

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Monday, 13 June 2022 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)
Councillor Judith Rippeth (Deputy Leader of the Council)

Councillors:	John Batchelor	Lead Cabinet Member for Housing
	Bill Handley	Lead Cabinet Member for Communities
	Dr. Tumi Hawkins	Lead Cabinet Member for Planning
	Peter McDonald	Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development

Officers in attendance in the Council Chamber for all or part of the meeting:

Aaron Clarke	Democratic Services Technical Officer
Loretta Curtis	Policy and Performance Officer
Kevin Ledger	Senior Policy and Performance Officer
Jonathan Malton	Cabinet Support Officer
Keira Mbye	Democratic Services Officer
Rory McKenna	Monitoring Officer
Jeff Membery	Head of Transformation
Liz Watts	Chief Executive

Officers in attendance remotely for all or part of the meeting:

Anne Ainsworth	Chief Operating Officer
Peter Campbell	Head of Housing
Kathryn Hawkes	Programme Manager
Peter Maddock	Head of Finance
Sean Missin	Procurement Officer
Eddie Spicer	Service Manager – Housing Assets
Chloe Whitehead	HR Business Partner

Councillors Sue Ellington and Heather Williams were in attendance in the Council Chamber.

Councillors Anna Bradnam, Brian Milnes (Lead Cabinet Member for the Environment), Dr. Lisa Redrup and Dr. Richard Williams were in attendance remotely.

1. Announcements

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Council, introduced Councillor Judith Rippeth to the Cabinet, and the role of Deputy Leader.

2. Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence from Councillor John Williams, Lead Cabinet Member for Resources

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Cabinet **authorised** the Leader to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 22 March 2022.

5. Public Questions

Cabinet received one public speaking request ahead of the meeting from Mr. Daniel Fulton to make a statement. A further request was made the day before the meeting to ask a question instead of making the statement which was refused by the Chair on the ground that the matter was the subject of legal proceedings. The public speaker did not make his statement.

6. Issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Cabinet noted the Scrutiny and Overview report summarising the meeting held on Monday, 6 June 2022, relating to the following agenda items:

- Quarter 4 Performance
- Housing Repairs – Award of Contract

7. Q4 Performance

Cabinet received the Quarter Four Performance Report. Councillor Judith Rippeth, the Deputy Leader, introduced the report and described the ongoing progress for the Council, including the improvement of the updated telephony system for the contact centre.

Councillor John Batchelor, Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, referred to the improvement in Housing repairs in March 2022, along with the continual review of the targets.

Councillor Brian Milnes, Lead Cabinet Member for the Environment, commented on the continued work of the Waste Service.

Councillor Peter McDonald, Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development, noted the distribution to Government Grants and the continued circulation of the business newsletter.

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, thanked the officers within the Greater Cambridge Planning Service, and commented on the reduction in time for Officers to respond to planning complaints.

Councillor Sue Ellington was pleased with the improved performance across the Council but asked when the key performance indicators would be reviewed. The Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services responded that such review would continue to be annually, and this was currently ongoing ahead of the publication of the Q1 Performance in September.

Councillor Anna Bradnam asked if there was any ongoing work to improve staff retention. The Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services responded that the HR team was working on improving staff retention, and noted the introduction of Exit Interviews, and the circulation of staff surveys.

Councillor Heather Williams queried the previous comment on staff engagement and the percentage of staff that complete surveys. The Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services confirmed that completion of staff surveys remained high and would provide the figure to Councillor Heather Williams after the meeting.

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Council, closed the discussion, thanked Officers across the Council for their continued work, and Cabinet:

Noted the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) results and comments at Appendix A and progress against Business Plan actions at Appendix B

8. Hybrid Working Policy

Cabinet received the Hybrid Working Policy. Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Council, introduced the report, described how Officers had been working from home since the first national lockdown in March 2020, and how all departments had put measures in place to allow the continued delivery of services to residents while working remotely.

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, commented on the challenges for the planning department during the previous two years, but concluded that flexible working had provided a positive impact.

Councillor John Batchelor, Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, commented on the front-line staff within the Housing department who had been required to work in South Cambridgeshire Hall, and requested that staff could continue to use the meeting rooms. The Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services responded that this would continue following the adoption of the policy.

Councillor Brian Milnes, Lead Cabinet Member for the Environment, was supportive of the policy, commenting on the influx of technology being used by Officers to work remotely, and to work collaboratively, despite not working at South Cambridgeshire Hall. It was also commented the future use of South Cambridgeshire Hall with Officers continuing to work from home. The Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services responded that the use of the building was currently being discussed, with the potential use of small businesses renting parts of the building. It was also commented that the policy would be reviewed annually.

Councillor Anna Bradnam, while pleased with the policy, asked if any work was being investigated for Members. Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Council commented that Members attending Committees in person was due to current legislation.

Councillor Heather Williams was pleased with the policy but asked if provisions were being made for Officers who were established in their careers. The Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services noted that mentors would be appointed for new staff.

Councillor Sue Ellington also supported the policy but asked whether Officers would be able to keep Councillors informed of updates to their queries. The Chief Executive responded that this was being discussed with colleagues, and the implementation of this would be reviewed.

Councillor Judith Rippeth, the Deputy Leader, noted introduction of the hybrid working policy would create a flexible working environment for a modern workforce and commented that each department would be reviewed on regularly, to ensure the policy's effectiveness for officers, residents and local Members.

Councillor Peter McDonald, Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development, supported the policy, but commented that arrangements made by the policy should be consistent across teams.

Councillor Bridget Smith, closed the discussion, and Cabinet:

Approved the introduction of the Hybrid Working Policy.

9. **Community Safety Partnership**

Cabinet received the Community Safety Partnership update. Councillor Bill Handley, Lead Cabinet Member for Communities introduced the report, noting the role of the statutory partnership in reducing crime, disorder, substance misuse and re-offending in a strategic and informed way, with the statutory responsibilities being discharged through other countywide partnerships.

Councillor Heather Williams supported the partnership but requested that rural communities be represented within the ongoing work, and rural specific crimes be noted within the report. The Communities Manager responded that rural crime is discussed regularly at the Community Safety Partnership Board, which meets every six months, and at the monthly Tasking and Tactical Coordination group. Councillor Heather Williams' was assured her comments would be referenced during the next meeting.

Councillor Anna Bradnam raised concerns at the cost of Domestic Homicide Reviews detailed within the report, for which there is no central government funding. Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Council, requested that Councillor Anna Bradnam keep the Communities Manager aware of progress made on the Cambridgeshire County Council's Police and Crime Panel.

Councillor Bridget Smith closed the discussion and Cabinet:

Agreed the content of the Action Plan for 2022/2023, considering the lead role the Council takes in its delivery and the resources committed to it.

10. Housing Repairs - Award of Contract

Cabinet received the Housing Repairs Contract. Councillor John Batchelor, Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, introduced the report and explained the competitive tender process to re-procure the contract for the Responsive & Void Repairs, Heating Servicing & Maintenance, Cyclical and Planned Works, and to award the contract to Mears Limited. The Lead Cabinet Member also noted Richard Medley from ARC Consultancy was in attendance remotely.

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins supported the proposed contract and was keen for the council's tenants to receive an improved service.

After a short discussion, Councillor Bridget Smith, leader of the Council, closed the item, and Cabinet:

Approved the award of the contract to Mears Limited who are the highest scoring bidder, who has also the lowest cost providing a submission that is within budget and provides the Council with value for money.

11. Exclusion of Press and Public

Cabinet **agreed** by affirmation that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of items number 20 and 21 in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) (exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act). Paragraph 3 refers to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

12. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Exempt

Cabinet **authorised** the Leader to sign, as a correct record, the exempt Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 22 March 2022.

**The Meeting ended at
11.06 a.m.**
