

**COUNCILLORS' BULLETIN  
16 NOVEMBER 2005**

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Cambridgeshire  
District Council**

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<b>COMMITTEE MEETINGS FROM: 21 November to 25 November 2005</b>				<b>Contact</b>
<b>Mon 21 Nov</b>	10 am	Development and Conservation Control Committee Chairman's Delegation	Monkfield Room	Janice Fisher
	10 am	Standards Committee	Swansley Room	Holly Adams
<b>Tue 22 Nov</b>	9 am	Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holders Meeting	Office of Finance and Resources Director	Vicki Barker
	9.30 am	Special Council – LDF – Cambridge East	Council Chamber	Carol Tyrrell
	2 pm	Environmental Health Portfolio Holders Meeting	Office of Housing and Environmental Services Director	Christine Martin
<b>Wed 23 Nov</b>				
<b>Thu 24 Nov</b>	2 pm	Council	Council Chamber	Susan May
<b>Fri 25 Nov</b>		Special Council – LDF – Cambridge Southern Fringe	Council Chamber	Ian Senior

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution has been amended and republished to reflect the changes agreed by Council at its meeting on 27 October 2005. Paper copies of the changes will be produced in due course when further associated changes have been made.

The Constitution can be found in the Library section of Modern.gov, which can be accessed via the South Cambs website or by staff via the intranet.

### **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The agenda for the next ordinary Council Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005 will be published today. Members are asked to note that the agenda item 'Public Questions' has been renamed '*Questions from the Councillors and the Public*'.

At the Council meeting of 27 October 2005 it was agreed that the Public Questions item on the Council agenda be extended to permit questions from Members, with the following conditions:

- An overall limit of 15 minutes for the item, subject to the discretion of the Chairman
  - That no officer time is involved
  - That questions should be submitted in advance whenever possible
- and that the operation of this question time be reviewed in six months.

Members are advised that there will be questions from Longstanton Parish Council under this agenda item on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005.

### **CALL IN ARRANGEMENTS**

The Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee or any five other Councillors may call in any executive decision recorded in this bulletin for review. The Democratic Services Manager must be notified of any call in by **Wednesday 23 November 2005 at 5 pm**. All decisions not called in by this date may be implemented on **Thursday 24 November 2005**.

Any member considering calling in a decision made by Cabinet is requested to contact the Democratic Services Section to determine whether any relevant amendments have been incorporated.

The call in procedure is set out in full in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, 'Scrutiny and Overview Committee Procedure Rules', paragraph 12.

## DECISIONS MADE BY OFFICERS AND REPORTED FOR INFORMATION

### Conservation Manager

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Decision and Reasons</b>
Friends of the River Shep	Wildlife Enhancement Scheme grant of £100 awarded to the friends of the River Shep for the management of a large veteran willow tree. The tree is at serious risk of becoming unstable, which could result in its total loss from the landscape and damage to the River Shep. The cut wood will be utilised in environmental projects.

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on  
Thursday, 10 November 2005

**PRESENT:** Councillor SGM Kindersley (Leader of Council)  
Councillor RT Summerfield (Deputy Leader of Council and Resources & Staffing Portfolio Holder)

**Councillors:** Dr DR Bard Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder  
JD Batchelor Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder  
Mrs JM Healey Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder  
Mrs EM Heazell Housing Portfolio Holder  
Mrs DSK Spink MBE Environmental Health Portfolio Holder

Councillors RE Barrett, RF Bryant, NN Cathcart, Mrs A Elsby, Mrs CA Hunt, Mrs HF Kember, J Shepperson, Mrs GJ Smith and JH Stewart were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs DP Roberts, Community Development Portfolio Holder, and from Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt, both of whom were attending the final children's concert of the Council's Celebrating the Classics series.

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### **Procedural Items**

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#### **1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2005 as a correct record.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following personal interests were declared:

RE Barrett	As a Member of the Housing for Older People Advisory Group
JD Batchelor	As a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council
RF Bryant	As a Member of the Housing for Older People Advisory Group
Mrs A Elsby	As a Member of the Housing for Older People Advisory Group
Mrs HF Kember	As a Member of the Housing for Older People Advisory Group
SGM Kindersley	As a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council
J Shepperson	As a Member of the Housing for Older People Advisory Group
RT Summerfield	Mother-in-law lives in one of the Council's sheltered schemes

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### **Recommendation to Council**

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#### **3. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CONSTITUTION REVIEW WORKING PARTY - CONSERVATION AREAS**

Mindful of the number of Conservation Area appraisals due to be considered, Cabinet

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

that Table 2B of Part 3 of the Constitution, paragraph 51 (page C-17) be amended to give authority to the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder to designate Conservation Areas and agree amendments to their boundaries.

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#### **Recommendation to Council and Decision made by the Cabinet**

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#### **4. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS**

Cabinet considered the implications of involvement in a Local Area Agreement (LAA) being developed by the County Council and partners to provide government funding against specific targets. There would be resource implications, but it was essential for the Council to be involved in order to ensure that it benefited from the allocation of funds. Urgent decisions were likely to be needed over the next few months.

Cabinet

**NOTED** the report;  
**REQUESTED** further updates;  
**AGREED** that the Leader of the Council have Portfolio Holder responsibility for this Council's involvement in the development and implementation of the Local Area Agreement; and

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

that the Leader be given authority to approve drafts of the Local Area Agreement on behalf of the Council (in consultation with other Portfolio Holders where practicable) when it is not possible to refer the matter to Cabinet and Council in the time available.

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#### **Decisions made by the Cabinet**

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#### **5. SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE CLIMATE PLAN**

Council, at its meeting of 22 September 2005, had received enthusiastically the draft South Cambridgeshire Climate Plan and the constructive comments offered then had been incorporated into the final document. The Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder had been delighted with the response to this important issue and commended the Plan to Cabinet.

Cabinet

**AGREED** to formally approve the Council's Climate Plan.

#### **6. SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DESIGN GUIDE**

The Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder commended to Cabinet the Design Guide and Cabinet

**AGREED** to adopt the Design Guide as Council Policy, subject to the incorporation of the changes agreed by the Conservation Advisory Group, as set out in the appendix to the report to Cabinet.

#### **7. FUTURE OF SHELTERED HOUSING**

The Housing Portfolio Holder commended the work of the Housing for Older People Advisory Group (HOPAG), citing it as a strong example of co-operative working with outside partners. She drew Cabinet's attention to:

- (a) the County Council's best value review of sheltered housing, which suggested that South Cambridgeshire was "overprovided" with sheltered housing compared to other districts;
- (b) possible significant reductions in the County Council's Supporting People budget over the next five years;
- (c) the number of South Cambridgeshire residents with special needs living in general housing, who were effectively subsidising part of the sheltered housing service;
- (d) that it would no longer be a requirement for sheltered housing staff to live on-site;
- (e) the number of out-of-hours calls did not justify the amount spent on the response service, which could be transferred to a deal of health and social care staff;
- (f) the need to review whether the right choices were being offered to residents; and
- (g) the benefit gained from visits to Cambridge City and Hereward Housing Association schemes.

The Housing and Environmental Services Director clarified that this review focussed on front-line staff, and that a Shire Homes management structure review was currently underway. Initial proposals from the latter review were expected at the end of November and would encompass an analysis of the number of area managers: at present there were three area managers and one weekend manager. Members would be kept informed.

The Housing Portfolio Holder agreed with comments that, given changes in the lifestyles of the elderly, care must be taken to ensure that the right service was being offered. She also assured Members that housing for scheme managers would be taken into account during one-to-one discussions.

**Cabinet AGREED**

- (a) to endorse the following vision for the Sheltered Housing Service:
  - I. "Our vision for the future is to develop a service that:
    - (i) is financially sustainable;
    - (ii) provides a high quality, flexible management and support service, tailored to the needs of our older residents;
    - (iii) encourages independence and allows dignity and quality of life; and
    - (iv) is integrated with other complementary services for older people";
- (b) to endorse the following key principles for the Sheltered Housing Service:
  - I. A new role for Scheme Managers – so that they become the hub of housing support activity within their scheme:
    - (i) increased skills, including training on enhancing the support role;
    - (ii) closer working with Neighbourhood Managers;
    - (iii) closer working with Primary Care Trust locality managers and teams; and
    - (iv) able to respond to Lifeline calls;
  - II. Support based on a firm and familiar relationship between residents and staff:
    - (i) a team approach – schemes to be managed in groups which will reflect the dispersal of the schemes but with a dedicated team that will serve that locality. This will involve a move from scheme management – scheme managers will provide support to a number of residents, with a more equal distribution. There would be a lead manager for each property, with the ability to provide cover from within the team – meaning residents would see only

- familiar faces;
      - (ii) a 9-to-5 on-site service with no resident Scheme Manager;
      - (iii) a small flexible team, but large enough to cover the scheme and to promote other activities, including social activities and promoting links between the schemes in that locality; and
      - (iv) able to carry out other duties linked with Lifelines;
    - III. A fast and appropriate response to out-of-hours calls for assistance:
      - (i) a night response service provided through the Primary Care Trust;
      - (ii) able to assist with falls and to assess whether emergency services are required;
      - (iii) access to nursing help if needed;
      - (iv) guaranteed response times;
      - (v) service to be offered to other Lifeline users (including private sector);
    - IV. Promoting further use of communal facilities – the current provision differs across the schemes, this is an opportunity to ensure consistency of service:
      - (i) seen as a community resource – promoted by the Team;
      - (ii) increasing resident involvement in organising activities at the scheme and in the wider community;
      - (iii) increasing use by the wider community of the facilities and with other organisations;
      - (iv) possible base for delivery of health or care services;
  - (c) the outline staffing structure set out at Appendix 3 to the review report, subject to further consultation with staff on the final composition of teams;
  - (d) that work continue with staff, stakeholders and residents on the long-term vision for housing for older people, to be incorporated into a South Cambridgeshire Strategy for Older People;
  - (e) that the following Difficult to Let flats be re-designated as non-sheltered properties for letting to single people in the 40 to 60 age group
    - I. 27-32 Greenleas, Histon (6 flats, all 1 bedroom);
    - II. 1-9 Fairview, Longstanton (9 flats, 1 x 2 bedroom and 8 x 1 bedroom);
    - III. 1 and 1A Chapel Street, Waterbeach (2 flats, both 1 bedroom); and
    - IV. 1-4 Chapel Close, Waterbeach (4 flats, 1 x 2 bedroom and 3 x 1 bedroom); and
  - (f) to commend and thank the Members, officers, residents and partners involved in the Housing for Older People Advisory Group.

## 8. REDUCING NUMBERS IN AND COSTS OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) required local authorities to reduce the use of temporary accommodation for homeless households by 50% by 2010 and the report outlined proposals to respond to this target. It was confirmed that letting one-bed units to families with one small child would not be considered statutory overcrowding: it provided more space than hostel accommodation and was a temporary housing solution. The recommendations would see a better use of the Council's own housing stock and Members were assured that there would be no effect on village exception sites where local people had priority for housing, since these were mainly housing association sites.

Cabinet **AGREED** to make the following amendments to the Council's Lettings Policy with effect from November 2005:

- (a) To let up to 10% of Council vacancies as temporary accommodation, including allocations of accommodation that may be one-bedroom short of what the household would be entitled to on a permanent basis, for example, on-bed unites let to families with one child. To be reviewed after 12 months;
- (b) To increase the minimum number of village choices to homeless applicants to

25, with at least 4 of these being in the villages identified as having more than 60 non-sheltered Council or housing association homes, whilst allowing individual families the opportunity to submit exceptional circumstances for a specific location; and

- (c) To award homeless priority points at 6 months after the Council has agreed to rehouse them, rather than the current 2 years.

## 9. SERVICE FIRST

The Service First Customer Care Project was established to develop a “customer-centric” consistency in all Council services. Customer care standards booklets had been developed for each customer-facing service outlining corporate and service specific standards and customer obligations; amendments had just been circulated electronically including revisions made in light of the capping situation. Subsequent changes could be made as needed via the Service First project team.

Cabinet **AGREED** that

- (a) the *corporate* customer care standards be adopted as set out in Appendix A to the report and used as the basis for further consultation with staff and customers by December 2005;
- (b) training for Council and Contact Centre staff and elected Members be organised for January to March 2006;
- (c) a customer care element be introduced to the 2006/07 service plan and personal appraisal templates to focus attention on how customer service could be improved;
- (d) all Portfolio Holders be asked to agree by the end of November 2005 the final version of service-specific standards to take account of post-capping budget reductions; and
- (e) the Service First project team be tasked with making further recommendations to the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder on the following:
  - (i) monitoring of performance against standards;
  - (ii) review and development of standards;
  - (iii) use of mystery shoppers;
  - (iv) integration of customer satisfaction and complaints monitoring; and
  - (v) generation of ideas to improve customer care.

## 10. 6-MONTH (APR-SEPT) PERFORMANCE MILESTONES MONITORING REPORT 2005-06

The report highlighted milestones achieved and gave details of those where progress was delayed, such as the Comprehensive Performance Assessment actions, which had been disrupted by capping. A further report would be brought to Cabinet in December.

Members noted that:

- (a) the Contact Centre’s customer satisfaction measuring software installation was expected in the next financial year, but a temporary manual arrangement was currently in place;
- (b) the Council had been proposed as a Beacon Council for its Waste and Recycling scheme (Milestone M88); and
- (c) work on the new integrated Waste and Recycling scheme was going ahead despite capping.

Cabinet

**CONFIRMED**

the importance of achieving milestones and performance indicators in relation to the following areas:

- (a) Completing Contact Centre Phase 2: maximising the use of the Contact Centre and identifying scope for efficiency gains



- through the use of the Contact Centre;
- (b) Ensuring that progress is maintained in the programme to achieve electronic service delivery;
- (c) Ensuring that progress is maintained on the Local Development Framework and in the planning for Northstowe;
- (d) Ensuring that the Council sets clear, realistic priorities for 2006/07 onwards to give direction to the work of officers;
- (e) The achievement of efficiency savings for 2005/06 and 2006/07 to 2007/08; and
- (f) Continuing to give priority to the achievement of performance indicator targets; and

**REQUESTED** that the Chief Executive provide each Portfolio Holder with a list of their milestones which might not be achieved in 2005/06 and to arrange for consideration of these milestones at each Portfolio Holder meeting.

**11. 6-MONTH (APR-SEPT) PERFORMANCE INDICATORS MONITORING REPORT 2005-06**

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder confirmed that most targets were likely to be achieved and Cabinet

**AGREED** to invite individual Portfolio Holders to discuss the following Performance Indicators at monthly Portfolio Holder meetings, with a view to satisfying themselves that all action that can be taken to achieve the targets is being taken:

***Resources and Staffing***

- BV 66a** % of rent collected as a proportion of rent owed (Housing Revenues Account)
- BV 78b** average time for processing notifications of changes in (benefits) circumstance that require a new decision on behalf of the local authority
- BV 179** % of Land Charges standard searches carried out in 10 working days
- SX 21** % SCDC employees single car users

***Planning and Economic Development***

- BV 109a** % of Major Planning applications determined within 13 weeks
- SH 311** Affordable Housing completions
- No PIs** Northstowe and the other growth areas
- No PIs** Affordable Housing Permissions, impact of officer's actions

***Environmental Health***

- SE 203** % of environmental health complaints responded to within 3 working days
- SE 225** % of pest control first treatments carried out within 4 working days

***Community Development***

- The Arts, Sports and Community Development Strategies**
- SX 16** the number of villages with completed Parish Plans

**12. PAY AWARD POLICY**

To correct inconsistencies in the policy which had arisen as a result of the former consultants' advice, Cabinet

**AGREED** that

- (a) future pay awards be based on a range of pay data, including the Retail Price Index (RPI), local government pay settlement and other public sector settlements; and
- (b) the payline be reviewed every four years.

**13. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA) FOR DISTRICT COUNCILS**

The Audit Commission were keen to streamline the CPA process for District Councils in the short-term, while the Government was seeking to replace CPA with area-based assessments of public services post 2008-09, and authorities were invited to respond to a consultation paper.

Cabinet **AGREED**

- (a) to approve the proposed response to the Audit Commission's consultation paper, as set out in paragraphs 8-22 of the report; and
- (b) that the Chief Executive send a written response to the Audit Commission reflecting the comments made in the report.

**14. FIXED TERM CONTRACT - BUILDING CONTROL**

The cost-cutting exercise had affected the Building Control section and the continued viability of the service necessitated maintaining this administrative post.

Cabinet

**AGREED** to renew the fixed-term contract for post D.5.13 for a period of one year.

**15. GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES GRANT 2006-08 - LATE ITEM**

The Leader had accepted this report as an emergency item due to the short time frame in which the Council could bid for government funding to refurbish or develop local authority-owned traveller sites during 2006-08. It was important that the Council made sure it could access the funding and a bid must be submitted by 31 January 2006; Cabinet acknowledged that this would be a resource-hungry process. The Community Development Portfolio Holder's endorsement of the bid was reported.

Cabinet discussed that:

- (a) the Council's case should be strengthened by the results of the Travellers' Housing Needs Survey, which should be available before the bid was made;
- (b) a similar letter received in July related to a different funding year which was not applicable to the Council's position generally but did result in some funding for sites at Milton and Whaddon;
- (c) bidding for funding would demonstrate that the Council looked after the welfare of travellers; and
- (d) Members were asked to be alert regarding a potential media leak of a confidential discussion.

Cabinet **AGREED** to endorse efforts by officers to undertake the necessary preparations with a view to making an application for Gypsy and Traveller Site grant-funding in 2006-08.

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**Information Items**

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**16. POOLING OF CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) had confirmed that the final legislation regarding the Pooling Scheme would result in receipts from the Equity Share Scheme being subject to pooling and the Council had since written to the ODPM asking that consideration be given to amending the regulations to ensure that pooling of these receipts would be avoided.

Cabinet **NOTED** the report.

**17. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS**

Cabinet's attention was drawn to the likely General Fund underspends for 2005/06, which, when compared to the budget reductions approved by Council on 27 October 2005, resulted in a net additional underspend of £20,000. With regards to Prudential Indicators, the Council continued to remain within the set limits for Treasury Management.

Cabinet **NOTED** the projected expenditure position and the monitoring of prudential indicators.

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**Standing Items**

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**18. MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

None.

**19. UPDATES FROM CABINET MEMBERS APPOINTED TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

None.

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**The Meeting ended at 10.55 a.m.**

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## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on  
Monday, 7 November 2005

PRESENT: Councillor RE Barrett – Chairman  
Councillor Dr JR Williamson – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: EW Bullman Mrs HF Kember  
Mrs A Elsby Mrs CAED Murfitt  
Mrs SA Hatton J Shepperson

Councillor Mrs DSK Spink, MBE was also in attendance in her capacity as Environmental Health Portfolio Holder.

### **20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors SJ Agnew, R Hall, Mrs JA Muncey, Dr JPR Orme and DALG Wherrell.

### **21. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

2.1 The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2005.

### **22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 The Chairman declared an interest in item 4 on the agenda as one of the local Members for Balsham; Councillor Dr JR Williamson took the Chair for that item.

### **23. REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION OF CONSENT STREETS - BALSHAM**

4.1 The Licensing Committee, having considered a request from Balsham Parish Council that all streets in the village be designated Consent Streets in order to control street trading in the village, and so that the necessary process to organise the Status could be commenced,

**AGREED** that all the streets in the village of Balsham be designated Consent Streets under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

### **24. DESIGNATION OF CONSENT STREETS - ADDING NEW ROADS TO VILLAGES**

5.1 As a result of a request made at the last Licensing Committee meeting as to whether the Council would be required to re-advertise when new roads had been added after Consent Street status had previously been granted to a village, Members were informed that after obtaining legal advice it was confirmed that in those circumstances it would be a legal necessity to re-advertise in order that the new streets or roads could be added to the original Order.

5.2 The Licensing Committee **NOTED** the information.

5.3 Following further discussion arising from this item, the following points were raised:

- (a) Would the addition of streets to an original Order require Committee consent?
- (b) What are the approximate costs of advertising the Orders?
- (c) Was any literature available in other languages?

5.4 In response Members were informed:

- (a) Yes, however the situation was unlikely to occur very often as most new roads were on the outskirts of villages and trading tended to occur in the centre.
- (b) £300-400 per advert payable by the Council. Fees (non refundable) were charged to persons requesting consent to trade; applicants were advised if they were likely or not to succeed in their application.
- (c) No, as no-one had requested additional versions. The Committee however requested that the guidance include a sentence indicating that it could be obtained in another language. **JS to action**

5.5 Members also noted that all traders providing hot food after 11pm would require a licence under the new Licensing Act, effective from 24 November 2005.

## **25. LICENSING ACT STATISTICAL UPDATE**

6.1 The Licensing Committee noted the information provided in the statistical update and additional information imparted at the meeting relating to the following:

(a) District Councils will be able to comment when the Licensing Act is reviewed in February 2006; main areas of concern for this Council were:

- (i) limited time period for determining applications
- (ii) the powers of the Licensing Authority
- (iii) Local Authorities unable to request a review of premises licences
- (iv) The parameters of Temporary Event Notices
- (v) The limited involvement of the Police authority due to their restricted resources

(b) Reviews as a result of the hearings would commence within the next few months

(c) There were still a number of outstanding applications

(d) The font size on the application forms and notices of intention were considered to be too small

(e) Costs relating to the arrangement of hearings would be finalised by the Licensing Officer and would include the additional costs of an appeal to the Magistrates Court

(f) Feedback from Parish Councils and local Members would be helpful

6.2 In conclusion, both Members and Officers were thanked for the manner in which the hearings were conducted, particularly the amount of work involved in creating and implementing what was deemed to be a successful procedure.

## **26. INCREASE IN FEES**

7.1 The Miscellaneous Provisions Act allowed for Councils to charge fees to cover the costs of administering Private Hire/Hackney Carriage Driver applications and Vehicle Testing but without making a profit; this was reviewable every year. It was noted that the revised charges had been advertised in the local paper and the fees for the following services would be effective from 1 December 2005, subject to no representation being made on or before the 28 November 2005

### **Private Hire/Hackney Carriage Driver application**

From: £117.00

To: £146.00 (Grant)

From: £60.00

To: £75.00 (Renewal)

### **Vehicle Testing**

From: £74.00  
From: £59.00

To: £94.00 (Grant)  
To: £74.00 (Renewal)

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**The Meeting ended at 11.02 a.m.**

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