

## South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on  
Wednesday, 7 October 2020 at 5.20 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Grenville Chamberlain – Chair  
Councillor Judith Rippeth – Vice-Chair

Councillors:	Anna Bradnam	Dr. Martin Cahn
	Nigel Cathcart	Sarah Cheung Johnson
	Graham Cone	Dr. Claire Daunton
	Dr. Douglas de Lacey	Peter Fane
	Geoff Harvey	Steve Hunt
	Richard Williams	

Councillors Heather Williams, Deborah Roberts, Neil Gough, Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Peter McDonald, Brian Milnes, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer, John Williams and Nick Wright were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers:	Liz Watts	Chief Executive
	Victoria Wallace	Scrutiny and Governance Adviser
	Peter Maddock	Head of Finance
	Anne Ainsworth	Chief Operating Officer
	Peter Campbell	Head of Housing

### 1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jose Hales.

### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record of the meeting, subject to the following amendment:

- Item 6 would be amended to the following (text in bold to be removed): 'A decline in staff taking regular breaks **between surveys** was noted and committee members suggested this needed to be monitored, to ensure staff were taking regular breaks and were not working more than they ought to'.

Regarding item 7, which referred to officers tethering their laptops to their phones where internet connections had failed, committee members were informed by the Chief Executive that most used their work mobiles to do this. Where staff had used their personal mobiles for tethering, they could be reimbursed for any costs incurred.

#### 4. Public Questions

There were no public questions.

The Chair informed the committee that a public question had been received, however this had not been accepted as it had been submitted after the deadline.

#### 5. Compulsory Purchase Order Policy

The Lead Cabinet Member for Finance presented the Compulsory Purchase Order Policy, which set out the approach, circumstances and conditions under which the council would consider the use of compulsory purchase powers to acquire land and property interests for the purpose of carrying out development, re-development or improvement where there was a compelling case in the public interest for doing so. He emphasised to the committee that these powers would be used as a last resort and the council's intention was to always seek voluntary acquisition. It was important to have a policy in place to ensure a consistent approach when these powers were used.

Committee members made the following comments on, and suggested amendments to the policy:

- It was queried whether any support could be given to vulnerable residents in obtaining an independent market valuation of their property when this was required.
- A clear exit strategy was needed for cases when the council had used its compulsory purchase powers to purchase a property.
- The addition of 'environmental net gain' was requested to paragraph 5.
- It was suggested that 'including energy efficiency' in relation to defective properties, should be added to paragraph 5 of the policy. The Lead Cabinet Member for Finance would look at this.
- The addition of the wording 'and other acts where appropriate power is given' to paragraph 8d was suggested.
- Wording should be amended at paragraph 22 to the following (the suggested amendment is shown in bold text); 'If a voluntary agreement cannot be reached, the Council will seek to make a CPO, and the property **should** be compulsory purchased at market value.'
- The Chief Executive should also be added to the Governance of the policy paragraph, in addition to the Chief Operating Officer.

Subject to the comments made by committee members, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee supported the adoption of the Compulsory Purchase Order Policy.

#### 6. Black Lives Matter Task and Finish Group Terms of Reference

The Chair of the task and finish group presented the draft Terms of Reference for the group. Subject to the following amendment (text highlighted in bold was to be added to the Terms of Reference), the Scrutiny and Overview Committee agreed the group's Terms of Reference:

- Conduct an audit of street names, **places** and any public monuments for which the Council is responsible, which name individuals or organisations and review any that have racist links.

The task and finish group Chair confirmed to committee members that it would make recommendations, which would be brought back to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee for agreement.

The task and finish group Chair agreed that the group would consider a more appropriate name for the group and bring a suggestion back to the committee.

## **7. Work Programme**

Following recent ICT outages, the Chief Executive agreed to bring an update on this issue, to a future meeting of the committee.

## **8. Cambridge Ice and Leisure Centre**

The committee agreed to exclude the Press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda items. This was 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 referred to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Lead Cabinet Member presented an update on the Cambridge Leisure and Ice Centre, which the committee considered in confidential session.

## **9. Confidential minutes of the previous meeting**

The confidential minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

## **10. To Note the Dates of Future Meetings**

The next meeting would take place on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November at 5.20pm.

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**The Meeting ended at 7.15 p.m.**

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