

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 25 May 2023 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Anna Bradnam – Chair
Councillor Peter Fane – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Michael Atkins, Henry Batchelor, John Batchelor,
Dr. Shrobona Bhattacharya, Tom Bygott, Ariel Cahn, Dr. Martin Cahn,
Stephen Drew, Sue Ellington, Corinne Garvie, Jose Hales, Bill Handley,
Sunita Hansraj, Sally Ann Hart, Geoff Harvey, Dr. Tumi Hawkins,
James Hobro, Helene Leeming, Daniel Lentell, Peter McDonald,
Brian Milnes, Lina Nieto, Annika Osborne, Dr Lisa Redrup,
Judith Rippeth, Peter Sandford, Bridget Smith, Dr Susan van de Ven,
Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer, Natalie Warren-Green, Bunty Waters,
Heather Williams, John Williams and Dr. Richard Williams

Officers: Andrew Francis Elections and Democratic Services
Manager
John Murphy Monitoring Officer
Liz Watts Chief Executive

1. Election of Chair of the Council for 2023/24

Councillor Bridget Smith nominated and Councillor Corinne Garvie seconded Councillor Peter Fane for the position of Chair of Council. There being no other nominations Councillor Peter Fane was duly elected as Chair of Council for 2023-24 by secret ballot with 31 votes in favour.

Councillor Fane read out and signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair of the Council for 2023/24

Councillor Bridget Smith nominated and Councillor Anna Bradnam seconded Councillor Peter Sandford as Vice-Chair of Council. There were no other nominations and so Councillor Peter Sandford was elected as Vice-Chair of Council for 2023-24 by secret ballot with 32 votes in favour.

Councillor Sandford read out and signed his declaration of acceptance of office form.

3. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Bearpark, Graham Cone, Libby Earle, Pippa Heylings, Carla Hofman, Mark Howell, William Jackson-Wood, Richard Stobart and Eileen Wilson.

4. **Declaration of Interest**

Councillor Heather Williams declared a registerable interest as a member of the Greater Cambridge Partnership Joint Assembly.

5. **Register of Interests**

The Chair reminded Members that Democratic Services should be informed of any changes to their Register or Members' Financial and Other Interests form.

6. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 March were agreed as a correct record, subject to the correction of the word "simply" to "simple" at the top of page 23 in minute 15(a).

7. **Announcements**

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of Council, thanked Councillor Anna Bradnam for her service as Chair of Council.

The Leader welcomed John Murphy, Monitoring Officer and Deputy Head of Legal, to his first meeting of Council.

The Leader explained that Cabinet had agreed to extend the trial of the four-day week for a further 12 months and subject to the approval of Cambridge City Council, to undertake a three-month trial in the Shared Waste Service.

8. **Petitions**

None received.

9. **Questions From the Public**

None received.

10. **Appointments to the Cabinet, including Statutory Deputy Leader**

Council **noted** the Leader's appointment of the following councillors to Cabinet for 2023-24:

Leader: Councillor Bridget Smith

Deputy Leader: Councillor Brian Milnes

Lead Cabinet Member for Housing: Councillor John Batchelor

Lead Cabinet Member for Communities: Councillor Bill Handley

Lead Cabinet Member for Planning: Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins

Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing: Councillor Henry Batchelor

Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development: Councillor Peter McDonald

Lead Cabinet Member for Resources: Councillor John Williams

11. The Allocation of Seats on Committees and Appointment of Committee Chairs

The Elections and Democratic Services Manager presented this report, which sought Council's approval of the allocation of seats on committees and the appointment of Members and substitute Members to these committees. The report also requested that Council appointed the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees; and reappointed the Lead Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person.

The Leader proposed an amendment to the report and nominated Councillor Dr Martin Cahn as Chair of Planning and Councillor Peter Fane as Vice Chair of Planning. This was seconded by Councillor Brian Milnes and agreed by affirmation.

Councillor Heather Williams proposed Councillor Graham Cone as Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Councillor Stephen Drew as Vice Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. This was seconded by the Leader and agreed by affirmation.

The Leader proposed and Councillor Brian Milnes seconded the recommendations in the report, as amended. A vote was taken and by affirmation:

Council **agreed** the following allocation of seats on committees:

Committee	No of Seats	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
Audit and Corporate Governance Committee	7	5 (5.568)	2 (1.432)
Civic Affairs Committee	9	7 (7.159)	2 (1.841)
Employment and Staffing Committee	7	6 (5.568)	1 (1.432)
Licensing Committee	14	11 (11.136)	3 (2.864)
Planning Committee	11	9 (8.750)	2 (2.250)
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	14	11 (11.136)	3 (2.864)
TOTAL	62	49	13

Advisory and Joint Committees

Committee	No of Seats	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
Climate Change and Environment Advisory Committee	7	6 (5.568)	1 (1.432)
Grants Advisory Committee	5	4 (3.977)	1 (1.023)
Joint Development Control Committee	6	5 (4.777)	1 (1.227)

Joint Local Plan Advisory Group	3	2 (2.386)	1 (0.614)
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Council **received** the Group Leaders' nominations for the following Committees:

Committee Name (Ordinary Committees)	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
Audit & Corporate Governance - 7 members - Cabinet members may not serve as committee members - Scrutiny & Overview Chair may be a member but may not be Chair	1. Michael Atkins 2. Geoff Harvey 3. Helene Leeming 4. Peter Sandford 5. Richard Stobart Substitutes 1. Dr James Hobro 2. Dr Lisa Redrup 3. Pippa Heylings 4. Jose Hales	1. Heather Williams 2. Mark Howell Substitutes 1. Graham Cone 2. Sue Ellington 3. Dr Richard Williams 4. Bunty Waters
Civic Affairs Committee - 9 members - Includes the Chair of Council as an ex officio member	1. Henry Batchelor 2. Paul Bearpark 3. Dr Martin Cahn 4. Peter Fane 5. Bridget Smith 6. Dr Susan van de Ven 7. Dr Aidan Van de Weyer Substitutes 1. Dr Tumi Hawkins 2. Brian Milnes 3. Michael Atkins	1. Mark Howell 2. Heather Williams Substitutes 1. Graham Cone 2. Dr Richard Williams 3. Sue Ellington 4. Bunty Waters 5. Lina Nieto
Employment & Staffing Committee - 7 members - Includes at least one cabinet member, normally the lead member for staffing	1. Anna Bradnam 2. Sunita Hansraj 3. Sally Ann Hart 4. William Jackson-Wood 5. Richard Stobart 6. John Williams Substitutes 1. Peter Fane	1. Mark Howell

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ariel Cahn 3. Dr Aidan Van de Weyer 4. Peter Sandford 5. Bridget Smith 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heather Williams 2. Sue Ellington 3. Graham Cone 4. Bunty Waters 5. Dr Shrobona Bhattacharya
<p>Licensing Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 14 members - The lead cabinet member for licencing may serve on this committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anna Bradnam 2. Corinne Garvie 3. Jose Hales 4. Sunita Hansraj 5. Geoff Harvey 6. Brian Milnes 7. Annika Osborne 8. Dr Lisa Redrup 9. Peter Sandford 10. Judith Rippeth 11. Eileen Wilson <p>Substitutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peter Fane 2. Carla Hofman 3. Pippa Heylings 4. Michael Atkins 5. Stephen Drew 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Shrobona Bhattacharya 2. Mark Howell 3. Bunty Waters <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heather Williams 2. Graham Cone 3. Sue Ellington 4. Lina Nieto
<p>Planning Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11 members - The lead cabinet member for development control may serve on this committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ariel Cahn 2. Dr Martin Cahn 3. Peter Fane 4. Bill Handley 5. Geoff Harvey 6. Dr Tumi Hawkins 7. Judith Rippeth 8. Peter Sandford 9. Eileen Wilson <p>Substitutes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anna Bradnam 2. Dr Lisa Redrup 3. Helene Leeming 4. William Jackson-Wood 5. Henry 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Richard Williams 2. Heather Williams <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Graham Cone 2. Sue Ellington 3. Mark Howell 4. Bunty Waters 5. Shrobona Bhattacharya

	Batchelor	
Scrutiny & Overview Committee - 14 members	1. Anna Bradnam 2. Dr Martin Cahn 3. Stephen Drew 4. Libby Earle 5. Peter Fane 6. Sally Ann Hart 7. Dr James Hobro 8. Helene Leeming 9. Judith Rippeth 10. Richard Stobart 11. Aidan Van de Weyer Substitutes 1. Annika Osborne 2. Paul Bearpark 3. Carla Hofman 4. Dr Lisa Redrup 5. William Jackson-Wood	1. Tom Bygott 2. Graham Cone 3. Sue Ellington 1. Heather Williams 2. Dr Richard Williams 3. Bunty Waters 4. Mark Howell 5. Lina Nieto

Committee Name (Joint Committees)	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
Joint Development Control Committee - 6 members	1. Anna Bradnam 2. Dr Martin Cahn 3. Peter Fane 4. Dr Tumi Hawkins 5. Richard Stobart Substitutes 1. Corinne Garvie 2. John Williams	1. Dr Richard Williams 1. Graham Cone 2. Heather Williams
Joint Local Planning Advisory Group - 3 members	1. Peter Sandford 2. Dr Tumi Hawkins Substitutes 1. Henry Batchelor	1. Heather Williams 1. Dr Richard

		Williams 2. Graham Cone
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Committee Name (Advisory Committees)	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
Climate Change & Environment Advisory Committee	1. Paul Bearpark 2. Ariel Cahn 3. Dr Martin Cahn 4. Geoff Harvey 5. Dr Tumi Hawkins 6. Pippa Heylings 7. Dr Lisa Redrup 8. Peter Sandford Substitutes 1. Stephen Drew 2. Peter Fane 3. Natalie Warren- Green 4. Sunita Hansraj	1. Dr Shrobona Bhattacharya 2. Bunty Waters 1. Graham Cone 2. Heather Williams 3. Dr Richard Williams 4. Lina Nieto 5. Sue Ellington
Grants Advisory Committee - 5 members	1. Jose Hales 2. Bill Handley 3. Sunita Hansraj 4. Peter Sandford Substitutes 1. Richard Stobart 2. Peter McDonald 3. Dr Martin Cahn	1. Sue Ellington 1. Heather Williams 2. Graham Cone 3. Mark Howell 4. Bunty Waters 5. Dr Shrobona Bhattacharya

Council **agreed** the following Chairs and Vice-Chairs:

Ordinary Committees

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Audit and Corporate Governance Committee	Michael Atkins	Peter Sandford
Civic Affairs Committee	Peter Fane	Paul Bearpark
Employment and Staffing Committee	William Jackson-Wood	Sally Ann Hart
Licensing Committee	Anna Bradnam	Annika Osborne
Planning Committee	Dr Martin Cahn	Peter Fane
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Graham Cone	Stephen Drew

Advisory and Joint Committees

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Climate Change and Environment Advisory Committee	Pippa Heylings	Geoff Harvey (Climate) Dr Martin Cahn (Nature)
Grants Advisory Committee	Jose Hales	Sue Ellington

12. **Appointments to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority**

The Chair presented this report which sought Council's approval for the appointments to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. It was noted that the Chief Executive was authorised to make amendments to these appointments should there be a change in political balance across the combined authority area.

The Leader proposed and Councillor Brian Milnes the recommendations in the report and by affirmation:

Council **agreed** to make the following appointments to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority:

	Member	Substitute
CA Board (Leader of Authority)	Cllr Bridget Smith	Cllr John Williams
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (2 Members, 2 Substitutes)	Cllr Judith Rippeth	Cllr Peter Fane
	Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer	

Audit and Governance Committee	Cllr Geoff Harvey	Cllr Sunita Hansraj
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13. Appointment to Outside Bodies

The Chair of Council presented this report, which sought Council's approval to the appointment of councillors onto various Outside Bodies.

Councillor Tom Bygott recommended that the title of the Cambridgeshire and District Blue Plaque Scheme should be corrected to the Cambridge and District Blue Plaque Scheme. Councillor Sue Ellington reported that the Swavesey Village College Community Committee no longer existed and should be removed from the list. With these amendments:

Council **agreed** to appoint Councillors to the following Outside Bodies:

Name	Representative(s)
Adults and Health Committee	Corinne Garvie Sub: Jose Hales
Bassingbourn Village College Centre Management Committee	Susan Van de Ven
Cambridge & District Citizens' Advice Bureaux Management Committee Trustee Board	Dr Tumi Hawkins
Cambridge Airport Consultative Committee	John Williams
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste Partnership	Henry Batchelor Sub: Peter Fane
Cambridge and District Blue Plaque Scheme	Corinne Garvie
Cambridgeshire Community Covenant Board	Jose Hales
Cambridgeshire Horizons Board	John Williams
Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel (Must be a Liberal Democrat)	Helene Leeming Sub: Peter Sandford
Carers Trust Cambridgeshire	Pippa Heylings
Comberton Village College Governing Body Sub-Committee	Dr Lisa Redrup
County Advisory Group on Archives & Local Studies	Dr Martin Cahn

East West Rail Consortium	Dr Tumi Hawkins Richard Stobart
Emmaus Cambridge Community	Tumi Hawkins
Ermine Street Housing Ltd	Peter Sandford James Hobro
Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board	Brian Milnes Sub: Bridget Smith
Housing Engagement Board	Jose Hales Mark Howell
Local Access Forum Note: this is a statutory group administered by Cambridgeshire County Council which liaises with groups interested in footpaths, bridleways and access to the countryside.	Dr Martin Cahn
Natural Cambridgeshire	Pippa Heylings
Needingworth Quarry Liaison Committee	Bill Handley
North Herts & District Citizens Advice Bureau	Jose Hales
Old West Internal Drainage Board	Bill Handley Martin Cahn Annika Osborne/Eileen Wilson
Over & Willingham Internal Drainage Board	Bill Handley
Responsive Repairs Partnership Management Board	Jose Hales Dr Martin Cahn Bunty Waters
Sawston Patient Reference Group	Libby Earle
Shire Homes Lettings	Peter Fane
Shifting Offered Furniture Around (SOFA)	Peter Fane
South Cambridgeshire Investment Board ("SCIP")	Richard Stobart
South Cambridgeshire Partnerships Projects Board	Richard Stobart
Swaffham Internal Drainage Board	-Vacancy-
Swavesey Byeways Advisory Committee	Sue Ellington Henry Batchelor

Swavesey Internal Drainage Board	Bill Handley Sue Ellington
Waterbeach Level Internal Drainage Board	Anna Bradnam -Vacancy-

Council **agreed** to make the following appointments to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority:

	Member	Substitute
Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee	Cllr Bridget Smith	Cllr Peter Sandford
Skills and Employment Committee	Cllr Eileen Wilson	Cllr Peter McDonald
Transport and Infrastructure Committee	Cllr Peter McDonald	Cllr Brian Milnes

14. **Designation of Scrutiny & Overview Committee as Crime and Disorder Committee**

The Chair proposed and Councillor Sally Ann Hart seconded the recommendation in the agenda. A vote was taken and by affirmation Council **agreed** to designate the Council's Scrutiny and Overview Committee as its crime and disorder committee in accordance with sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

15. **Annual Report from Scrutiny & Overview Committee**

Councillor Stephen Drew presented the Annual Report from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. He stated that the Committee had scrutinised a wide range of topics, including the regular review of key performance indicators, facilities at Northstowe, the development of the Local Plan, the four-day week trial in the Shared Waste Service, housing of Ukrainian refugees and support for residents during the cost of living crisis. He thanked Cabinet members for their attendance and officers for imparting their expert knowledge whilst advising the Committee. He also thanked members of the Committee for their work and wished Councillor Graham Cone every success in chairing the Committee during the following year.

Council **noted** the report.

16. **Annual Report from Civic Affairs Committee**

Councillor Anna Bradnam presented the annual report of the Civic Affairs Committee, which had received updates on Code of Conduct complaints and recommended the appointment of political group assistants. She thanked the members of the Committee for their diligence and the officers supporting the Committee for their guidance.

Council **noted** the report.

17. **Leader of Opposition's Annual Statement**

Councillor Heather Williams made her annual statement as the Leader of the Opposition. She explained that whilst it was the duty of the opposition to hold the administration to account, she welcomed the unanimous support for the recent motion opposing the intimidation and abuse of councillors. She was pleased to welcome back Councillor Tom Bygott to the authority, but expressed her sadness at the passing of Councillor John Loveluck.

Congestion charge

Councillor Heather Williams urged the Council's representatives on the Greater Cambridge Partnership to withdraw their support for the congestion charge, for which she stated there was no mandate, noting that it had been opposed by petitions signed by tens of thousands of people. She expressed her disappointment at the administration's refusal to support a referendum on this issue.

Coton Orchard

Councillor Heather Williams opposed the proposed Cambourne to Cambridge bypass through Coton Orchard and suggested that the support for this proposal by the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership was contrary to the authority's Green to our Core objective.

Four-day week

Councillor Heather Williams opposed the decision of Cabinet to extend the four-day week trial, which she asserted should have been taken by full Council, as it fundamentally changed the way in which the authority was run.

Cost of living

Councillor Heather Williams stated that Council had unanimously supported a motion to support residents with the cost of living crisis. However, the administration had then decided to increase Council Tax, housing rents and community room charges, which the opposition had voted against.

Council **noted** the annual statement without debate.

18. **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority**

It was noted that there had been no meetings of the Combined Authority Board since the last Council meeting.

19. Greater Cambridge Partnership

It was noted that there had been no meetings of the Greater Cambridge Partnership since the last Council meeting.

20. Questions From Councillors

The Chair reported that three questions from the last Council meeting had not been answered due to a lack of time. Two of these had received written responses, that were included on the agenda. The third question, from Councillor Sue Ellington, was the first question on the agenda.

20 (a) From Councillor Sue Ellington

It was noted that there had been insufficient time to answer the following question at the last meeting of Council and so, at Councillor Sue Ellington's request, it had been brought forward to this meeting.

As there has now been ample opportunity to analyse Cambridge Water Draft resources plan, when will the Leader be informing residents and us alike of the impact this has on the housing growth agenda being pushed for by this council?

Councillor Tumi Hawkins reported that this authority had agreed a joint response with Cambridge City Council to Cambridge Water's plan. The housing need strategy had been independently assessed as requiring more housing, in part due to the success of the Greater Cambridge local economy. However, this identified need was a starting point for the Joint Local Plan, which would be considered later this year and the availability of water would be a vital factor. The Council would continue to engage with Cambridge Water, the Environment Agency and DEFRA on the provision of water to the District.

In her supplementary question, Councillor Sue Ellington asked if the Council was pressing the Environment Agency and Cambridge Water to ensure that there was a sufficient water supply to allow the authority to deliver the number of houses it wanted to build. Councillor Tumi Hawkins replied that the Council was currently implementing the local plan agreed by the previous administration. The responsibility of water supply lay with Cambridge Water and not this authority. Councillor Heather Williams stated that this local plan had received near unanimous support and the only councillor who opposed it was from the Conservative group.

20 (b) From Councillor Daniel Lentell

Will the Leader be seeking advice and insight from the newly appointed CEO of the CPCA about his time setting up and running a unitary authority in North Northamptonshire with a view to improving the crazy-paving landscape of costly and disjointed local authorities in Cambridgeshire?

The Leader reported that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined

Authority was a partnership organisation and she looked forward to working with our partners and the new Chief Executive in planning the future of Cambridgeshire. She was due to meet the new Chief Executive in two weeks' time.

Councillor Daniel Lentell did not consider his original question had been answered. As his supplementary question, he asked whether the Leader agreed with the former Chair of the County Council, that one of the fundamental flaws of the Greater Cambridge Partnership was that Huntingdonshire, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire were not represented and that the Greater Cambridge Partnership was unnecessary as Cambridgeshire had an elected Mayor. The Chair ruled that the supplementary question did not arise from the original question and the Leader was under no obligation to respond. The Leader opted not to provide an answer to the question.

20 (c) From Councillor Heather Williams

What is the Leader doing to pressure the County Council to enable our residents access to Royston recycling centre as the barring of South Cambs residents not only makes them drive twice the distance in many cases, which is not good for the environment, and the likely increase in fly tipping this will cause?

Councillor Henry Batchelor replied that the County Council had acted quickly to negotiate with Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that the district's residents could use recycling sites in Hertfordshire, including the site in Royston.

As her supplementary question Councillor Heather Williams asked for assurances that action would be taken to prevent a reoccurrence of such problems in the future. Councillor Henry Batchelor stated that this authority would continue to work in partnership with the County Council on any future issues.

20 (d) From Councillor Stephen Drew

Can the leader outline the current plans for the next three years of social housing in South Cambridgeshire and explain how this will benefit residents?

Councillor John Batchelor stated that in 2022/23, 91 new council homes had been purchased and the aim was to buy 225 more council homes over the next three years. The housing stock currently numbered approximately 5,600 units. The Asset Management team was carrying out a stock condition survey that would result in an extensive refurbishment of the Council's housing stock, which would also reduce its carbon footprint. The Housing Strategy Team were working with developers to deliver more affordable housing. 504 affordable homes had been delivered in 2022/23 and in the next three years 1,565 affordable units were expected to be built. The Housing Advice and Options Team continued to allocate social housing in a fair and transparent manner and provided tailored options for residents in need to prevent homelessness. Ermine Street Housing Limited had invested over £100 million to purchase/lease 870 properties that were being rented out in the private sector market. Ermine Street Housing Limited would also contribute over £4 million to the Council in the coming year.

There was no supplementary question.

20 (e) From Councillor Pippa Heylings

In the absence of Councillor Pippa Heylings, Councillor Geoff Harvey read out the following question:

Our chalk streams in South Cambs are some of the most precious and most vulnerable in the world, threatened by sewage pollution with worrying levels of e-coli (faecal bacteria) which makes them unsafe for families and dogs and fatal for local wildlife, all whilst water companies rake in huge profits and pay out bumper bonuses. Following on from my motion last year to stop the dumping of raw sewage, what more can the Council do to ensure greater scrutiny of water quality in our chalk streams?

Councillor Tumi Hawkins explained that whilst the Council was not responsible for water or sewage, our views had been made clear to Anglian Water, by highlighting the importance of drainage infrastructure to address water quality issues. Pressure would be maintained and a formal study was being undertaken to consider bathing water designation for part of the River Cam in the District. The outcome of this study would be known shortly and may result in an application to DEFRA. There was no supplementary question.

20 (f) From Councillor Susan van de Ven

Thank you to all those involved in the 4-Day-Week trial, a bold and important initiative at a time when all local authorities – and indeed public sector organisations generally – are facing severe and increasing difficulties recruiting to vacancies in the workforce and retaining experienced and valuable staff, for reasons that are becoming better understood. These include higher pay in the private sector, but also the build-up of multiple public service pressures in the wake of tumultuous events of the past several years, with the overlay of massive societal change.

One of the key positives of the trial is signs of improved health and wellbeing of our staff. I was struck by a conversation with a member of staff last week who said that already, the trial had changed his life for the better. At home he is tackling jobs and responsibilities, getting physical exercise and mental relaxation, and has time needed to nurture family relationships. At work he is applying himself in a more energetic and smarter way and is more focused and productive.

We know that the mental and physical health of our population is worse than before Covid, and that improvements must be made. A focus on improving health via the workplace is an important building block used by public health strategists in seeking to improve population health.

In light of this, how will learning from the trial be shared with our Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Health and Integrated Care System partners, as part of our joint population health improvement goals?

The Leader explained that there was an opportunity to share learning as a result of the four-day week trial with organisations such as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Health Board and other partners. Each organisation would then need to consider what benefit could be derived from this data. It should be noted that there was already a wide range of flexible working arrangements in these organisations and a “one size fits all” arrangement was unlikely to work. However, it was hoped that the data from the Council’s four-day week trial would assist our partners now and in the future.

20 (g) From Councillor Peter Sandford

The latest survey on letsrecycle.com shows the top performing councils have recycling rates in excess of 60%. Meanwhile, the Greater Cambridge Waste Service ranks 69th out of 308 councils, with a recycling rate under 50%. Can the Leader tell us what measures are being put in place to elevate Greater Cambridge to the Premier League of recycling councils?

Councillor Henry Batchelor provided a brief summary of how the top performing councils were achieving recycling rates in excess of 60%, including a weekly food waste collection, a week dry recycling collection, additional collection of electrical goods and textiles and a fully chargeable garden waste collection service. The joint waste collection service had successfully undergone a three-year trial of separate food waste collection in March 2023 and this would be rolled out either when it became affordable to both authorities or when it became mandatory by central Government. The collection and recycling of small electrical goods had been increased with the provision of pink recycling banks. Mobile banks were likely to be used more in the future.

As his supplementary question, Councillor Peter Sandford asked if the recycling arrangements with the County Council could be reviewed to improve performance. Councillor Henry Batchelor explained that the County Council was tied in to a long-term PFI contract, which was a complex legal agreement that he understood would be difficult to renegotiate. However, the Greater Cambridge Waste Service was committed to increasing its recycling rate.

20 (h) From Councillor Dr Richard Williams

Does the whole administration share the Leader’s view that the doubling of the time taken by this Council to process Housing Benefit claims between January and March 2023 is “really minor”?

Councillor Stephen Drew asked if the question could be asked in Councillor Dr Richard Williams’ absence, as had been the case with Councillor Pippa Heylings’ question. Councillor Heather Williams stated she had not been aware that this was an option and was happy to ask the question in Councillor Dr Richard Williams’ absence. She asked for clarification of the process. The Chief Executive agreed to ensure advice on this matter was sent to all Councillors. The Chair stated that Councillor Dr Richard Williams had asked to be provided with a written response to his question if he was unable to ask it himself and so Council

would comply with this request.

21. Chair's Engagements

Council **noted** the Chair's engagements since the last Council meeting.

The Chair presented Councillor Anna Bradnam with a commemorative badge, which was provided to all former Chairs.

The Meeting ended at 3.15 p.m.
