

**COUNCILLORS' BULLETIN
23 NOVEMBER 2005**

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**South
Cambridgeshire
District Council**

INFORMATION ITEMS

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2. Environmental Health Portfolio Holders Meeting – Draft action points & notes 22 November 2005

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS FROM:
28 November to 2 December 2005**

				Contact
Mon 28 Nov		South Cambridgeshire Environment & Transport Area Joint Committee	Postponed until 6 December 2005	
Tue 29 Nov				
Wed 30 Nov				
Thu 1 Dec	10.00 am	Milton Country Park Advisory Group	Milton Country Park	Maggie Jennings
Fri 2 Dec				

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

All Members are reminded that December payments will be made to Banks and Building Societies earlier than usual, namely on the 23rd December 2005. Accordingly the payroll section must receive all items for the payroll run, such as travel allowances by Monday 5th December to ensure processing.

Therefore would Members please ensure that any **claims for travel allowances are submitted** to Holly Adams in Democratic Services no later than **Friday 2nd December 2005** for payment in December. Any claims received after this date will be paid in January 2006.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS 5TH – 15TH DECEMBER 2005

That time of year is fast approaching, and it's time to remember those less fortunate. We will be collecting presents from Monday 5 December to Friday 15 December for local children in the care of Social Services.



There are specific age groups to buy for. You can get tags from Emma George in Development Services (Tel: 01954 713254) to stick to the presents. The presents can then be put in the collection box in reception.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group held on
Wednesday, 26 October 2005 at 10.00am

PRESENT: Councillor SJ Agnew – Chairman
Councillor NN Cathcart – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	RF Bryant	Mrs SJO Doggett
	R Hall	Dr JA Heap
	Dr JPR Orme	EJ Pateman
	Mrs DSK Spink MBE	JH Stewart
	Dr JR Williamson	NIC Wright

and Councillors Mrs JM Healey, (none).

Councillor J Shepperson was in attendance, by invitation.

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Mrs P Corney, Mrs A Elsbey, Mrs CA Hunt and RJ Turner sent their Apologies for Absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In relation to Minute no. 6 (Fen Drayton Lakes), Councillor SJ Agnew declared a Personal Interest as a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Conservation Advisory Group authorised the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2005 as a correct record.

4. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a number of options for the future management of its work programme, in the light of a request from the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder that all Member bodies within the Council review the cost implications of holding meetings.

Commending the report as well-balanced, the Chairman said that there were significant issues to be addressed, given the amount of vital work undertaken by Conservation officers, and its implications for both the Council and South Cambridgeshire.

Members considered each of the options set out in paragraph 8 of the report.

While one Member spoke in favour of the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder calling future meetings as and when needed, the general view was that such an arrangement would be impractical in terms of conservation. It would be better to establish a programme of meetings, as was currently the case, and cancel meetings when *not* required. As a compromise, the number of scheduled meetings should be reduced from eight, in 2005-06, to six in 2006-07. In addition, it was argued that extraordinary meetings could be called, if appropriate.

Members felt that the overall size of the Conservation Advisory Group was indicative of the importance that the Council attached to conservation issues. There was general opposition to the option of reducing the Group's membership as a way of saving the cost of printing agendas and paying travelling expenses. The Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder highlighted the importance of having a formal group of Members with specialist interest and expertise, and argued in favour of the Conservation Advisory Group determining its own size. An alternative course of action would be to refer conservation issues to full Council: this was considered to be impractical. It was noted that two Members had not attended meetings for almost a year, and the Chairman asked that they be formally invited to the next meeting. Should they not attend, it was agreed that they should no longer be considered to be members of the Conservation Advisory Group. In such a case, or if they resigned from the Group, it was agreed that the resulted vacancies would not be filled in 2005-06.

Members were not in favour of option (d) set out in the report.

The Conservation Manager made particular reference to paragraph 3 and to Appendix 1. Many functions were statutory. A formal structure of meetings helped officers to prioritise work so as to meet specific timetable requirements.

Members discussed the question of travelling expenses.

The Democratic Services Manager informed Members that the principal saving in reducing the number of meetings would be in the time commitment of Democratic Services Section and service officers.

The Conservation Manager explained how the Conservation Advisory Group constituted an essential element in agreeing strategies ahead of those strategies being submitted to public participation as part of the Local Development Framework process.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder endorses the setting of a programme of Conservation Advisory Group meetings, while reducing the number of meetings from eight a year to six a year, starting in May 2006, subject to the calling, by the Portfolio Holder, of extraordinary meetings, if appropriate.

5. SWAVESEY VILLAGE GREEN SPACE

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the 'Rood Awakening' proposal as the basis for the future development of the site as a Village Green Space to be maintained by Swavesey Parish Council.

Mr Glyn Jones, who reports to the Finance Sub-Committee of Swavesey Parish Council, made a presentation to Members, focusing, among other things, on the background, publicity, funding and long-term maintenance.

Design was an important issue, given the need to minimise any opportunity for vandalism.

A further concern was that of flooding. The support and advice of the Environment Agency would be important given the consideration of any imported materials within the flood plain.

There was some discussion on the extent of grant aid that should be made available by the Council immediately, the preference being for a sum *up to* £3,000 in this case only, as opposed to the figure suggested in the report. Mr Jones confirmed that the Parish Council had contributed to the cost of skips, and had undertaken to carry out future maintenance

of the site.

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder authorises adoption of the, "Rood Awakening" proposal as the basis for the development of the Swavesey Constable's Rood Village Green space; and
- (2) that the Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder authorises release of funding of up to £3,000 (three thousand pounds) from the Heritage Initiative Fund to the Swavesey Constable's Rood to support the implementation of the "Rood Awakening" proposal, subject to the final submission and approval of a detailed management and maintenance plan.

(Councillor J Shepperson attended the meeting as local Member.)

6. FEN DRAYTON LAKES

The Conservation Advisory Group considered an outline of the proposed Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) initiative at Fen Drayton lakes, which sought the Council's support in facilitating the scheme.

The Head of Legal Services reminded Members about their obligations to be fair in their quasi-judicial decision making, and reiterated the need to be aware of the rules on pre-determination. Mindful that the majority of those Members present were also members of the Development and Conservation Control Committee, he confirmed that Members could take part in the debate at Conservation Advisory Group or any potential debate at Development and Conservation Control Committee, but not both. At this stage, it was deemed unlikely that planning permission would be needed for change of use.

Following this clarification by the Head of Legal Services and Conservation Manager, Councillor Dr JPR Orme and Councillor JH Stewart withdrew from the Room for the remainder of this item. Councillor Dr J Williamson had previously left the meeting. Councillor NIC Wright informed Members that his grandfather had owned part of the land in question.

The Conservation Advisory Group expressed its support for the RSPB's bid to secure funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to establish a wetland nature reserve, but stopped short of indicating support for, or approval of, any kind of planning application that might be submitted in the future, as this would have amounted to pre-determination, in the case of those Members being members of the Development and Conservation Control Committee or wishing to speak at that committee, in the case of any such application.

Councillor J Shepperson, the local Member, attended the meeting for this item, and informed Members that he had supported it when discussed by Fen Drayton Parish Council. His main concern was that future management should be determined at the outset.

Members expressed concerns about the possible negative impact on the site as a result of the proposed Guided Bus route, and about the implications for existing wildlife of seeking to improve public access. The Council should be proactive in ensuring that these concerns were addressed appropriately and that recreational use of the lakes was kept to a minimum. Members noted that there could be a risk of flooding.

The Conservation Advisory Group **SUPPORTED** the RSPB's bid to secure funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, while not indicating support for, or approval of,

any planning application that might be submitted in relation to this site. Officers expressed support for use and management of the land as a wetland nature reserve. While a change of use planning application is thought unlikely, officers support the principle of ancillary works on site, subject to the submission of details.

7. DESIGN GUIDE CONSULTATION

The Conservation Advisory Group considered a report on the outcome of the public consultation exercise for the South Cambridgeshire Design Guide, and seeking support for recommending adoption of the document as Council Policy.

The Conservation Area and Design Officer highlighted to Members the responses set out in the Appendix to the report. Members identified a number of changes that would be incorporated into the Design Guide, including:

2. Reference to horse chestnut trees on page 29 would be deleted
6. The recommended amendment to paragraph 3.2.4 would exclude the words "in most instances" Paragraph 2.2.1 would be amended to read "These design principles are intended primarily to address...developments. The phrase "and may not...Northstowe" would be deleted. The words "Major developments would" would be replaced by "Major developments (such as Northstowe) would be expected..."

The Conservation Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Conservation, Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder present the draft Design Guide (as amended) to Cabinet to seek its approval and adoption as Council Policy.

8. BUILT HERITAGE AWARDS - SHORTLIST

Members received a timetable for the coach tour on Wednesday 23rd November 2005 to establish a short-list of nominations for the Built Heritage Awards.

9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of the Conservation Advisory Group would be held at South Cambridgeshire Hall on Wednesday 14 December 2005 starting at 10.00am.

The Meeting ended at 12.52pm

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PORTFOLIO HOLDERS MEETING

Action Points & Notes

22nd November 2005

Present: Cllr Mrs DSK Spink MBE, Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
 Cllr S Kindersley, Leader of Council
 Mr S Hampson, Housing & Environmental Services Director
 Mr D Robinson, Chief Environmental Health Officer.

Item		Action
1.	Notes of Previous Meeting - Agreed	
2.	Matters arising and action points Real Nappies; Members asked if Officers could consider further promotional activities to use all remaining kits.	TC
3.	Gambling Act 2005. Members noted the additional responsibilities to be placed on the Council and the timetable for implementation. The Chief EHO was requested to produce a business case for the required level of resourcing anticipated for the additional work to feed into the 2006/07 budget process.	DSR/MB
4.	Beacon Council: Waste & Recycling Members were pleased with the short-listing of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Waste Partnership for Beacon status and noted the process by which the application would be further assessed. Ministers would announce their decision in March 2006.	
5.	Briefing note on the Supporting People funding situation Members were dismayed at the level of potential reductions in funding from the ODPM for Supporting People and the future viability of Council Services reliant on this funding stream. The Chief EHO was requested to approach the Portfolio Holder for Housing, in her capacity as the Council's representative on the Supporting People Joint Member Group, re the sending of a letter to the relevant Minister expressing these concerns and specifically asking what replacement funding was being proposed to make up the funding shortfall for the relevant Council services.	DSR
6.	Use of Fixed Penalty Notices Members praised the work of the Enforcement Officer and requested that the enforcement action rate was publicised more widely. The Portfolio Holder agreed to the proposed use of the fixed penalty notices and not at this time to set the level of penalty of fixed penalty notices or the payment period.	PMQ
7.	Environmental Health & Waste Management Performance Indicators 2005/06 Members noted that the reasons for the majority of the poorer performing areas could be traced back to staff vacancy rate and the results of capping. The Chief EHO was requested to try and progress contaminated land issues as quickly as resources would allow. Members also felt that if recruitment into the post	SW

	failed again an approach should be made to the relevant Universities to explore any partnership opportunities.	
8.	<p>Environmental Health & Waste Management Service Improvements 2005/06</p> <p>Members were concerned at the level of staff resource available to support the Council's involvement in the CEMEX application and major developments such as Northstowe. Members believed that funding opportunities from Cambridgeshire Horizons may still be available for additional resources in Environmental Health to support the growth agenda i.e. Northstowe and the Chief EHO was asked to explore this matter further with the Development Services Director.</p> <p>Remote working: The leader advised the meeting of the County Council's Touch down centres and wondered whether these could be of use to Council staff.</p> <p>The Chief EHO updated the meeting on the latest position regarding the negotiations with the County Council on Footway Lighting. Given the size of the committed sum the County was looking it was Agreed that most effort should now be placed on negotiations with the relevant Parish Councils and County Council. All relevant parish Councils Clerks should be written too next week updating them on the position, likely costs of them retaining the lights etc so that they could consider this item as part of their precept budget discussions.</p>	<p>DSR</p> <p>JW</p> <p>PMQ</p>
9.	<p>Environmental Health Portfolio – first six months budget report. No major concerns were expressed and the general approach being taken was noted and endorsed.</p>	
10.	<p>Any other Business</p> <p>The leader requested information on the costs of the Licensing Act 2003 for his forthcoming meeting with the Minister.</p> <p>Members requested an update on the Frozen bins issue.</p>	DSR
11.	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>14.00 Tuesday 24th January 2006.</p>	