

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Monday, 18 January 2021 at 10.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)
Councillor Dr. Aidan Van de Weyer (Deputy Leader of Council (Statutory) -
Strategic Planning and Transport)

Councillors:	Neil Gough	Deputy Leader (non statutory) - Transformation and Projects
	Bill Handley	Lead Cabinet Member for Community Resilience
	Dr. Tumi Hawkins	Lead Cabinet member for Planning Policy and Delivery
	Peter McDonald	Lead Cabinet Member for Business Recovery
	Brian Milnes	Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing
	Hazel Smith	Lead Cabinet member for Housing
	John Williams	Lead Cabinet member for Finance

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Anne Ainsworth	Chief Operating Officer
Peter Campbell	Head of Housing
Mark Deas	Senior Policy Planner
Rebecca Dobson	Democratic Services Manager
Susan Gardner Craig	Head of HR and Corporate Services
Stephen Kelly	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
Peter Maddock	Head of Finance
Jonathan Malton	Cabinet Support Officer
Liam Martin	AV Support Officer
Lesley McFarlane	Development Officer - Health Specialist
Rory McKenna	Deputy Head of Legal Practice/Monitoring Officer
Jenny Nuttycombe	Senior Planning Policy Officer
Liz Watts	Chief Executive

Councillors Anna Bradnam, Grenville Chamberlain, Dr. Claire Daunton, Dr. Douglas de Lacey, Sue Ellington, Geoff Harvey, Heather Williams and Dr. Richard Williams were in attendance, by invitation.

1. **Leader's Announcements**

There were no announcements

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Judith Rippeth, Vice Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee send her apologies for absence.

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 public version of the Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 7 December 2020.

Councillor Neil Gough sent apologies for absence at the meeting held on 7 December 2020 and abstained from voting to affirm the minutes thereof.

5. **Public Questions**

There was one public question received ahead of the meeting.

(a) From Mr. Daniel Fulton

“The Fews Lane Consortium is in the process of conducting a full audit of the Council’s PS2 planning performance returns submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

To date, our volunteers have completed the audit for Q2 2020. Whilst the Council reported to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government that 85% of decisions on non-major applications were taken within the statutory determination period or within the period of a planning performance agreement or extension of time meeting the requirements set before Parliament by the Secretary of State, the truthful performance statistic was only 9%.

Councillors have been provided with a document containing our detailed audit results on a decision by decision basis.

Will the Portfolio Holder for Planning instruct the Council’s internal audit team to audit the PS2 planning performance returns for non-major applications from Q3 2018 to Q3 2020, or will it be necessary for the Fews Lane Consortium to obtain a Direction from the Secretary of State to bring the Council into compliance with its legal obligation to report accurate planning performance data?”

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning and Policy, responded:

Thank you for your question.

Firstly, I wish to re-iterate that we take our legal obligations extremely seriously indeed and take care to report accurate data as we are required to do.

Secondly the submission from Fews Lane Consortium has no supporting explanation as to how the figures have been arrived at. The Council does not agree with the performance figures arrived at by Fews Lane Consortium and remains of the view that the Q2 2020 submission is correct.

Third; whilst on that basis, I do not consider it necessary to undertake an audit of the thousands of decisions made since 2018, given the continued time being spent by officers on responding to this matter, the work of Fews Lane

Consortium volunteers and my desire to provide reassurance on this issue, I am happy to ask that the internal audit team review and report on the Councils Q2 2020 submission. This will, I hope allay any wider concern on the matter.

Mr. Daniel Fulton thanked the Lead Cabinet Member for her response.

6. Issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Cabinet **received and noted** a report from Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, and Councillor Judith Rippeth, Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, informing it about the discussions at, and recommendations from the Committee's meeting held on 17 December 2020.

7. Actions Taken under the Chief Executive's Delegated Powers

Cabinet **received and noted** a report relating to the actions taken under the Chief Executive's Delegated Powers:

- Christmas Support for Wet-led Pubs Policy, decision taken on Wednesday, 15th December 2020
- National Lockdown Business Support Policy Addendum (Local Restrictions Business Support), decision taken on Monday, 21st December 2020

8. Authority Monitoring Report for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning and Policy, introduced a report on the Greater Cambridge Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2019-20. The report, which covered both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, was brought to this meeting following a request made at the Cambridge Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee meeting in September 2020, to be considered at a meeting rather than being published as a decision outside a meeting. The AMR was set out as an appendix. Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins referred to the key findings as set out, and thanked Officers for completing the report during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Councillor Anna Bradnam, Vice Chair of the Council, requested clarification of the allocations for gypsy and traveller sites. Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins responded that there was sufficient provision, based on the need identified in the local plan. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development said a new needs assessment was being undertaken.

In response to a query from Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton, Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins said that the Council was working with Historic England to amend the advice to owners of historic buildings.

Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton then asked what impact permitted development legislation had on "whole life housing". The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development said the recent changes related to room standards, but it

should be noted that the report before Members related to the current adopted local plan.

Councillor Heather Williams asked why the Authority had not met the target for the West Cambridge Master Plan, and whether there would be any impact on the Five-Year Land Supply. The Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development responded that this was being led by Cambridge City Council, and no residential development was planned within the West Cambridge Master Plan.

Councillor Geoff Harvey welcomed the comments regarding encouraging fuel efficiency in historic buildings, and on behalf of the Chair of the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee, he asked whether the application of policy would shift from permissive to encouraging efficiency, in view of the climate change situation.

Councillor Dr. Tumi Hawkins said the authority would make the guidelines as clear as possible within government guidelines and would welcome discussion on a progressive approach.

After a further short discussion, the Leader closed the debate, and Cabinet:

- a) **Agreed** the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020 (included as Appendix 1) for publication on the Councils' websites.
- b) **Delegated** any further minor editing changes to the Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council - AMR for Greater Cambridge 2019-2020 to the Joint Director for Greater Cambridge Shared Planning.

9. Update on Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Councillor Bill Handley, the Lead Cabinet Member for Community Resilience, Health and Wellbeing, introduced a report updating Members on delivery of activities and services promoting physical and mental health and wellbeing, since the report presented to Cabinet in June 2020. Councillor Bill Handley said the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted significantly on this work, but commended Officers on the progress which had been made.

Councillor Sue Ellington congratulated the officers for their hard work during the Covid-19 pandemic, with particular reference to the Covid-19 Community Patches and Mobile Wardens Scheme but requested that further online exercise classes be introduced. The Health Specialist Development Officer responded that such classes were introduced at the beginning of the March lockdown last year but would be considered again. Councillor Dr. Douglas de Lacey, the Chair of the Council, thanked the Officers for their work during the last six months, but asked how the Council had deviated from the strategy. The Development Officer responded that from October 2020, there had been a return to supporting the volunteer groups.

Councillor Hazel Smith asked about when the review would be provided to Cabinet. Councillor Bill Handley believed it was too early to confirm a timescale but would liaise with relevant Officers.

Following a further discussion, the Leader thanked Officers for providing the update, and Cabinet:

Noted the contents of the report and considered the impacts of Covid on the delivery of activities and services which promote physical and mental health and wellbeing.

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