

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Wednesday, 4 September 2019 at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Aidan Van de Weyer Deputy Leader of Council (Statutory) (in the Chair)
Neil Gough Deputy Leader
Bill Handley Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing
Dr. Tumi Hawkins Lead Cabinet member for Planning
Hazel Smith Lead Cabinet member for Housing
John Williams Lead Cabinet member for Finance

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Phil Bird	Interim Corporate Programme Manager
Jonathan Dixon	Principal Planning Policy Officer (Transport)
Susan Gardner Craig	Interim Director of Corporate Services
Mike Hill	Director of Housing and Environmental Services
Kathrin John	Democratic Services Team Leader
Peter Maddock	Deputy Head of Finance
Jonathan Malton	Cabinet Support Officer
Rory McKenna	Deputy Head of Legal Practice
Trevor Roff	Interim Director of Finance
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer

Councillors Anna Bradnam, Jose Hales, Philippa Hart, Brian Milnes, Peter Topping, Heather Williams and Nick Wright were in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of the Council) sent Apologies for Absence. Councillor Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer (Deputy Leader (Statutory)) took the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Cabinet authorised the Deputy Leader (Statutory) to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2019.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

6. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Cabinet **received and noted**, without discussion, a report of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting held on 20 August 2019. The report referred to the following:

- 2019-20 Performance Reporting Arrangements and Quarter 1 Operational Key Performance Indicator Results
- Strategic Risk Register
- Value for Money Strategy

7. 2019-20 PERFORMANCE REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS AND QUARTER 1 OPERATIONAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR RESULTS

Cabinet considered a report providing details of proposed performance reporting arrangements for the 2019-20 financial year and presenting the Council's Quarter 1 position regarding its Operational Key Performance Indicators.

There were no comments from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee other than those in the report referred to in Minute 6.

Discussion included the following:

- Councillor John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for Finance) updated those present about the status of the Contact Centre. Regarding CC307 (Average call answer time), Councillor John Williams pointed out that the report should have said that a full report providing further details in relation to customer contact service performance had been presented to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 16 July 2019 (not 2020).
- Regarding AH212 (£s spent on bed and breakfast), those present noted that, in future, figures would be shown on a monthly basis rather than cumulatively to give more meaningful information.
- Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins undertook to investigate how best to report the cost of Appeals against planning and enforcement decisions in the context of the designation threshold.

Cabinet

- a) **Endorsed** the approach to reporting to be adopted for the 2019-20 financial year, as set out at paragraph 7 and Appendix A to the report from the Director of Corporate Services; and
- b) **Noted** the list of emerging Business Plan Indicators as set out and mapped against Business Plan focusses at Appendix B and currently being considered and shaped for reporting at the end of Quarter 2.
- c) **Reviewed** the Operational Key Performance Indicator results as set out in Appendices C and Ci to the report.

8. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Cabinet considered a report on South Cambridgeshire District Council's Strategic Risk Register.

Councillor John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for Finance) paid tribute to those officers involved in presenting such meaningful information.

In response to a comment from Councillor Brian Milnes, the Deputy Head of Finance

updated those present about progress being made in replacing the Council's telephone system. The Interim Chief Executive added that the deployment of new equipment at South Cambridgeshire District Council would take place ahead of similar deployment at Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridge City Council.

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins (Lead Cabinet Member for Planning) responded to comments from Councillor Nick Wright regarding Risk C1 (Housing delivery and maintaining five-year housing supply), and offered to meet with Councillor Wright to discuss his concerns outside of the Cabinet meeting.

The following answers were given in reply to questions from Councillor Heather Williams:

- The Investment Strategy would be reported to Cabinet on 2 October 2019 and Full Council in November.
- Audit of the Accounts for 2017-18 had not yet been completed.
- Regarding Risk C2 (Failure to meet targets for building new affordable Council housing and failure to spend Right To Buy receipts), Councillor Hazel Smith (Lead Cabinet Member for Housing) said that the risk should be reduced significantly during 2019-20.
- Consideration could be given to inviting all Councillors to attend training offered for particular committees rather than just the relevant committee members.

Councillor Peter Topping suggested that Risks should be 'owned' by appropriate Lead Cabinet Members rather than by officers.

Cabinet **approved** the amended draft Strategic Risk Register attached as Appendix A to the report from the Interim Director of Finance.

9. DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Cabinet considered a report on South Cambridgeshire District Council's draft response to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority Draft Local Transport Plan consultation taking place between 17 June 2019 and 27 September 2019. The Combined Authority was now the Transport Authority responsible for producing a Local Transport Plan.

Cabinet noted that discussion with Cambridge City Council had raised the potential of a joint response on some or all issues.

The Deputy Leader (Statutory) said that the Local Transport Plan would help to inform, but must not constrain, progress with South Cambridgeshire District Council's next Local Plan (being prepared jointly with Cambridge City Council),

In response to a question, the Deputy Leader (Statutory) said that, while a proposal to extend the M11 or to build a new dual-carriageway standard route from Cambridge to Chatteris, March and Wisbech had not been identified as a project at this stage, it might still be explored in the future.

Councillor Anna Bradnam suggested that A.99 of the draft response should be strengthened by emphasising the need for public transport links between villages in South Cambridgeshire. Expanding on this, Councillor Peter Topping cited A.27 and said there was a good argument for South Cambridgeshire District Council submitting a supplementary response covering those issues that impacted solely on the District and not on Cambridge. Issues such as the Girton Interchange should be highlighted. The

Deputy Leader (Statutory) maintained his view that a joint response would be more effective.

Councillor Heather Williams questioned the appropriateness of supporting, without prior consideration of the implications, East West Rail (East West Rail Company), the Oxford / Cambridge expressway and Caxton to A1 / A428 improvement scheme, and the M11 Smart Motorway (Highways England). The Deputy Leader (Statutory) undertook to discuss this point with officers. Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins asked that A.38 be expanded to refer specifically to the A428 between Girton Interchange and the Caxton Gibbet roundabout, and a junction from the A428 dual carriageway to the proposed new village on Bourn Airfield. Councillor Nick Wright supported Councillor Hawkins on the question of such a junction. The Deputy Leader (Statutory) doubted whether the Local Transport Plan carried enough weight to influence Highways England Policy. Councillor Brian Milnes pointed out that the introduction of Smart Motorways might be paused to allow certain issues to be resolved. Councillor Nick Wright hoped that a review would be taking place and said that, in the meantime, South Cambridgeshire District Council should not support Smart Motorways.

In response to a question from Councillor Anna Bradnam, the Principal Planning Policy Officer undertook to find out whether provision was being made for charging points specifically for electric Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles.

Cabinet

1. **Agreed** in principle the draft joint response from South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council to the Local Transport Plan consultation as attached to the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, subject to the addition, either as part of the joint response or of a separate South Cambridgeshire District Council response, of comments relating to
 - (i) the A428 between the Interchange at Girton and the Caxton Gibbet roundabout
 - (ii) transport links between South Cambridgeshire villages
 - (iii) the specific provision of charging points for Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles
2. **Agreed** to delegate the wording of the final joint response and any individual response to the consultation to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, in consultation with the Deputy Leader (Statutory) of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

10. MOTIONS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL

Cabinet considered four Motions referred to it by Full Council at its meeting held on 18 July 2019. Cabinet received two further documents relating to the Motion about safe spaces from Councillor Gavin Clayton.

Discussion focussed on two of the Motions.

Regarding the Motion from Councillor Nick Wright (paperless meetings), Councillor Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer (Deputy Leader (Statutory)) said that there was significant support in principle for the idea of reducing paper use. He asked officers to produce a high-level report into the implications involved and agreed with the idea that Cabinet should show leadership by piloting a scheme of meetings conducted electronically. Councillor

Philippa Hart was in support but asked the Deputy Leader (Statutory) to explore whether there was a need for new equipment. However, Councillor Anna Bradnam took a contrary view and made an impassioned plea that the electronic conduct of meetings should require individual Members to opt in and be supported by extensive Member training. Councillor Brian Milnes highlighted the need for effective technical support. Councillor Jose Hales suggested that the Council should consider adopting carbon-offset measures to mitigate its use of paper.

Regarding the Motion from Councillor Gavin Clayton (safe spaces), the Corporate Programme Manager explained that, while South Cambridgeshire District Council did not have a specific Equality and Diversity Officer, he was confident that the Policy and Performance team would have enough capacity to meet the Council's statutory obligations in this regard. Every Council policy was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and statistics were published annually with the Equalities Strategy being reviewed every four years. The Interim Corporate Programme Manager agreed that more could be done to increase awareness, through various communication channels, of how seriously the Council viewed the subject, but pointed out that many instances of so-called hate crime related to factors other than equality. He cautioned against duplicating the work of partner organisations. Expanding on this, the Interim Chief Executive suggested that the most effective course of action would be for the Council to approach the issue of safe spaces through its involvement with the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The Interim Chief Executive emphasised that all available evidence suggested that South Cambridgeshire remained a safe district in which to live.

Other points raised included

- The possible inclusion of equality statements on agendas and reports
- Recognition that equality is embedded in the Council's culture
- The existence of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub at Cambridgeshire County Council
- The changing demographic of South Cambridgeshire
- Safe places should be an opt-in facility
- The potential cost of being 'badged' as a safe spaces Authority could be spent more effectively by providing appropriate training

Regarding the Motions referred to it from Full Council, Cabinet

1. **Noted** the Motion from Councillor Sarah Cheung Johnson about domestic violence and the White Ribbon Campaign, and asked officers to present a report to a future meeting on the implications for South Cambridgeshire District Council.
2. **Noted** the Motion from Councillor Alex Malyon about single-use plastics and plastic pollution and requested the Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing and the Waste Policy, Change and Innovation Manager to take forward work to promote the Plastic Free Communities scheme to parishes and community groups in the District.
3. **Noted** the Motion from Councillor Nick Wright and:
 - a. Agreed, in principle, that the Council should embrace, as far as possible, a pragmatic approach to a transition to paperless meetings;
 - b. Requested officers to present a report to a future meeting on the options and cost implications; and
 - c. Supported the proposal for Cabinet to pilot the concept with a view to

providing leadership and identifying any issues.

4. **Noted** the Motion from Councillor Gavin Clayton about Safe Spaces, the further comments from Councillor Clayton tabled at the meeting, and agreed that officers be requested:
 - a. To present a report to Cabinet on an annual basis on the Council's work in respect of equality and diversity.
 - b. To investigate the concerns and issues that the LGBT+ community experiences in South Cambridgeshire by engaging with representatives of the community and any actions the Council could undertake to address those issues both within the organisation and within the wider community.
 - c. To explore how the Council can promote equality and diversity policies through working with partners and engaging with our communities, including encouraging community groups to consider equality and diversity issues when applying to the District Council for grant aid.

11. **VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY**

Cabinet considered a report seeking its adoption of a Value for Money Strategy.

Scrutiny and Overview Committee had not raised any concerns about this item.

Councillor John Williams summarised the statutory context and referred to the need to demonstrate social value. He said that South Cambridgeshire District Council should encourage those groups and organisations to which it gave grant funding also to adopt a Value for Money approach.

Cabinet approved the adoption of the Value for Money Strategy attached at Appendix A to the report from the Interim Director of Finance.

12. **OPTIONS AROUND MATERNITY, PREMATURE BIRTH AND NEO-NATAL LEAVE**

Cabinet considered a report on the proposed introduction of a premature birth and neo-natal policy that would be applied to all employees, and would support them if they had a child born prematurely requiring an extended stay in hospital.

Councillor John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for Finance) paid tribute to Councillor Heather Williams for her contribution towards developing a policy that would establish South Cambridgeshire District Council as a vanguard Local Authority in this respect.

Following a short debate, Cabinet **agreed**:

1. To support the introduction of a premature birth and neo-natal policy, as set out in the appendix to the report; and
2. To approve option 4, at 100% of normal salary, in respect of paid leave for employees on premature or neo-natal leave.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Cabinet noted that its next scheduled meeting would be on Wednesday 2 October 2019 starting at 9.30am.

14. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Cabinet voted, by affirmation, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following Minutes¹⁵ and 16 (Update from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Housing Revenue Account: Purchase of affordable homes and review of Executive Scheme of Delegation) in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act). Paragraph 3 relates to information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information).

15. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE (HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - PURCHASE OF AFFORDABLE HOMES AND REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE SCHEME OF DELEGATION)

Cabinet **received and noted**, without discussion, a restricted report of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee meeting held on 20 August 2019. The report referred to the following:

- Housing Revenue Account: Purchase of Affordable Homes and Review of Executive Scheme of Delegation

16. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - PURCHASE OF AFFORDABLE HOMES AND REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Cabinet considered a restricted report about a proposal that South Cambridgeshire District Council purchase affordable homes as detailed, and to review the Executive Scheme of Delegation.

Following discussion among those present, Cabinet

1. **Approved** South Cambridgeshire District Council entering into Heads of Terms, followed by a JCT Design and Build Contract, for the purpose and with the developer specified in the confidential report from the Interim Chief Executive, and a land contract and transfer to purchase the site in Sawston;
2. **Approved** South Cambridgeshire District Council entering into Heads of Terms, followed by a JCT Design and Build Contract, for the purpose and with the developer specified in the confidential report from the Interim Chief Executive, in Northstowe;
3. **Acknowledged** the significant benefits arising from the investments, outlined in the confidential report, at the sites in Sawston and Northstowe in line with the Council's key Business Plan priorities; and
4. **Agreed** that the limit for Executive Decisions by the Lead Cabinet Member for Housing be amended, with decisions above a certain level being referred to Cabinet and that the Scheme of Delegation of Executive Functions be amended accordingly.

**The Meeting ended at 12.25
p.m.**
