



Report to: Cabinet 7 February 2022

Lead Cabinet Members: Councillor Neil Gough (Deputy Leader and Lead Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport)
Councillor John Williams (Finance)

From: Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chair, Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Councillor Steve Hunt, Vice-Chair of the meeting

Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Purpose

1. This report is to inform Cabinet about relevant discussion among members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at their meeting on 18 January 2022 and to make recommendations at paragraphs 2, 9, 15, 18, 22 and 24.

Civil Parking Enforcement

Recommendation from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

2. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee welcomes and supports the recommendation that Cabinet support an application by Cambridgeshire County Council to the Department for Transport (DfT) to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) across South Cambridgeshire and grant delegated authority to the Head of Transformation, in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, to provide feedback on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council to the application for CPE to DfT and the Funding Agreement between the County Council and Greater Cambridge Partnership.

Comments

3. Several Members specifically welcomed the proposal, and Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton highlighted how helpful it would be in encouraging more considerate car parking outside schools.
4. Councillor Daunton noted that this was a joint initiative between Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and

the Greater Cambridge Partnership. It would be important to identify which of those partners ultimately would provide scrutiny of the scheme. For the time being though, it was accepted that Cambridgeshire County Council was accountable for implementation and noted that there was significant co-operation between the three parties.

5. Members accepted that the need for enforcement would be informed by experience gathered during Year 1 of the scheme, and that the level of penalty notices in an area was likely to remain relatively stable.
6. Councillor Dr. Richard Williams anticipated that civil parking enforcement would find significant support among residents of South Cambridgeshire. In response to his question about the reporting route, Committee members noted that South Cambridgeshire District Council would receive reports specific to its administrative area.
7. Councillor Nigel Cathcart queried how inconsiderate parking would be managed. Officers explained to the Committee that work was taking place with Cambridgeshire County Council to explore whether a letter or information could be placed on window screens of vehicles that were not parked illegally but in an inconsiderate manner. If this was possible this information would be issued by agents when such inconsiderate parking was spotted while enforcement action was being undertaken in relation to another matter in the vicinity.
8. Councillor Anna Bradnam queried whether such scheme could operate effectively in a rural area like South Cambridgeshire. The Committee noted the aspiration that a small amount of enforcement might change car parking behaviour for the better generally. Councillor Martin Cahn shared the concern about resources and accepted that, while civil parking enforcement would improve the situation, it would not completely solve the problem of inconsiderate parking.

2020-25 Business Plan

Recommendation from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

9. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee supports the proposed draft 2020-25 Business Plan (with the Action Plan primarily focused on delivery 2022-23).

Comments

10. In connection with Action C2 (Work with partners to protect and enhance the environment with the aim of doubling nature), Councillor Anna Bradnam suggested that the 'Six Free Trees' initiative might usefully be extended to allow the planting of trees on private land.
11. With reference to Action B3 (Liaison meetings and forums), Councillors Dr. Claire Daunton and Grenville Chamberlain supported the idea of creating

more such bodies as a way of engaging with those residents most affected by significant new developments.

12. Energy costs should be considered in assessing the affordability of homes.

13. Councillor Graham Cone supported ongoing initiatives to tackle fly-tipping and to expand the network of publicly available electric vehicle charging points.

14. Councillor Nigel Cathcart hoped that more attention could be given to conservation matters and measures to enhance local high streets.

General Fund Budget

Recommendation from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

15. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee supports recommendations (a) to (k) set out in paragraph 3 of the draft report to the Cabinet meeting on 7 February 2022.

Comments

16. The Chair and others thanked the Head of Finance and his team for the helpful and clear way in which this complex subject had been presented, and accepted that, nevertheless, it represented work in progress.

17. The Chair expressed concern at the increased cost of providing pensions.

Housing Revenue Account Revenue & Capital Budget: 2022-2023

Recommendation from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

18. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee supports the recommendations set out in paragraph 3 of the draft report to the Cabinet meeting on 7 February 2022.

Comments

19. Councillor Anna Bradnam urged South Cambridgeshire District Council to be clear about who it was selling self-build plots to so that plots were not being acquired by commercial developers.

20. Councillor Nigel Cathcart expressed concern about the disparity between Council House rent levels and rent levels charged by Housing Associations. Committee members noted that the former were social rents while the latter were affordable rents defined as being 80% of the market rate.

21. Where vacant garages were being considered for demolition, Councillor Dr. Claire Daunton hoped that consideration would be given to building social housing there instead.

Treasury Management

Recommendation from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

22. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee supports the recommendations set out in the draft report to the Cabinet meeting on 7 February 2022.

Comments

23. The Committee welcomed the report and had no further comments to make to Cabinet.

Capital Strategy

Recommendation from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

24. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee supports the recommendations set out in the draft report to the Cabinet meeting on 7 February 2022.

Comments

25. Referring to the Capital Strategy 2022, Councillor Anna Bradnam noted the projected levels of South Cambridgeshire District Council's total outstanding debt (which comprised borrowing and lease liabilities) compared with the Capital Financing Requirement as shown in Annex A Prudential Indicator 3: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement. Debt remained below the Capital Financing Requirement as required by statutory guidance.

Report Author:

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