and public will not be able to view it. There will be an explanation on the website however as to why the information is exempt.

## 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, FIRST FLOOR** at **2.00 P.M.** on

**THURSDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2010**

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

**DATED** this Wednesday 15 September 2010

**SJ HAMPSON**  
Acting Chief Executive

**The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you.**

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### AGENDA

#### PRESENTATION

The Chairman will invite the leaders of the political groups to sign the East of England Charter for Elected Member Development to confirm that the Council is working towards Charter Status for Elected Member Development:

“South Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the vital role of Elected Members in local governance and pledges to adopt good practice in member development by:

1. “Being fully **committed** to developing elected members in order to achieve the council’s aims and objectives.
2. “Adopting a **member led strategic approach** to elected member development.
3. “Having a **member learning and development plan in place** that clearly identifies the difference development activities will make.
4. “Seeing that **learning and development is effective in building capacity.**
5. “Addressing wider development matters **by supporting councillors.**

“We are willing to accept external peer scrutiny of member development and to share good practice with other councils and agencies.”

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies have been received from Councillors David Bird and Mark Howell.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**3. MINUTES**

To authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2010 as a correct record.

(Pages 1 - 22)

**4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements from the Chairman, Leader, the executive or the head of paid service.

**5. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND THE PUBLIC**

**5 (a) From Graham Ford to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

*Mr Ford has been asked to resubmit his question by noon on Monday 20 September 2010 to accord with the Council's guidelines for public questions at Council meetings.*

**5 (b) From Cllr John Batchelor to the Planning Portfolio Holder**

"I would appreciate it if the Portfolio Holder would pass on my thanks to John Koch and his team for their excellent work in defending the District Council's position at the Linton Wind Farm Appeal.

"That said I have been shocked at the wasteful nature of the appeals process. The Linton appeal has been ongoing since February and only closed last week. Can the Portfolio Holder tell me how much this appeal has so far cost the tax payers of South Cambridgeshire?"

**5 (c) From Cllr Bridget Smith to the Leader**

"I know that I am not alone in wishing to congratulate the staff from every service area for showing such resilience during the past few extremely difficult months and in managing to carry out their duties to such very good effect.

"The October spending review is obviously going to cause great stress for us all. What is each of the portfolio holders planning to do in order to support their own departmental staff in these very challenging times?"

**5 (d) From Cllr Steve Harangozo to the New Communities Portfolio Holder**

"In view of the need to use all opportunities to reduce the district's carbon emissions, will the portfolio holder agree that the awarding of capital grants to local organizations be made conditional on their committing (in writing and with a follow-up 'method statement') to reduce their carbon emissions by at least 10% in total within two financial years?"

**5 (e) From Cllr Tumi Hawkins to the Housing Portfolio Holder**

"This Council has up till now obtained valuations for its property and land assets from just one Agent. Could the Housing Portfolio Holder please explain when and why the Council selected Pocock & Shaw for this task, and why it pays the company to carry out valuations, considering the fact that householders wanting to sell properties often get this service free and from multiple agents."

**5 (f) From Cllr Lynda Harford to the Northstowe Portfolio Holder**

"There would appear to be mixed messages coming from cabinet about the future of Northstowe. It has always been understood that there was an interdependence between this new development and the proposal to upgrade the A14 which is now on hold. Could the portfolio holder please take this opportunity to define the probability

of the Northstowe project proceeding independently of the A14 upgrade?”

**5 (g) From Cllr Frances Amrani to the Housing Portfolio Holder**

“Teversham Parish council and myself have been informed in writing that just over £6K per year is allocated from a commuted sum from the original developers for the Foxgloves estate in Teversham for land maintenance. Over the past two years residents have received an average of three rough grass cuts per year; with no tree or shrub maintenance. £2000 per cut doesn’t seem to offer good value for a relatively small amount of grasscutting. Discussions and complaints on this topic have used up a disproportionate amount of officer time. What reassurance can the Housing PFH give that residents can expect a better service next year and beyond, and that officers will be supported in securing this delivery?”

**5 (h) From Cllr Mike Mason to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

“With reference to the continuing problems experienced by many members using the new secure email system, together with the changes introduced on the Web Site, would Councillor Ellington now agree to give IT training and competence, top priority in the Member Development Task and Finish Group.”

**5 (i) From John Toomey, UNISON Regional Officer, to the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder**

“Please can the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder explain how just a single e-mail sent on 23 August to the union representatives, with the new redundancy policy attached but without any notification of what had changed, is adequate consultation on such an important issue?”

**6. PETITIONS**

To note all petitions received since the last Council meeting.

**7. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**7 (a) Review of the Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy (Cabinet, 9 September 2010) (Key)**

Cabinet unanimously **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** adoption of the revised Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy, incorporating the following minor amendments made by the Cabinet:

- Vacancies, first paragraph: “All vacancies will be restricted to employees who **are** at risk in the first instance...”,
- Suitable Alternative Employment, final paragraph: “...will be taken into account **by the Head of Paid Service** when making any decision...”; and
- all references to “Chief Executive” to be amended to read “Head of Paid Service”.

The policy is available on the Council’s website at [www.scambsgov.uk/meetings](http://www.scambsgov.uk/meetings)

Hard copies of the policy will be provided by Democratic Services if requested no later than 48 hours before the Council meeting date.

**7 (b) Clarifying Scrutiny Procedures and Related Definitions (Constitution Review Working Party, 8 September 2010)**

The Constitution Review Working Party unanimously **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the Definitions and the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules in the Constitution be amended as follows:

**Definitions** (the two following paragraphs to be added)

“Whip” means any instruction given by or on behalf of a political group to any councillor who is a member of that group as to how that councillor shall speak or vote on any matter before the Council or any committee or sub-committee, or the application or threat to apply sanction by the group in respect of that councillor should he / she speak or vote on any particular matter.

A **Decision** is when an issue ultimately is decided by the appropriate decision-maker. A recommendation is not a decision.

**Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules** (new text in ***bold italics***)

12.1 Call-in should be used only in exceptional circumstances and can relate only to executive decisions made ~~or to be made~~ by the executive decision takers referred to in the Budget and Policy Framework Rules, Rule 7...

...

12.9 If, having considered the decision, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee is concerned about it or agrees that the decision is a departure, it may take one of the following courses:

12.9.1 refer the decision back to the executive decision taker for re-consideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns. If referred back, the executive decision taker shall then ~~re-consider~~ ***respond*** within five working days, ~~amending~~ ***re-considering*** the decision ~~or not~~, before ***confirming the original decision***, adopting a ~~final~~ ***an alternative*** decision ***or adopting a course of action leading to a final decision, such as but not limited to further consultation or exploration of other options, and confirming the deadline by which the final decision will be taken.*** ~~If the decision had been made before call-in, it~~ ***The final decision, once taken***, may be implemented immediately.

12.9.2 refer the matter to Council, ~~unless the executive decision taker has indicated a preparedness to reconsider the matter~~; or

12.9.3 not refer the matter back or to Council, in which case the decision if made may be implemented immediately following the Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting.

**7 (c) Review of Procedures for Public and Member Questions at Full Council (Constitution Review Working Party, 8 September 2010)**

The Constitution Review Working Party unanimously **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the revised procedures for public and Members’ questions at full Council, amending Council Standing Orders 1, 2, 10 and 11 (attached), be adopted.

**(Pages 23 - 28)**

**7 (d) Climate Change Working Group: Revised Terms of Reference (Climate Change Working Group, 8 July 2010)**

The Climate Change Working Group unanimously **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** adoption of the attached revised Terms of Reference.

**(Pages 29 - 30)**

**8. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**  
For decision.

**(Pages 31 - 32)**

**9. CHANGE OF APPOINTED MEMBERS AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE 2010/2011**

Council is asked to appoint Councillor David McCraith to the Planning Committee in place of Councillor Peter Topping and to appoint Councillor Ben Shelton as the

Conservative Group's fourth substitute member.

| <b>Current Membership (Conservative)</b>   | <b>Proposed Membership (Conservative)</b>  |
|--|--|
| Val Barrett                                | Val Barrett                                |
| Brian Burling                              | Brian Burling                              |
| Pippa Corney                               | Pippa Corney                               |
| Mervyn Loynes                              | Mervyn Loynes                              |
| Charlie Nightingale                        | David McCraith                             |
| Peter Topping                              | Charlie Nightingale                        |
| Robert Turner                              | Robert Turner                              |
| Nick Wright (as Planning Portfolio Holder) | Nick Wright (as Planning Portfolio Holder) |
| <b>Substitutes in hierarchical list:</b>   | <b>Substitutes in hierarchical list:</b>   |
| 1 – David McCraith                         | 1 – Richard Barrett                        |
| 2 – Richard Barrett                        | 2 – Raymond Matthews                       |
| 3 – Raymond Matthews                       | 3 – David Bard                             |
| 4 – David Bard                             | 4 – Ben Shelton                            |

**10. CHANGE OF APPOINTED MEMBERS TO THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE 2010/11**

Council is asked to appoint another member of the Conservative Group to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee in place of Councillor David Morgan.

**11. TO MAKE TWO APPOINTMENTS TO THE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DIRECT LABOUR ORGANISATION (DLO) MANAGEMENT BOARD**

Council is asked to appoint two Members to the South Cambridgeshire Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) Management Board. Councillors Richard Barrett and Hazel Smith have been attending Board meetings for several years without formal appointment and are willing to continue as the Council's Member representatives.

**12. QUESTIONS ON JOINT MEETINGS**

| <b>Joint Body</b>   | <b>Date of Meeting</b> | <b>Minutes Published in Weekly Bulletin</b> | <b>Member Spokesman</b>        |
|---|------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership Board | 21 April 2010          | 21 July 2010                                | Leader                         |
| Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership Board | 23 July 2010           | 25 August 2010                              | Leader                         |
| South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership             | 23 July 2010           | 25 August 2010                              | Leader                         |
| Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes                    | 11 August 2010         | 25 August 2010                              | Councillor Charlie Nightingale |

**13. UPDATES FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

**14. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS**

To note the Chairman's engagements since the last Council meeting:

| <b>Date</b>       | <b>Venue / Event</b>   |
|-------------------|--|
| 22 July 2010      | Royal Anglian Regiment Presentation, Churchill College   |
| 25 July 2010      | Park Life: Countdown to the Olympics, <b>Milton</b> Country Park   |
| 27 July 2010      | Chalklands Sheltered Housing, <b>Linton</b>  |
| 31 July 2010      | <b>Orchard Park</b> Family Fun Day   |
| 3 August 2010     | Thistle Green Sheltered Housing, <b>Swavesey</b>   |
| 15 August 2010    | Girl Guiding Look 2010 - Our Centenary Camp, <b>Stow-cum-Quy</b>   |
| 21 August 2010    | East Anglian Air Ambulance 10th Anniversary Celebration, Wyboston Lakes  |
| 4 September 2010  | The <b>Abington</b> Allotment & Leisure Gardeners Association Official Opening   |
| 6 September 2010  | Judging for Cambridge News Awards  |
| 10 September 2010 | High Sheriff's Reception, Cambridge Union, Bridge Street   |
| 11 September 2010 | Cambs Army Cadet Force Open Day, <b>Waterbeach</b>   |
| 12 September 2010 | Dedication Memorial to Royal Anglian Regiment at <b>Duxford</b> War Museum   |
| 20 September 2010 | South Cambs District Council Civic Service, <b>Great Shelford</b> Official Launch of Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age, Harris Suite, CUFC |
| 22 September 2010 | Carers Conference<br>Mayor of Haverhill's At Home  |



## **GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL**

While the District Council endeavours to ensure that visitors come to no harm when visiting South Cambridgeshire Hall, those visitors also have a responsibility to make sure that they do not risk their own or others' safety.

### **Security**

Members of the public attending meetings in non-public areas of the Council offices must report to Reception, sign in, and at all times wear the Visitor badges issued. Before leaving the building, such visitors must sign out and return their Visitor badges to Reception.

### **Emergency and Evacuation**

In the event of a fire, a continuous alarm will sound. Evacuate the building using the nearest escape route; from the Council Chamber or Mezzanine viewing gallery this would be via the staircase just outside the door. Go to the assembly point at the far side of the staff car park.

- **Do not** use the lifts to exit the building. If you are unable to negotiate stairs by yourself, the emergency staircase landings are provided with fire refuge areas, which afford protection for a minimum of 1.5 hours. Press the alarm button and wait for assistance from the Council fire wardens or the fire brigade.
- **Do not** re-enter the building until the officer in charge or the fire brigade confirms that it is safe to do so.

### **First Aid**

If someone feels unwell or needs first aid, please alert a member of staff.

### **Access for People with Disabilities**

The Council is committed to improving, for all members of the community, access to its agendas and minutes. We try to take all circumstances into account but, if you have any specific needs, please let us know, and we will do what we can to help you. All meeting rooms are accessible to wheelchair users. There are disabled toilet facilities on each floor of the building. Hearing loops and earphones are available from reception and can be used in all meeting rooms.

### **Toilets**

Public toilets are available on each floor of the building next to the lifts.

### **Recording of Business**

Unless specifically authorised by resolution, no audio and / or visual or photographic recording in any format is allowed at any meeting of the Council, the executive (Cabinet), or any committee, sub-committee or other sub-group of the Council or the executive.

### **Banners, Placards and similar items**

No member of the public shall be allowed to bring into or display at any Council meeting any banner, placard, poster or other similar item. The Chairman may require any such item to be removed.

### **Disturbance by Public**

If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chairman will warn the person concerned. If they continue to interrupt, the Chairman will order their removal from the meeting room. If there is a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may call for that part to be cleared.

### **Smoking**

Since 1 July 2008, the Council has operated a new Smoke Free Policy. Visitors are not allowed to smoke at any time within the Council offices, or in the car park or other grounds forming part of those offices.

### **Food and Drink**

Vending machines and a water dispenser are available on the ground floor near the lifts at the front of the building. Visitors are not allowed to bring food or drink into the meeting room.

### **Mobile Phones**

Visitors are asked to make sure that their phones and other mobile devices are set on silent / vibrate mode during meetings or are switched off altogether.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on  
Thursday, 22 July 2010 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Charles Nightingale – Chairman  
Councillor Tony Orgee – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Frances Amrani, David Bard, Richard Barrett, Val Barrett, John Batchelor, Trisha Bear, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Jonathan Chatfield, Pippa Corney, Douglas de Lacey, Jaime Dipple, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Jose Hales, Roger Hall, Steve Harangozo, Lynda Harford, Sally Hatton, Tumi Hawkins, Liz Heazell, James Hockney, Mark Howell, Mrs PE Jarvis, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mike Mason, Raymond Matthews, David McCraith, David Morgan, Lorraine Morgan, Cicely Murfitt, Alex Riley, Deborah Roberts, Neil Scarr, Ben Shelton, Hazel Smith, Jim Stewart, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, John F Williams, John G Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

|           |                |   |
|-----------|----------------|---|
| Officers: | Holly Adams    | Democratic Services Team Leader   |
|           | Greg Harlock   | Chief Executive   |
|           | Fiona McMillan | Acting Legal & Democratic Services Manager<br>and Deputy Monitoring Officer |

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Bird, Mark Hersom, Janet Lockwood and Bridget Smith. Councillor Sebastian Kindersley explained that Councillor Janet Lockwood, who had been recovering from a serious illness, had some time ago booked a holiday with her children, and was devastated not to be present at this meeting.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Prior to the start of the formal meeting, the Chairman presented Long Service Awards to Gail Cooke, Housing Services Officer, and Sean Geoffrey O'Connor, DSO Operative, in recognition of their completion of 25 years' respective service with the Council.

The Chairman also presented retiring Chief Executive Greg Harlock with a garden fork and engraved shovel to commemorate his years at South Cambridgeshire District Council. The Leader, Councillor Ray Manning; Major Opposition Group Leader, Councillor Sebastian Kindersley; and Independent Group Convenor, Councillor Alex Riley, led tributes to Mr Harlock. Mr Harlock offered the Council his best wishes in the future addressing the challenges and opportunities ahead.

**27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors John Batchelor, Sebastian Kindersley and Tony Orgee, all elected Cambridgeshire County Councillors, declared personal non-prejudicial interests in any items relating to Cambridgeshire County Council. In response to a query, the Acting Legal and Democratic Services Manager confirmed that it was not necessary to declare such an interest generally at the start of each meeting.

Councillor Frances Amrani declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in the Government Review of Council Housing Finance, as her brother was a Council tenant and Councillor Amrani had, in the past, been a tenant of another authority and had been through the homeless family referral unit. Notwithstanding this interest, Councillor Amrani remained in the Council Chamber and participated in the debate and vote on this

item.

Councillor Mark Howell declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in the Government Review of Council Housing Finance as a former Council tenant. Notwithstanding this interest, Councillor Howell remained in the Council Chamber and participated in the debate and vote on this item.

Councillor Mrs Liz Heazell declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in the Appointments to the Standards Committee 2010-14 as a former university classmate of Mrs Diane Best, Independent Member. Notwithstanding this interest, Councillor Heazell remained in the Council Chamber for the duration of this item.

## **28. MINUTES**

The Chairman signed the minutes of the 27 May 2010 Council meeting as a correct record.

## **29. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman asked Members to remind their parish councils of the 31 July 2010 deadline for nominations for the Village Hero and Community Pride awards.

The Leader announced that the government had frozen all Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) grant funding, which had brought to a halt all Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) projects. He commended officers, whose successful work to achieve the LPSA stretch targets had brought £9 million in reward grant to Cambridgeshire County Council for onwards distribution to the districts. Approximately £468,000 in funds were on hold, which would affect not only larger programmes like the Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership and the Quality Parish Council scheme, but also the Community Chest grants of £500-£1,000 for smaller local groups.

## **30. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND THE PUBLIC**

### **30 (a) Suspension of Standing Order 10.1**

On the proposal of Councillor Charlie Nightingale, seconded by Councillor Tony Orgee, Council **RESOLVED** that Standing Order 10.1, footnote 1, item 5 – “A maximum of ten minutes will be allowed for public questions on any specific agenda item” – be suspended for the duration of the public and member questions.

### **30 (b) Statement by the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

Before responding to the eight questions regarding Hauxton, the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder made the following statement: “Members will be aware that there is one councillor and seven public questions regarding the former Bayer site at Hauxton. Prior to answering these, I would like to make some general points about the council’s role and responsibilities at this site, building on the points made by the Executive Director at the last Council meeting.

“The Council takes its responsibilities to safeguard the health and wellbeing of its residents very seriously and our staff in Planning and Environmental Health services have been working diligently to ensure the site is remediated and implement the Council’s Planning Committee decision. In the course of achieving this objective, they have been working with the other public bodies who have duties in this matter, namely the Environment Agency, NHS Cambridgeshire and the Health Protection Agency, and

have ensured that local people and their elected representatives are receiving, up to date, factual information about operations on site.

“Our staff and their colleagues in the Environment Agency are in daily contact with the developer, Harrow Estates and their contractor Vertase FLI, to influence on site operations to minimise the impact of the works on local people and the local environment.

“Members will appreciate that this is a very serious matter, but it is also a very complex one which requires careful consideration of the facts and a high level of specialist technical expertise. I make no apology therefore for the length and detail of my replies to questions, and for the same reason I do not intend to respond to supplementary questions without the benefit of professional and technical advice. I shall however be pleased to respond to any supplementary questions in writing and I shall commit to publishing the questions and my answers on the Council’s website.”

**30 (c) From Councillor Deborah Roberts to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From Councillor Deborah Roberts to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder:

“In the light of the public concern regarding unpleasant physical symptoms being experienced in and around Hauxton as well as the generally obnoxious odours being emitted day after day which are destroying the quality of life for so many residents of South Cambridgeshire and which goes against all the supposed values of SCDC will the council now take control of this situation, distance itself from the developers and their contractors, demand truly independent monitoring / evaluation, look at alternative methods of remediation that would not allow the airborne pollution to occur and thereby be seen to be acting in the public interest rather than as partners in the development of the former chemical works?”

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied:

“Thank you for your question. I am aware that there has been extensive dialogue between yourself and officers on the technical aspects of this site. Having read those communications, I believe that this Council does have control of the situation and are acting in the public interest to achieve the successful remediation of this site. Our officers are leading the multi agency group of organisations involved in the site that is working to ensure that all measures are put in place to minimise the effect on the local community. However, in order to do this, we must work closely with the site developers and contractors to find appropriate solutions.

“The Health Protection Agency’s advice, following review of all current air monitoring, is that emissions from site are unlikely to cause any health effects to the local residents. The human nose is very sensitive to odours and some can cause a reaction in individuals.

“The Council has already taken all appropriate steps to secure the benefit of independent expert advice by way of a legal obligation creating a duty of care (collateral warranty) from both the Contractor (Vertase FLI) and the Consultants (Atkins). Atkins is one of the leading environmental consultancies in the UK. They have and will continue to act impartially and independently in their role as specialist consultant for the remediation works at the Hauxton site. They have a continual site presence to oversee the remediation work that Vertase are carrying out. Analysis of all samples taken from site are also analysed by an independent and accredited laboratory.

“When assessing the remediation application, costs were not a consideration to the council. The application was assessed on technical merit and on the basis of whether

the methodology proposed would address the significant pollutant linkages that exist on the site. Both the Environment Agency and this Council considered that the remediation methodology put forward, i.e. excavation and treatment, was the only method that would satisfactorily address the contamination at the former Bayer site. The soil material needs to be excavated because the contaminants cannot be effectively treated in the ground due to the geology and the nature of some of the contamination. The current methodology for the treatment of excavated soil is comprehensive and appropriate to ensure a solution for all material that may be found on site.

“It has been suggested that tents should be used to minimize emissions during the excavation phase. This is one of the options that have been considered, however, it is only a practical solution for small-scale remediation work. The Bayer site is a 20 acre site with substantial excavations which are carefully excavated, logged, exposed to the remediation process and returned to refill the original excavation site, tenting is not practical or manageable on such a large scale excavation and therefore all other best practice procedures have been put in place to minimise the odour created from the works.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Roberts produced a jam jar of water she said had been drawn from ten yards outside the site boundary wall, and asked if any Executive Members and senior officers would smell or taste it. The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder offered to have the water sent for analysis.

**30 (d) From Trisha McCrae, resident of Hauxton, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From Trisha McCrae, Resident of Hauxton, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder:

“The day to day checks and monitoring are being done on site by the contractor, who is working for the developer and are then overseen by Atkins who are also financially involved with the developer.

“With the present problems in mind this is hardly seen as a true independent and transparent process.

“In order to give the public some sort of confidence will South Cambridgeshire District Council now order the developer to pay for an objective independent expert in this field to be employed to do the required testing.

“Can this also include analysing the minor chemicals and components on site because as at present only the top 10 are being done.”

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied:

“The Council has already taken all appropriate steps to secure the benefit of independent expert advice by way of the legal obligation creating a duty of care from both the Contractor (Vertase) and the Consultants (Atkins). Atkins is one of the leading environmental consultancies in the UK. They have and will continue to act impartially and independently in their role of specialist consultant for the remediation works at the Hauxton site. They have a continual site presence to oversee the remediation work that Vertase are carrying out. Analysis of all samples taken from site are also analysed by an independent and accredited laboratory.

“Regarding the monitoring of soil and water samples, there has been extensive site investigation and risk assessments undertaken to establish a set of Contaminants, a procedure set out in industry guidance. It is these contaminants of concern that are

routinely analysed in soil and water throughout the remediation process. In addition, condition 4 of the planning consent requires additional samples to be taken and analysed for any further contaminants that have not previously been identified to ensure that no new contaminants are being missed. The analysis of all samples is carried out by an independent and accredited laboratory.

“The analysis of the tubes used to monitor the air quality around the site are also sent to an independent and accredited laboratory. The laboratory reports the 10 compounds with the greatest concentration. Based on testing to date, it is unlikely that further significant compounds would be detected. The current monitoring reports include the top ten contaminants for each location. This method ensures that any substance that may not be expected is identified. We are sampling for all potential compounds but only the top ten in each location are reported because the remainder are at or below detection levels.

“All sample analysis results are posted on the joint website pages accompanied by the Health Protection Agency’s comments once they have been reviewed.

Ms McCrae asked, as her supplementary question, “I agree that Atkins is a big company. The first sentence of their methodology statement says that they have never done a cocktail like that at Hauxton before -- effectively letting them off the hook. Vertase says differently, says that the chemicals are more concentrated on site than in the village: this is not true. Benzothiazole levels are the same in the village as on site and sometimes higher. Vertase says one thing, the actual reports say otherwise. The public deserve to know that this is not simply a group of financially intertwined interests being more important than them. How much would it cost to do this right and save both reputations and possibly the future viability of the site?”

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder asked for copies of the documents to which Ms McCrae referred and stated, “The site works are being carried out in line with best practice and all agencies involved are working together to ensure that all measures are put in place to minimise the effect on the local community.

“The Council has already taken all appropriate steps to secure the benefit of independent expert advice by way of duties of care from both the Contractor (Vertase) and the Consultants (Atkins). Atkins is one of the leading environmental consultancies in the UK. They have and will continue to act impartially and independently in their role of specialist consultant for the remediation works at the Hauxton site. They have a continual site presence to oversee the remediation work that Vertase are carrying out. Analysis of all samples taken from site are also analysed by an independent and accredited laboratory.”

**30 (e) From Linda Bland, resident of Hauxton, and Rob Thomas, resident of Harston, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From Linda Bland, resident of Hauxton, and Rob Thomas, resident of Harston, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder:

“It appears that at the end of all this aggravation South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Environment Agency will sign the job off .

“If some years down the line, remembering that know one to date will give a 100 % guarantee that everything here is OK, if we were to experience another Corby like scenario will the responsibility not be fairly and squarely down to South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Environment Agency ?”

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied:

“At Corby the Local Authority was not only the Planning Authority but was also the relevant landowner and had accepted legal responsibility for the decontamination and remediation works which it failed to carry out in a safe way. At Hauxton, South Cambridgeshire District Council is not the landowner and has no contractual /land ownership responsibilities/liabilities in relation to the decontamination and remediation works. The District Council's legal responsibilities are limited to its two roles as (i) Local Planning Authority in terms of it regulating the planning conditions, and (ii) in terms of its duty to inspect its area to detect any statutory nuisances and to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to investigate any complaint of a statutory nuisance.

“The long-term responsibility will remain with the landowner carrying out the decontamination and remediation works. Once the remediation process is complete there will be a minimum of at least six months monitoring to ensure that the works have been successful. At the end of this period Atkins will submit a full report to the Council detailing the works undertaken and the results of all sampling and analysis undertaken to verify the achievement of the target levels. Approval of this Verification Report does not give 100% guarantee that everything is OK. That responsibility remains with the landowner and with the authors of the Report. If any initial Verification Report does not demonstrate the effectiveness of the remediation works, and the Council is not satisfied, it will not be approved and no residential development will be permitted until a Verification Report is produced which does demonstrate the necessary effectiveness.”

Ms Bland asked, as her supplementary question, "What kind of insurance policy does the Council have and does it provide for claims against individual councillors?"

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied that, as previously stated, the Council was not the landowner and the responsibility remained with the landowner and the remediation works provider.

**30 (f) From Dr Charles Turner on behalf of the Cam Valley Forum to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From Dr Charles Turner on behalf of the Cam Valley Forum to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder:

“In their Remediation Method Statement discussing “Contaminants of concern” Vertase noted:

“(A) The recommended targets produced by Atkins are certainly protective of all identified receptors .... However, for the avoidance of doubt we do not believe these targets are achievable through the use of readily available and commercially viable remediation technologies or without significant export of contaminated materials off site. (Page 60, Section 18.1)

“(B) It does mean that some material will be replaced at the site that does not meet the present generic criteria (Page 14, Section 6.4).

“Which are, and what is the nature of the chemicals that cannot be remediated - or not to the target levels - and so will be replaced and, more importantly, what measures will be taken to isolate them to ensure the safety of humans and groundwater?”

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied, “The statements quoted from the Remediation Method Statement need to be read in the context of the sections from which they have been taken. These sections set out the possibility of reviewing the numbers that were used for the computer model to calculate the target levels for



remediation. The numbers currently used are very conservative estimates, however, through the excavation and remediation process more accurate numbers will be measured on site and these can be used in the models to produce new targets.

“Any proposed changes to the remediation targets following such a review of the computer model would have to be submitted and agreed as set out in condition 2 of the planning consent.

“The Remediation Method Statement correctly identifies that some contaminants are more treatable than others. South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Environment Agency will not accept the replacement of any soil that does not comply with agreed remedial targets. Any soils that, after extensive treatment, still have contaminant concentrations exceeding the agreed targets will need to be exported off site to a suitable licensed landfill. This is covered in the Remediation Method Statement to ensure that the treatment of excavated soil is comprehensive and that there is an appropriate option for all material that may be found on site.”

Dr Turner asked, as a supplementary question, "So you don't know whether there is a material that cannot be remediated?", to which the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied that the Council did not.

Dr Turner further asked, "In a letter to the Council from GTA Grimley in a report to Natural England, the cover system was designed to be protective to human health and must not be breached. In a response from Claire Sproats, the human health targets are limited to the top 1 metre. There must be some materials affecting human health and getting into the drainage system - do you regard as satisfactory the solution / remediation strategy which accepts that there are contaminants underneath and a cover on top?" The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder promised Dr Turner a written response.

**30 (g) From William Garfit, resident of Harlton, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From William Garfit, resident of Harlton, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder: “As the owner of the old gravel pit site opposite the former Bayer site at Hauxton, I have serious concern for those who work here. They are exposed all day to the obnoxious smells and volatile chemicals in the air since remediation commenced in March.

“My daughter, Jackie Williams, proprietor of the Organic Health shop on our site, has had to be rushed to hospital on three occasions with severe breathing difficulties. She has never suffered breathing difficulties in her life before but occupational asthma has now been diagnosed and I am very concerned about her future health. She has had to close her shop as she is advised by the hospital doctors to keep away from the area.

“Mr and Mrs Noble run Cambridge Farm Machinery Company. They and their employees suffer symptoms such as sore throats and dry coughs, headaches, tingling lips and numb tongues. Much work on modern agricultural machinery needs to be done outside. However they are driven to operate in the workshop with the roller doors shut.

“At home in the village they, like so many residents of Hauxton, have to keep windows closed and are unable to sit in the garden.

“They are expected to exist like this for another 15 months.

“Would members of the South Cambridgeshire District Council tolerate these living and

working conditions for themselves and their families?"

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied, "I acknowledge that residents appear to be affected by the remediation process and the Council continues to work with all organisations involved to do everything possible to reduce the odours from the site.

"The issue of asthma isn't a straightforward one and the HPA cannot comment on individual cases. However, in general it remains the HPA's opinion that there is no reason to suspect emissions from the remediation works at Hauxton are sufficient to cause asthma. In individuals with pre-existing asthma, episodes can be triggered by contaminants in the air. Such contaminants might include volatile organic substances or odours but any effect would depend upon their chemical composition, the levels and duration of exposure and an individual's sensitivity to odour. The main substances of concern for asthma triggers are allergens and irritant gases, which are present in the air from a variety of sources including natural and human activities. It is unlikely that emissions from the remedial works at Hauxton would trigger asthma. It is likely that other potential sources of asthma triggers (e.g. plant pollen, traffic) are more important factors."

Mr Garfit indicated that he did not accept the Portfolio Holder's answer as a response to his question and, as a supplementary question, asked, "Open remediation is not appropriate. I invite the Leader and Deputy Leader to visit Hauxton and the homes of those affected. If SCDC officers lived there, would you tolerate these conditions? I repeat my invitation: would you and the Council be happy to live and work in these conditions?"

The Portfolio Holder replied that many individuals had said that they would be happy to visit, noting that the work had to be done and the site had to be remediated.

**30 (h) From Martin Goldman, resident of Great Shelford, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From Martin Goldman, resident of Great Shelford, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder "South Cambridgeshire District Council granted a licence for the so-called remediation at the Hauxton Bayer Crop Science site and consulted residents in Hauxton and Harston. In this matter, it did not consult or inform people in Grantchester, Barton, Coton, Haslingfield, Newton, Whittlesford, Stapleford, The Shelfords, Trumpington, south Cambridge and further afield."

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied, "For any planning application, this Council has a duty to consult owners of adjoining land, either directly or by the posting of a notice on site. In addition the practice is that it consults with the relevant Parish Council where the site lies within its area. Consultations for the remediation application included the Parish Councils of Hauxton, Haslingfield, Great Shelford and Harston who were identified as the immediate neighbours. Four site notices were erected around the site and publication put in two places in the Cambridge Evening News on 19th December 2006. Both the remediation and development application were discussed in planning committee on two occasions and public minutes were published following these meetings."

Mr Goldman asked, as his supplementary question, "The council has said and written much about working to ensure its residents have a good quality of life by looking after them, and their environment.

"Its constitution claims that it is "committed to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire

continues to be a safe and healthy place for you and your family".

"It has powers to stop this nuisance to its residents' quality of life. Why is it not doing so?"

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied, "South Cambridgeshire District Council has powers available to it in respect of statutory nuisance. We can only operate within the regulatory framework which requires us to make our judgements on the ordinary normal person. When investigating any complaint of disturbance, several factors need careful consideration by the Environmental Health Officer in determining whether the source is likely to constitute a statutory nuisance. Considerations to which the test of an ordinary normal person will be applied include location, time, duration, frequency, convention, importance to the community of activity and difficulty in avoiding external effects of activity.

Investigations have been undertaken at locations where complaints have been received, at all times of the working day during variable weather conditions, as well as early in the morning, at night and on weekends. If a statutory nuisance is established then South Cambridgeshire District Council must serve an abatement notice in accordance with the council's enforcement policy. However the Council is limited to the extent of enforcement action we can take at Hauxton due to the existence of the environmental permit. Any enforcement action for statutory nuisance would have to be approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment, as the primary enforcement body is the Environment Agency in its regulation of the environmental permit.

In the last fortnight I have asked for officers to undertake a review of the evidence of nuisance in respect of this site and the Principal Environmental Health is satisfied that the Council's procedures have been followed and at this time there is not a statutory nuisance on the grounds of odour."

**30 (i) From Linda Whitebread on behalf of the South Cambridgeshire Green Party to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From Linda Whitebread on behalf of the South Cambridgeshire Green Party to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder: "I was surprised to see that the Council and other public bodies are sharing a website with the contractors carrying out the remediation work, rather than taking a more detached and regulatory stance. It also appears that the contractors are doing their own monitoring. Are these normal practices, and if so, how do the public bodies confirm that the measurements made by the contractor are done correctly?"

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied, "The website you refer to is hosted and controlled by this Council as a means of providing information about the Bayer site to local residents. Whilst the developer and contractor share information, such as site photographs etc, they have their own web pages in relation to the site through their respective company's websites.

"It is normal practice for contractors to monitor their own work and this is a requirement of their Environmental Permit, which is regulated by the Environment Agency. The monitoring is verified by Atkins as an independent consultant and all of the analysis is carried out at an independent and accredited laboratory. All of the results are provided to this Council, the Environment Agency and the HPA for review, in addition they are all published on the dedicated website. SCDC and the Environment Agency also carry out random visits to monitor and validate procedures as well as any complaints."

Ms Whitebread asked, as her supplementary question, "All agree that the land needs to be cleaned up and it is a legitimate of the Council to require the developer to make sure the work is done before permission is granted to build houses. However, we are not happy with the shared website. It creates a conflict of interests. It is unfortunate to say that Council officers are working closely with contractors and are happy with the spot checks. The perception is that the Council is hand-in-glove with the developers. Will the Council consider detaching itself from the developers, using a separate website with a link to the contractor?"

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder noted Ms Whitebread's concerns and said that the Council was willing to consider these suggestions and would see if it were practical for all concerned to implement.

**30 (j) From Jackie Williams, resident of Little Eversden, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder**

From Jackie Williams, resident of Little Eversden, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder: "As the owner of an organic food business in Church Road, Hauxton who has had to go to A&E twice in May and be seen by paramedics on a third occasion with breathing problems confirmed by A&E Doctors as being due to chemical inhalation, I would like S.C.D.C. to tell me if they consider the cocktail of chemicals being released from the Bayer Site to be safe for a pregnant woman to breath in approximately 48 hours per week? I am particularly concerned about research that shows that in some instances two toxic chemicals mixed together can be one thousand times more toxic than one of the original chemicals. Please bear this in mind before commenting on the safety of an unborn child."

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied, "The Health Protection Agency has advised us that they do not expect an appreciable increase in the risk of cancers or birth defects to be caused by emissions from the remediation activities at this site. Their assessment is based on the results of air monitoring data at the site boundary. The current scientific view is that the probability of any health risk from exposure to mixtures of chemicals present at low levels is likely to be small. Furthermore, when there is exposure to multiple chemicals that cause toxicity in the same way, the combined effects are likely to be no greater than the additive effect. Only two chemicals, toluene and tetrachloroethylene have consistently been detected by the monthly monitoring at the site boundary. Even if these two chemicals were to cause toxicity in the same way, there would be no reason to expect adverse health effects, since the levels detected are many times below the levels required to cause ill health.

"I have been advised that the multi agency group working on the management of Hauxton issues remain open to receiving any relevant evidence to the contrary of this opinion."

Ms Williams asked, as her supplementary question, "We keep getting told that the chemicals are safe and there are no side effects. I have twice been to A&E and 1 time seen by paramedics: I do not consider this safe. Would you take such risks?"

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied that she was not qualified to answer personally, but that the Health Protection Agency (HPA) advice was that there was no risk that they were able to identify.

**30 (k) From Councillor Hazel Smith to the New Communities Portfolio Holder**

From Councillor Hazel Smith to the New Communities Portfolio Holder: "I was concerned

to read in the Cambridge News that Dr Bard had decided to slow down even further the preparation of the Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan document (GTDPD). Policies on provision for this sizeable minority of the residents of South Cambs are referred to in our main LDF documents which were adopted many years ago now. We have looked into the needs of local Gypsies and Travellers at local and regional level to justify with evidence the numbers of pitches we were going to have to provide, just on the basis of families growing up and getting independent plots of their own. We know that the trajectory of new plots required was 69 from 2006 to 2011, another 27 up to 2016 and a further 31 to 2021 under the slimmed-down figures. As the RSS has now been abolished and neighbouring authorities in the East of England are now not having to make provision the need will be greater, perhaps up to half as much again.

“We have given permanent consent to 40 I know of, or perhaps a few more, up to now. There is also temporary consent to around 60 plots, many of them in Milton ward, and the GTDPD is now unlikely to be adopted in time for the end of the temporary permissions which have been given.

“Travellers have a justified expectation that this authority should have a proper policy, and tell them once and for all whether they can expect to be able to stay on their own land. Planning applications are increasingly likely to succeed on appeal, the longer we are without a credible strategy for providing for this community's needs. What is the administration's plan for the policy in this area?”

Councillor David Bard, New Communities Portfolio Holder, replied, “I am well aware of the importance of planning for the needs of our Gypsies and Travellers, who account for 1% of South Cambs population. The Council has been working for some time on the preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller DPD in view of the level of need for new pitches in the district, and two rounds of public consultation have already been undertaken.

“Unfortunately, just as we were making progress towards a further round of consultation leading to the preparation of a draft DPD, the significant changes being made by the new Government have meant that we have had to slow down that work. It is unfortunate, but there are good reasons for it.

“Members will recall that the Gypsy and Traveller DPD was aiming to meet the targets for pitch numbers set out in the East of England Plan. Members will also know that on 6th July, regional spatial strategies were revoked by the Secretary of State, meaning that they no longer form part of the development plan. As a consequence, we do not currently have an agreed target to provide for and it will be for the District Council through its plan making to identify a local target.

“However, it is important to realise that the impact of the loss of the East of England Plan could be particularly significant on South Cambridgeshire, as the high levels of need identified for the district in the 2006 Needs Assessment (the Cambridge Sub Region Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2006) was to be spread across the region, to aid choice, and speed up delivery. This gave us a lower target in the RSS than could have been the case simply using our local Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessment.

“Also relevant is that the new Government proposes to introduce changes to the planning system in the UK. This will include a change to the LDF system, which we anticipate will be introduced in draft in the Decentralisation and Localism Bill in November.

“The Government has said it intends to give local communities greater say in planning

decisions that will affect their local areas. They say that targets for numbers of pitches will now be set locally. They also say that local authorities should reflect local need and historic demand.

“Recent guidance from the CLG advises that needs assessments will continue to provide a good starting point. At the same time they say that local authorities are not bound by them.

“My judgement is that we need to proceed with caution during this period of uncertainty to make sure that any plan we prepare is likely to be found sound by independent Inspectors. CLG says that regulations and guidance for Gypsy and Traveller provision will be reviewed in due course.

“The Council will therefore now need to consider what is an appropriate target, that is transparent and can be defended, taking account of local need and historic demand, and any other relevant factors. This is likely to include the practicalities of delivering the number of new sites identified. This will need to be considered in the context of wider changes to the planning making system which will affect how we make plans in the future.

“For all these reasons, we consider the appropriate way forward is for the work on the Gypsy and Traveller DPD to now progress more slowly whilst we wait for the new government to produce the much needed guidance on how we should plan for the needs of our Gypsies and Travellers. Members should however be reassured that work is continuing to explore how needs can be met, and how sites can be delivered.”

Councillor Smith stated, as her supplementary question, "Travellers feel let down by the new government. I understand the Council's position: we need to reassure them that the thrust of the original policy is to provide for Travellers in the area and for their legitimate expansion."

Councillor Bard assured members that large resources in the New Communities service have been dedicated to this issue for the last two years and that the Council had no intention of abandoning it.

### **30 (I) From Councillor Sebastian Kindersley to the Planning Portfolio Holder**

From Councillor Sebastian Kindersley to the Planning Portfolio Holder: “Would the Portfolio holder please advise Council what the Administration's position is on Local Enterprise Partnerships? In particular I am interested to know with whom the Council expects to work; what the anticipated timeline for this is and what discussions have so far taken place.”

Councillor Nick Wright, Planning Portfolio Holder replied, “On 29th June, the Secretaries of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, and for Communities and Local Government wrote to local authorities and business leaders requesting outline proposals from partnerships of local authorities and businesses for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) by 6 September.

“The Government's stated expectation is that Local Enterprise Partnerships will be about setting the right conditions for growth and business, tackling issues such as planning and housing, local transport and infrastructure priorities, employment and enterprise and the transition of the low carbon economy. Supporting small business start-ups will be important. The Government has also said that Partnerships will work closely with academic institutions and that tourism will be important in some areas.

"It is expected that Partnerships will focus on supporting and enabling the private sector.

"The Council expects to work with the city council, the county council, the business and academic communities (especially these two) to submit a proposal for a LEP by 6 September. Discussions with these and other parties is ongoing, with the next high level meeting arranged for 28 July."

Councillor Kindersley asked, as his supplementary question, "If we are to be fully behind our own LEP, you need to engage all members now – will you assure members that this will not be Making Cambridgeshire County v2?"

Councillor Wright replied that the proposal had been around for several months now and it had seemed appropriate to Cabinet to involve SCDC, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, the University of Cambridge and local businesses as the highest level of growth in the County was in these areas and not in neighbouring Cambridgeshire districts. The Secretary of State was now suggesting that Cambridgeshire County Council work with other County Councils across the sub-region from Peterborough to Stansted.

### **30 (m) From Councillor Douglas de Lacey to the Planning Portfolio Holder**

From Councillor Douglas de Lacey to the Planning Portfolio Holder: "Will the Portfolio Holder please tell us how it is possible that an upgrade of a perfectly-functioning planning website, on which many Parish Councillors rely to fulfil their duties, can take over three weeks rather than the three milliseconds which switching systems in the 21st century would normally be expected to take?"

Councillor Nick Wright, Planning Portfolio Holder replied, "I agree that the changing or switching of websites takes but a moment. However the work being undertaken is much more than this and involves the closure of the existing planning database, the extraction of data and all related records back to 1948. This was then sent to our new supplier Swift LG where the data has been converted for import back into the new planning system.

"This work was scheduled to take two weeks and I can confirm it has been completed successfully. Testing of the data has taken place and the system went live on Monday.

"The planning service is acutely aware of the disruption to customers and has minimised this by clear scheduling of work and taking mitigating actions including interim working arrangements that allow members to be kept up to date with records of submitted applications, whilst at the same time publishing as much information as possible to the public. Please note that:

- All records that existed on the website prior to 2nd July have been fully maintained on the site, including notifications of decisions and details of any amendments. Only new applications were not appearing.
- For new applications, staff were validating these applications manually and creating a list that was regularly circulated to members via email. As soon as the new system was available, staff commenced uploading these applications so that they are available on the new search page as soon as it is turned on, which will be by the 26th July at the latest. Newly received applications are also being entered simultaneously to ensure no continuing delay to application detail availability.
- Parish Councils were informed of the planned procedure at the forum held on 14th June, prior to the transition commencing and although there were some concerns, in general Parish Councils expressed understanding, because the

manual system was to be introduced.

- Periods for consultations are unaffected by the transition between systems.
- Work to connect the new database with the new Swift webpages is underway and we expect to be live in the next day or two.“

Councillor de Lacey felt that this response did not address his question sufficiently and asked for further technical explanations, for example, why one database was shut down before another was opened, and was promised a written response.

### **30 (n) From Councillor Jose Hales to the New Communities Portfolio Holder**

From Councillor Jose Hales to the New Communities Portfolio Holder: “Could the portfolio holder explain to members what this council’s policy is now regarding housing provision numbers given, that the Regional Spatial Strategy policy has now been abolished?”

Councillor David Bard, New Communities Portfolio Holder, replied, “Shortly after the Secretary of State abolished the Regional Spatial Strategies for England, this question was answered in part by the Chief Planning Officer at the Department for Communities & Local Government who wrote to all local planning authorities to explain the practical implications of the Secretary of State’s decision and to provide guidance on how local planning authorities should proceed during the transitional period before the government’s new planning system comes into effect at the end of 2011. The Chief Planning Officer’s letter was put on the Council’s website on day it was received – 6th July.

“In reply to the question, the letter explains that the planning policies which will remain in force are the Council’s adopted Development Plan Documents and the saved policies from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003. The housing numbers that do apply are now only to be found in the Council’s Core Strategy which was adopted in January 2007 (20,000 homes 1999 – 2016), pre-dating the Regional Spatial Strategy which was not adopted until May 2008 (23,500 homes 2001 – 2021).

“This information and the links to both the Council’s Core Strategy and the Structure Plan ‘saved policies’ are on the Council’s website and this information was included in the July Planning Policy Update which is sent to all Parish Councils and to members.

“The housing numbers in our Core Strategy are based on the 2003 Structure Plan which was developed locally and endorsed by all of the Districts as well as the County Council. Those housing numbers were produced by local forecasts of the growth of the local economy and local population and are the houses that we all agreed would be needed to ensure the continued prosperity of the area and to stop houses becoming unaffordable to more local people. Based on those housing numbers we have an agreed development strategy which all Councils in Cambridgeshire have signed up to and, through the Joint Development Control Committees, we are actively delivering

“Looking to the future once the new local planning system is in place, housing numbers will be found in the new style Local Plans and will be based once more on forecasts of prospects for our local economy and population growth. We are already working with partners to begin the developing the evidence needed and I am looking forward to working with our local communities to develop the new local plans.”

Councillor Hales asked the Portfolio Holder if this would offer comfort to South Cambridgeshire residents still awaiting affordable housing. The Portfolio Holder replied that the growth agenda had been ambitious and that there had been some slippage due



to the economy from what was envisaged in the original plan. Major sites were now coming forward; for instance, the northwest Cambridge University application was now expected by the end of the year.

**31. PETITIONS**

No petitions had been received since the previous Council meeting.

**32. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**32 (a) Amendments to the Constitution - Article 9 - The Standards Committee (Standards Committee, 16 June 2010)**

Councillor Tony Orgee proposed and Councillor Ray Manning seconded that the amendments to Article 9 be adopted.

Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the amendments to Article 9 – The Standards Committee as set out in the second column of the table attached to the Council agenda.

**32 (b) Government Review of Council Housing Finance: Proposals to Replace Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Subsidy System (Housing Portfolio Holder, 5 July 2010)**

Councillor Mark Howell proposed, seconded by Councillor Francis Burkitt, that Council endorse the Housing Portfolio Holder's response as the view of the authority and agree any further representations to be included.

Councillor Mark Howell, Housing Portfolio Holder, presented his personal response to the government's consultation on its review of Council Housing Finance, the deadline for which had been 6 July 2010. He explained that the government was seeking to pay back the £25 billion housing debt it had accumulated from Councils across the country, a figure which also included debt taken on by the government when Council houses were transferred to Housing Associations. Councillor Howell stated that he personally felt that it was unfair to ask the authority, currently debt-free, to take on a debt incurred elsewhere. The proposed debt allocated South Cambridgeshire District Council was the second highest in the country, equivalent to £36,000 per dwelling. Councillor Howell cautioned Members that a rejection of the government's debt offer outright left the Council unable to try to negotiate a better settlement, and that the Council had been advised that it must accept the debt voluntarily or the government would pass primary legislation to impose it. If Members were unable to support the Portfolio Holder's individual response, the Chairman of Council would write to the government to say that the full Council had rejected the offer in its entirety.

Councillor Howell reminded Members that the response from tenants during the Housing Futures ballot had shown that tenants were unhappy at the proposed £80 million debt to be taken on by South Cambridgeshire Village Homes, but that the debt proposed by the government was now £197 million, rising to £206 million within the first five years due both to interest and to the government's calculations which assumed that the authority had a higher rental income than it actually received. Councillor Howell confirmed that Members had been aware of these reforms since April 2010, and that the amount originally told to the Council had been £154 million, then £168 million, before the final consultation paper had been received with its offer of a debt of £197 million.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley stated that the Liberal Democrat group would abstain as the information supplied was insufficient to allow them to form a view. Councillor Howell reminded Members that a report had been presented at his 19 May 2010 Portfolio

Holder meeting, at which the matter had been discussed thoroughly. Councillor Howell added that what was before Council was a response to a consultation document and not the final result of negotiations.

Councillor Tony Orgee noted that the consultation papers had been available for public consultation from April to July 2010 and read aloud his personal representations.

***Comments in support of the Portfolio Holder's response:***

- The Portfolio Holder had said that the Council supported in principle the move to a self-financing system for council housing, but opposed the imposition of such a significant debt incurred elsewhere as the price to be paid for that settlement;
- Only be voluntarily agreeing to accept some level of debt would the authority be in a position to negotiate;
- If the Council paid off the principal and the interest, the total debt should not rise above £206 million;
- After thirty years, the Council would be in a position where it owned all its housing stock and retained rents and capital receipts for local benefit;
- Council could reject the offer of a £197 million debt and have the full amount imposed by legislation, which would not be supported by tenants, or it could try to negotiate for a lower settlement knowing that tenants would prefer that debt be kept as low as possible;
- A subsequent government might change the redistribution of the debt.

***Comments opposing the Portfolio Holder's response:***

- The responses appeared contradictory: in paragraph 5.1 the Portfolio Holder stated that the self-financing proposal was preferable in the long term to the current system but the Council was reluctant to proceed to early implementation, but in paragraph 5.2 the Portfolio Holder stated that the Council could implement self-financing in time for 2011/12;
- Some Members felt that the Housing Portfolio Holder had responded without other Members being aware;
- The Portfolio Holder's response to the questions in the consultation did set out other alternatives;
- The scope for negotiation had been reduced by sending the response, as the Council had shown its hand;
- Commercial rates of interest were unknown and the interest payments would place an unsustainable burden on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

***General comments:***

- The public had to be made aware that any level of debt would require cuts to services to finance the debt and interest repayments;
- Abstention was unhelpful: Council was being asked to take a view on whether or not it accepted the principle of accepting to pay off debts incurred elsewhere, regardless of the actual amount of debt;
- The on-going ramifications would be for tenants rather than for council taxpayers generally;
- The determination to keep the Council debt-free was to be commended;
- The scale of the debt was opposed unanimously.

Councillor Simon Edwards, seconded by Councillor Howell, moved that the question now be put. Councillor Howell, supported by more than six Members, called for a recorded vote on whether or not Council endorsed the personal response he had made to the consultation document. Fifty-one Members recorded their presence for the vote.

**For (12)**

David Bard  
Roger Hall  
Tony Orgee  
Hazel Smith

Francis Burkitt  
Mark Howell  
Neil Scarr  
Peter Topping

Pippa Corney  
Mike Mason  
Ben Shelton  
Tim Wotherspoon

**Against (22)**

Richard Barrett  
Tom Bygott  
Sue Ellington  
Mervyn Loynes  
David McCraith  
Cicely Murfitt  
Robert Turner  
Nick Wright

Val Barrett  
Nigel Cathcart  
James Hockney  
Ray Manning  
David Morgan  
Alex Riley  
Bunty Waters

Brian Burling  
Simon Edwards  
Peter Johnson  
Raymond Matthews  
Lorraine Morgan  
Jim Stewart  
John F Williams

**Abstained (12)**

Frances Amrani  
Jonathan Chatfield  
Tumi Hawkins  
Sebastian Kindersley

John Batchelor  
Steve Harangozo  
Pauline Jarvis  
Deborah Roberts

Trisha Bear  
Sally Hatton  
Douglas de Lacey  
John G Williams

**Not Voted (5)**

Jose Hales  
Charlie Nightingale

Lynda Harford  
Edd Stonham

Liz Heazell

In response to a question by the Chief Executive, Council confirmed that it was satisfied that the votes had been recorded properly.

Council **REFUSED TO ENDORSE** the Housing Portfolio Holder's personal response to the government consultation and required officers to forward to the government the points raised at the Council meeting as the Council's response.

**32 (c) Capital Receipts Pooling: Equity Share (Cabinet, 8 July 2010)**

Councillor Simon Edwards, Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder, explained that Cabinet's recommendations for managing the shortfall in resources caused by the requirement for the authority to re-purchase properties disposed of under equity share leases entered into prior to 2006. Councillor Edwards explained that the proposals reflected the tenants' preference, as expressed during the Housing Futures ballot, for Council houses remaining with the Council, and therefore Cabinet had rejected the option to transfer to a Housing Association vacant properties with pre-2006 equity share leases. Concerns were expressed at the absence of any indication from the government whether or not the Secretary of State would be minded to grant a direction to exempt the Council from capital receipts pooling of its residual interest in properties with pre-2006 equity share leases.

On the proposal of Councillor Edwards, seconded by Councillor Mark Howell, Council **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) direction be sought from the Secretary of State (under section 74 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) that the Council's residual interest in properties disposed of under pre-2006 equity share leases be removed from the Housing Revenue Account and transferred to the General Fund; and
- (b) an increase of £1,000,000 to the 2010/11 Capital Programme be approved for the re-purchase of equity share properties funded from either:

- (i) capital receipts (up to 100% assuming that the direction at (a) is granted);  
or
- (ii) the balance from an increase in the Council's borrowing limits.

**32 (d) Clarifying Scrutiny Procedure and Related Definitions (Constitution Review Working Party, 22 July 2010)**

Councillor Charlie Nightingale, Chairman of the Constitution Review Working Party, proposed, seconded by Councillor James Hockney, Scrutiny and Overview Committee Chairman, that Council adopt the amendments to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules and related Definitions. Councillor Sebastian Kindersley expressed concern that the proposed amendments to the call-in procedure at paragraphs 12.1 and 12.9.1 removed from the Committee the right to pre-scrutinise issues, and commented that Councillor Jim Stewart had not been present at the Constitution Review Working Party meeting and therefore the Liberal Democrat Group had not had any representation.

Councillors Nightingale and Hockney **WITHDREW** their motion to invite more members to participate in reviewing the proposed changes and this item was **REFERRED** back to the Constitution Review Working Party for further consideration.

**32 (e) Review of Procedures for Public and Member Questions at Full Council (Constitution Review Working Party, 22 July 2010)**

This item was **REFERRED** back to the Constitution Review Working Party for further consideration.

**33. APPOINTMENT OF A CHIEF EXECUTIVE / HEAD OF PAID SERVICE, ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER AND RETURNING OFFICER**

Steve Hampson, Executive Director (Operational Services) and Fiona McMillan, Acting Legal and Democratic Services Manager, left the Chamber for the duration of this item.

Councillor Ray Manning, as Chairman of the Appointments Panel of the Employment Committee, commended the response received to the advertisement and the number of superb candidates who applied. The Appointments Panel's recommendation of Jean Hunter had been unanimous.

Council **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that:

- (a) Jean Hunter, currently Chief Executive of South Ribble Borough Council, be appointed Chief Executive Officer, Head of Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) the offer of employment be subject to two exemplary references, medical clearance and eligibility checks in accordance with the Council's policies;
- (c) the appointment commence on a date to be mutually agreed, taking account of any contractual notice period that will need to be served at South Ribble Borough Council;
- (d) the salary offered be £120,000 per annum. There will be no other financial benefits offered with the appointment and no relocation package, with the exception of Returning Officer fees; and
- (e) the appointment be subject to a 6 month probation period.

Council further **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that:

- (f) Steve Hampson, currently Executive Director (Operational Services), be appointed Acting Chief Executive Officer, Head of the Paid Service, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010 until such time that Jean Hunter takes up the Chief Executive post permanently;
- (g) Fiona McMillan, Acting Legal & Democratic Services Manager, be appointed Acting Monitoring Officer from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010 until such time that Jean Hunter takes up the Chief Executive post permanently; and
- (h) that remuneration for the interim arrangements be delegated to the Leader and Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder.

Councillor Manning thanked all the Appointments Panel members for their hard work.

#### **34. FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2010/11**

Council congratulated officers on the new Scores on the Doors Elite award and **RESOLVED** to adopt the Food Safety Service Plan 2010/11.

#### **35. FRINGE SITES JOINT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - REVIEW OF SITE BOUNDARIES**

Councillor David Bard, New Communities Portfolio Holder, presented the revised Terms of Reference for the Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control Committee, amendments to which had been proposed to include the extended NIAB site, as set out in the relevant Site Specific Policy of the Development Plan Document, within the Joint Development Control Committee responsibilities. The revisions had already been adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council, and would come into effect only once all three authorities had agreed to adopt them.

Councillors Tom Bygott and Douglas de Lacey opposed the revised site boundaries as development on the site could see Girton village become part of Cambridge City, preferring to keep development control of the site solely the responsibility of South Cambridgeshire District Council. Members noted that rejecting the amendments would require further consultation, delaying the delivery of sites for which applications were expected this year.

Councillor Ben Shelton proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Tom Bygott, that only South Cambridgeshire and Cambridgeshire County Councillors have voting rights for development on the NIAB2 site. Forty-six members registered their presence to vote and, with 14 in favour, 31 against and 1 abstention, the amended motion was **REJECTED**.

Councillor Bard confirmed that additional lands would be included to allow for landscaping proposals, such as Councillor Bygott's proposed woodlands or country park between Girton and Cambridge, as well as some of the surface drainage works. He cautioned that rejecting the revisions would demonstrate to the Council's partners that this authority was unwilling to work in partnership.

Forty-six members registered their presence to vote and, with 33 in favour, 13 against and no abstentions, Council **RESOLVED**:

- (a) to approve the amended Terms of Reference for the Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control Committee as included in Appendix A to the report; and

- (b) that the Terms of Reference for the Joint Development Control Committee be kept under review and any proposals for revision be brought back to Council when appropriate.

**36. CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING**

During debate on the previous item and in accordance with Council Standing Order 13(d), Council **RESOLVED** that the meeting continue beyond four hours in duration.

**37. FORMAL ADOPTION OF SECTION 64 OF THE TOWN IMPROVEMENT CLAUSES ACT 1847**

On the proposal of Councillor Nick Wright, seconded by Councillor Pippa Corney, Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the provisions of Section 64 of the Town Improvement Clauses Act 1847.

**38. APPOINTMENT TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS 2010-14**

Councillor Tony Orgee noted that Councillor Iain Booth of Cambourne Parish Council had been elected to fill the Parish Member vacancy, but had had to withdraw due to new work commitments, and so a further election would be held to fill the vacancy.

On the proposal of Councillor Tony Orgee, seconded by Councillor Ray Manning, Council **RESOLVED**

- (a) to co-opt Mrs Diane Best, Mr Raith Overhill and Mr Eric Revell to the Standards Committee as Independent Members for four years, 2010-14; and
- (b) formally to thank Ms Georgina Butcher, Independent Member 2006-10 and Chairman 2008/09, and Councillor David Kelleway, Parish Council Member 2006-10, for their contribution to the Standards Committee and service to the residents of South Cambridgeshire.

**39. UPDATES FROM MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Councillor Frances Amrani reported on the recent opening by the Governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, of the new Cambridge Citizens' Advice Bureau on Devonshire Street, which she had attended with Councillor Charlie Nightingale. The new premises would be open to the public on 26 July and the contact telephone numbers remained unchanged.

**40. NOTICES OF MOTION**

**40 (a) Standing in the name of Councillor Ray Manning, seconded by Councillor Sebastian Kindersley**

Councillor Ray Manning, seconded by Councillor Sebastian Kindersley, moved that "This Council publicly recognises the unique contribution that the Marshall Group has made to South Cambridgeshire for more than 100 years, both in economic terms by the provision of local employment opportunities and the supply of goods and services, but also by its direct and indirect investment in the local community, and calls upon the Chairman and Chief Executive to mark this special relationship in the form of a commemorative illuminated scroll."

Councillor Manning spoke of the importance of the Marshall Group to the local economy and to the local people, providing employment, supporting schools and local charities,

and being a good employer genuinely concerned about the wellbeing of its employees. Councillor Kindersley highlighted the Marshall Group's retention of its original engineering works and development of cutting edge technologies, commending its apprenticeship scheme as a model for other companies to follow. Many Members echoed these statements and offered personal remembrances of the Marshall Group.

Mr Jonathan Barker, company secretary for the Marshall Group, addressed the Council, was present at the meeting and received Members' gratitude for his personal efforts on behalf of the authority. He addressed the Council, thanking Members for their comments, for which he was grateful, and offered his thanks to Members and officers for their work in the community. He spoke of the more than four thousand Marshall Group employees worldwide and their families, their importance to the company and their gratitude to the Council for recognising their contribution to South Cambridgeshire.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the above Motion.

**40 (b) Standing in the name of Councillor Sebastian Kindersley**

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley, seconded by Councillor Liz Heazell, moved that "This Council agrees to immediately cancel the competitive tendering exercise for Responsive Repairs on the basis that the exercise is costing this Council money unnecessarily and destabilising a profitable arm of the Council."

Councillor Kindersley expressed his dissatisfaction with the Cabinet decision on 12 November 2009 to proceed to tender, preferring that the service be retained in-house as it had proven successful. He felt that the tender exercise had been unnecessary and a waste of council taxpayers' money.

Councillor Mark Howell, Housing Portfolio Holder, explained that, although tenant satisfaction with the service was high, the Housing Futures papers had said that the service likely would be put to tender if the Council were to retain the housing stock. A peer review of the housing service had supported putting the service out for tender, as had the Tenant Services Authority (TSA). If the Council chose not to tender the service, it would have had to undergo an inspection by the Audit Commission and would have to demonstrate why it had not proceeded with the tender exercise; an Audit Commission inspection would cost the authority more than the tender exercise. Councillor Howell also reminded Members that one-third of the service had been awarded to Cambridge City Council. If the Council did not put all three contracts out to tender, it might have to transfer immediately all affected employees under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE). Part of the revised tender documents would extend the contract length from two to five years, making it more attractive and potentially increasing the number of tenders received.

The motion was put to the vote. Thirty-seven Members recorded their presence. With 17 in favour, 19 against and 1 abstention, the motion was declared **LOST**.

**40 (c) Standing in the name of Councillor Mike Mason**

This motion was **WITHDRAWN** and **REFERRED** to the Constitution Review Working Party as part of the review of public and Member questions at Council meetings.

**41. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS**

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

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**The Meeting ended at 7.05 p.m.**

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## Council Standing Orders

### 1. Annual Meeting of the Council

#### 1.1 Timing and business

...

- (b) The annual meeting will:
- (i) elect a person to preside if the Chairman of Council is not present;
  - (ii) elect the Chairman of Council;
  - (iii) elect the Vice-Chairman of Council;
  - (iv) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
  - (v) in a year when there is an ordinary election of councillors, receive the Returning Officer's Return of councillors elected.
  - (vi) receive any announcements from the Chairman and / or Head of Paid Service;
  - (vii) upon the expiry of the Leader's normal term of office as Leader, elect the Leader including, where available, notification by the Leader of the number of members he / she is appointing to the Executive (Cabinet), their names and their portfolios, and the Leader's Scheme of Delegation of Executive Functions;
  - (viii) appoint up to four substitute members per committee from each political group in a hierarchical list to all committees and sub-committees other than the Standards Committee;
  - (ix) appoint at least one scrutiny and overview committee, a Standards Committee, the Licensing Committee (2003 Act) and such other committees as the Council considers appropriate to deal with matters which are neither reserved to the Council nor are executive functions (as set out in Part 3 of this Constitution);
  - (x) agree the scheme of delegation or such part of it as the Constitution determines it is for the Council to agree (as set out in Part 3 of this Constitution);
  - (xi) receive questions from, and provide answers to, the public ~~and members~~ in relation to matters which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting are relevant to the business of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Orders 10 ~~and 11~~ below;
  - (xii) receive reports and recommendations from the Executive and the Council's committees and receive questions and answers on any of those reports;
  - (xiii) receive the Leader of the Major Opposition Group's Annual Report.
  - (xiv) consider any business set out in the notice convening the meeting including consideration of proposals from the Executive in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework and reports of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee for debate; and
  - (xv) receive questions from, and provide answers to, members in relation to matters which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting are relevant to the business of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 11 below.

### 2. Ordinary Meetings

#### 2.1 Agenda for Ordinary Meetings

Ordinary meetings of the Council will take place in accordance with a programme agreed by Council. Ordinary meetings will:

- (i) elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are not present;
- (ii) approve the minutes of the last meeting;
- (iii) receive any declarations of interest from members;
- (iv) elect the Leader of the Council, in the event that the position becomes vacant during the Civic Year including, where available, notification by the Leader of the number of members he / she is appointing to the Executive (Cabinet), their names and their portfolios, and the Leader's Scheme of Delegation of Executive Functions;
- (v) appoint members to committees and outside bodies where vacancies have arisen, except where appointment to outside bodies has been delegated by the Council or is exercisable only by the Executive;
- (vi) receive any announcements from the Chairman, Leader, the Executive or the Head of Paid Service;

- (vii) receive questions from, and provide answers to, the public ~~and members~~ in relation to matters which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting are relevant to the business of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Orders 10 ~~and 11~~ below;
- (viii) deal with any business from the last Council meeting;
- (ix) receive reports and recommendations from the Executive and the Council's committees and receive questions and answers on any of those reports;
- (x) receive reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations;
- (xi) receive questions from, and provide answers to, members in relation to matters which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting are relevant to the business of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 11 below;
- (xii) consider motions; and
- ~~(xii)(xiii)~~ consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, including consideration of proposals from the Executive in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework and reports of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee for debate.

## 10. Questions by the Public

### 10.1 General

At the discretion of the Chairman, members of the public may ask questions of any member at ordinary meetings of the Council. ~~A This~~ standard protocol is to be observed by questioners ~~is given in the footnote below.<sup>4</sup>~~

- ~~(a) Questioners will not be permitted to raise the competence or performance of a councillor or officer, nor any matter involving exempt information or normally considered 'confidential'. Questioners cannot make any abusive or defamatory comments.~~
- ~~(b) Each questioner must make it clear whether he or she is speaking as a private individual or as a representative of an organisation.~~
- ~~(c) If any clarification of what the questioner has said is required, the Chairman will have the discretion to allow councillors to ask questions.~~
- ~~(d) The questioner will not be permitted to participate in any subsequent discussion and will not be entitled to vote.~~
- ~~(e) The Chairman will decide when and what time will be set aside for questions depending on the amount of business on the agenda for the meeting. Normally public questions will be dealt with as the first substantive item of the meeting. A maximum of thirty minutes will be allowed for public questions, although this may be extended at the Chairman's discretion.~~
- ~~(f) Individual questioners will be permitted to speak for a maximum of three minutes.~~

### 10.2 Order of questions

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.

- 
- ~~1. Questioners will not be permitted to raise the competence or performance of a councillor or officer, nor any matter involving exempt information or normally considered 'confidential'. Questioners cannot make any abusive or defamatory comments.~~
  - ~~2. Each questioner must make it clear whether he or she is speaking as a private individual or as a representative of an organisation.~~
  - ~~3. If any clarification of what the questioner has said is required, the Chairman will have the discretion to allow councillors to ask questions.~~
  - ~~4. The questioner will not be permitted to participate in any subsequent discussion and will not be entitled to vote.~~
  - ~~5. The Chairman will decide when and what time will be set aside for questions depending on the amount of business on the agenda for the meeting. Normally questions will be dealt with as the first substantive item of the meeting. A maximum of ten minutes will be allowed for public questions on any specific agenda item.~~
  - ~~6. Individual questioners will be permitted to speak for a maximum of three minutes.~~

### 10.3 Notice of questions

A question may only be asked if notice has been given by delivering it in writing or by electronic mail to the proper officer no later than midday ~~three~~ seven working days before the day of the meeting. The proper officer shall acknowledge the receipt of each question in writing. Each question must give the name and address of the questioner. The Chairman may permit a question to be asked if shorter notice is given. If a substantive answer cannot be given at the meeting, the Chairman may refer the question to any other body of the Council or for a written response within five working days by the member or by the relevant Chief Officer.

### 10.4 Number of questions

At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question but one supplementary question may also be asked at the meeting. More than one question shall not be submitted on behalf of any organisation.

### 10.5 Scope of questions

The Chairman, having regard to the advice of the proper officer may reject a question if it:

- is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the district;
- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at the meeting or a meeting of the Council in the past six months; ~~or~~
- raises issues about the competence or performance of a councillor or officer;
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information; ~~or~~
- relates to a planning application which has yet to be determined.

The Chairman shall have the discretion to limit the length of preamble or other background information supplied with the question.

### 10.6 Record of questions

The proper officer will keep a record of submitted questions open to public inspection and will immediately send a copy of the question to the member to whom it is to be put. Rejected questions will include reasons for rejection.

### 10.7 Asking the question at the meeting

The Chairman will invite the questioner to put the question. If a questioner who has submitted a written question is unable to be present, they may ask the Chairman to put the question on their behalf or appoint a representative to do so. The Chairman may ask the question on the questioner's behalf, indicate that a written reply will be given within five working days or decide, in the absence of the questioner, that the question will not be dealt with.

### 10.8 Supplementary question

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the member who has replied to his or her original question. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in Standing Order 10.5 above.

### 10.9 Written answers

Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time, either because of lack of time or because of the non-attendance of the member to whom it was to be put, will be dealt with by a written answer. Written answers shall be circulated to the questioner within five working days of the meeting and shall be included as an appendix to the minutes.

**10.10 Reference of question to the Executive or a committee**

Discussion can take place on a question only if the Chairman agrees. However, any member may move, in accordance with Standing Order 13(d) that a matter raised by a question be referred to the Executive or the appropriate committee or sub-committee. Once seconded, such a motion will be voted on without discussion.

**10.11 Public participation at Planning Committee**

Members of the public shall be entitled to address the Planning Committee in accordance with a scheme agreed by Council which may be amended by the committee from time to time.

**11. Questions by Members**

**11.1 On reports of the Executive or committees**

A member of the Council may ask the Leader, portfolio holder or the Chairman of a committee any question without notice upon an item of the report of the Executive or a committee when that item is being received or under consideration by the Council.

**11.2 Questions on notice at full Council**

Subject to Standing Order 11.4, a member of the Council may ask:

- the Chairman;
- a member of the Executive, the Leader, who may respond on behalf of the Cabinet or who may appoint a member of the Executive to respond; or
- the Chairman of any committee or sub-committee

a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the district.

**11.3 Questions on notice at committees and sub-committees**

Subject to Standing Order 11.4, a member of a committee or sub-committee may ask the Chairman of it a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the district and which falls within the terms of reference of that committee or sub-committee.

**11.4 Notice of questions**

A member may only ask a question under Standing Order 11.2 or 11.3 if either:

- (a) they have given to the proper officer at least six-seven working days' notice in writing of the question; or
- (b) the question relates to urgent matters, they have the consent of the Chairman of Council and member to whom the question is to be put and the content of the question is given to the proper officer by 9.30 a.m. on the day of the meeting.

**11.5 Order of questions**

Questions will be asked in the order notice of them was received, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.

**11.511.6 Scope of questions**

The Chairman, having regard to the advice of the proper officer may reject a question if it:

- is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the district;
- is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- is substantially the same as a question which has been put at the meeting or a meeting of the Council in the past six months;
- raises issues about the competence or performance of a councillor or officer;
- requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information; or
- relates to a planning application which has yet to be determined.

The Chairman shall have the discretion to limit the length of preamble or other background information supplied with the question.

**11.76 Response**

An answer may take the form of:

- (a) a direct oral answer;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written response which will be circulated within five working days to the questioner and included as an appendix to the minutes.

**11.87 Supplementary question**

A member asking a question under Standing Order 11.2 or 11.3 may ask one supplementary question without notice of the member to whom the first question was asked. The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. It may be rejected by the Chairman on any of the grounds set out in Standing Order 11.5 above.

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## SCDC Climate Change Working Group: proposed revisions/updates to Terms of Reference

### Current (2007-present)

#### Accountability

The Climate Change Working Group reports directly to Full Council. A 'Task and Finish' body, it consists of nine District Council Members, appointed on a proportional basis, supported by relevant Council officers, and by independent experts as and when required.

#### Scope of deliberation

- To identify activities and processes within South Cambridgeshire that could be considered as contributing to climate change, and to encourage residents to adopt practices that minimise or eliminate any adverse impact.
- To consider how the District Council can best achieve its corporate objectives and priorities so as to minimise or eliminate any adverse impact from climate change by considering, among other things, the design and construction of new housing and public buildings.
- To consider how Members and staff of South Cambridgeshire District Council can contribute as individuals to the reduction or elimination of any adverse impact from climate change.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of energy management within South Cambridgeshire Hall, the Waterbeach Depot, and sheltered housing schemes, and identify any way in which improvements could be made that would reduce the Authority's carbon footprint.
- To address environmentally-friendly transport issues in relation to the Council's vehicle fleet, including its staff car leasing scheme, and to encourage 'green' commuting by Members, staff and residents.
- To examine the benefits of climate change mitigation measures in the context of their financial implications.
- To advise on actions to be undertaken under the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

### Proposed (from September 2010)

The Climate Change Working Group principally reports to the Portfolio Holder responsible for climate change and, as required, to Cabinet or Council.

As a standing working group concerned with both project delivery and policy development, it consists of nine District Council Members, appointed on a proportional basis, supported by relevant Council officers, and by independent experts as and when required.

- To champion positive and constructive actions to support the climate change agenda across the District Council's operations, actions and broader sphere of influence.
- To consider how the District Council can best achieve its corporate objectives, priorities and actions so as to minimise or eliminate carbon emissions and the adverse impacts of climate change.
- To act as the Council's principal point of reference, deliberation and advice for matters specifically relating to the reduction of carbon emissions and adaptation to the effects of climate change. Such matters would incorporate:
  - the internal operations of the Council in support of the services it delivers and as an exemplar to external organisations;
  - the services that the Council provides to the residents of South Cambridgeshire;
  - community leadership in facilitating and enabling actions across the district: including bringing together and working with key strategic partners and expert voices (especially via formal strategic partnership arrangements)
  - influencing and interpreting county, regional and national policy for the benefit of South Cambridgeshire.
- To facilitate the effective and efficient implementation of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan – its delivery, monitoring and review.

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**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Council

23 September 2010

**AUTHOR/S:** Executive Director (Corporate Services) / Head of Accountancy

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**FINANCIAL REGULATIONS****Purpose**

1. To agree an amendment to the Council's financial regulations to nominate officers to authorise payments. This is not a key decision but Council approval is needed to amend the constitution.

**Recommendations and Reasons**

2. Council is requested to approve:
  - the addition with immediate effect of the post of Principal Accountant (Housing);
  - the deletion of the posts of Finance Project Officer and Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing) with effect from 30th September;
  - the addition of the post of Principal Accountant (General Fund and Projects) with effect from 1st October 2010; and
  - the deletion with immediate effect of the posts of Corporate Manager (Finance and Support Services) and Head of Revenuesto paragraph 6 (Operation of Bank Accounts) of financial regulations which are part of the Council's constitution.

**Considerations**

3. Financial regulations as part of the constitution currently specify postholders of the following posts to authorise payments:

Chief Finance Officer  
Corporate Manager (Finance and Support Services)  
Head of Accountancy  
Head of Revenues  
Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing)  
Finance Project Officer

4. The recent round of savings included a restructuring of the Accountancy team and the Finance, Projects and Procurement team resulting in the post of Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing) being made redundant with effect from 30th September 2010. A replacement, the Principal Accountant (Housing), is, therefore, needed as two authorisers are required for payments over £10,000 and there are annual leave and the possibility of sick leave to consider.
5. The post of Finance Project Officer is also deleted with effect from 30th September and the postholder has been appointed to the new post of Principal Accountant (General Fund and Projects). The posts of Corporate Manager (Finance and Support Services) and Head of Revenues have also been deleted.

**Implications**

|    |                     |   |
|----|---------------------|---|
| 6. | Financial           | A replacement authoriser is required to ensure suppliers and housing benefits are paid on time and treasury management transactions can be effected |
|    | Legal               | None  |
|    | Staffing            |   |
|    | Risk Management     |   |
|    | Equal Opportunities |   |
|    | Climate Change      |   |

**Consultations**

7. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee are being consulted and any comments will be reported verbally. Any amendment to financial regulations would normally be a recommendation from the Corporate Governance Committee to Council but the timing of these meetings with Corporate Governance meeting tomorrow, 24th September, and the next Council on 25th November could potentially leave the finance function unable to authorise payments.

**Effect on Strategic Aims**

8. Approval will allow a prompt payment service to suppliers and housing benefit claimants and, by effecting treasury management transactions, a better return on investments which will provide resources to meet strategic aims.

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

The Constitution

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