

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning and New Communities Joint Portfolio Holders' Meeting held
on
Tuesday, 10 March 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Portfolio Holders: Dr DR Bard and NIC Wright

Councillors in attendance:

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors: Mrs VM Barrett

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitor and
Opposition spokesman Mrs BZD Smith

Opposition spokesmen Mrs PM Bear, AN Berent and JF Williams

Also in attendance: AG Orgee

Officers:

Patrick Adams	Senior Democratic Services Officer
David Grimster	Accountant
Peter Harris	Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing)
Gareth Jones	Corporate Manager, Planning & Sustainable Communities
Alison Talkington	Senior Planning Policy Officer
Jane Thompson	Cultural Services Manager

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor NIC Wright, New Communities Portfolio Holder, declared a personal interest in item 5, as an owner of an adjacent piece of land to the proposed borrow pit at New Barns Farm, Conington. It was noted that the original plan erroneously included a small part of Councillor Wright's land in the proposed development. This error had been subsequently rectified by the applicant.

Councillor AG Orgee declared a personal interest as a County Councillor in items 5, 10 and 11, which involved the County Council's consultation with this authority.

Councillor Wright declared a personal interest in item 14 as the local member for residents who benefit from the community services offered by Swavesey Village College.

40. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2009 were accepted as a correct record.

41. DRAFT SERVICE PLAN FOR THE PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SERVICE, 2009-10 TO 2011-12

The Corporate Manager – Planning and Sustainable Communities introduced the draft service plan by informing the Meeting that it represented a “snapshot” in time and more recent developments included:

- A decrease of about 30% in the number of planning applications received by the authority
- An increase of about 50% in informal planning enquiries

Councillor NIC Wright explained that the Council were considering charging for informal meetings to discuss planning applications. It was hoped that this could replace some of the income lost in planning fees due to the economic downturn.

Planning software

The Corporate Manager – Planning and Sustainable Communities explained that the Society of Information Technology Management (Socitm) were evaluating the Council's use of the software for the Planning section, which was provided by a small independent firm.

Plan documents

It was understood that a Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document would be prepared by January 2012. It was agreed that the possibility of an Economic Development Supplementary Planning Document should be discussed with the Economic Development Officer.

Planning applications

It was noted that approximately 90% of planning applications were decided by officer delegation. The Corporate Manager – Planning and Sustainable Communities explained that unlike this Council, most authorities did not have a mechanism to refer planning decisions to Committee that were to be determined under delegation. It was agreed that it might prove useful to publicise these two facts to the District's parish councils.

Consulting with parish councils

It was understood that a consultation event with parish councils had been held recently, which was attended by over 60 parish councillors from over 40 different parishes. It was expected that further training events for parish councils would be held in the future, although it was agreed that the service objective should be amended from quarterly to bi-annual, as this was more achievable. It was understood that local members could report the views of parish councils and meetings without necessarily supporting the views expressed.

It was noted that good progress was being made on the establishment of a database to assist officers in implementing Section 106 obligations.

Update required to Service Plan

It was noted that the Service Objective for the Planning Policy Service was currently blank and needed to be completed.

The Planning Portfolio Holder and the New Communities Portfolio Holder

AGREED the Service Plan for the Planning & Sustainable Communities Service 2009/10 to 2011/12, subject to minor amendments to be made by the Corporate Manager – Planning and Sustainable Communities.

42. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT UP TO 31 JANUARY 2009 - PLANNING PORTFOLIO

The Accountant presented this report, which compared the actual revenue and capital expenditure to 31 January for the Planning Portfolio with the annual budget for the year ending 31 March 2009.

Budget shortfall

It was noted that due to the economic downturn there was likely to be a shortfall of approximately £37,000 in the adjusted budget figure for expected Development Control

income.

Uncommitted grant balances over two year old

The Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing) explained that it would require the permission of the Finance Portfolio Holder to carry over the uncommitted balances on the Heritage Initiatives Fund and the Historic Buildings Preservation Fund at the end of the financial year. These budgets had been carried over in previous years.

Concessionary fares

It was understood that it was difficult to calculate the concessionary fare subsidy and it was possible that the bus companies exaggerated the number of single fare journeys.

The Planning Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the report.

43. NEW SITES PROPOSED FOR MINERALS AND WASTE DEVELOPMENT - THROUGH THE RECENT CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH MINERALS AND WASTE (PREFERRED OPTIONS 2) PLAN CONSULTATION

The Senior Planning Policy Officer introduced this report which sought the Council's response to consultation being carried out by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council on a number of new or amended proposals for mineral and waste development.

Land at Hinxton for sand and gravel extraction

Councillor AG Orgee, as the local member for Hinxton, raised concerns about the proposed sand and gravel extraction site south of the A505 at Hinxton on the grounds of the extra traffic it would put on the A1301 and the A505. He highlighted the fact that the roundabout where the two roads met was already congested with traffic backing up to the M11 at busy times. For these reasons he requested that the recommendation to support in principle be changed to object.

Land at Pampisford for proposed Waste Transfer Station

Councillor Orgee, as the local member for Pampisford, supported the recommendation to oppose the Waste Transfer Station south of Worsted Lodge, Pampisford due to its rural location.

Land at Hauxton for proposed household waste recycling centre

Councillor Orgee, as the local County Councillor for Hauxton, supported the recommendation to oppose the household waste recycling centre west of the A10, Hauxton due to the distance from residents who would use the facility. He suggested that the proposed site at Trumpington would be a far more suitable location.

Borrowpits for A14 upgrade

It was noted that it was possible that not all the proposed borrow pits for the construction work on the A14 would be required, which made assessing their environmental impact difficult. It was hoped that it would be unnecessary for any of the vehicles from the pits to drive through existing villages. It was agreed that the restoration of the borrow pits after the A14 work had been completed needed to be considered. It would be inappropriate to fill them with inert waste, but there were concerns that although it might be acceptable for some to be restored as areas of open water it would not be appropriate for all of them since this would create a string of wetlands adjacent to the A14.

Railhead

The New Communities Portfolio Holder expressed concern at the proposed railhead at Waterbeach due to the additional traffic it would put on the A10 and the proximity of the

site to Denny Abbey.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder

AGREED

- A)** That the Council respond to the proposed mineral sites as laid out in table 1 of the report, with the exception of Land at Hinxtton (South of A505 near Whittlesford Bridge) which the Council should object to, due to the additional traffic it would place on roads that were already busy.
- B)** That the Council respond to the proposed waste recycling and recovery sites as laid out in table 2.
- C)** To request the County Council to review whether the Minerals and Waste Development Plan is the appropriate vehicle for providing borrowpits for the A14 upgrade and consider how the borrowpits should be restored after the A14 work has been completed.
- D)** That the Council should object to the proposed Railhead at Waterbeach, due to the proximity of the access road to Denny Abbey and the extra traffic that it would add to the A10.

44. FORWARD PLANS

These were noted.

45. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next joint meeting would be held on Tuesday 12 May at 10am.

46. NEW COMMUNITIES - SERVICE PLAN 2009/10

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

47. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT UP TO 31 JANUARY 2009 - NEW COMMUNITIES PORTFOLIO

The Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing) presented this report which compared the actual revenue and capital expenditure to 31 January for the Community Services Portfolio with the annual budget for the year ending 31 March 2009. He explained that the expenditure for this Portfolio was dependent on grant applications submitted by local organisations making it irregular and so difficult to predict. It was noted that historically there had been considerable expenditure on Community Development, Sports Development and Arts Development very close to year end, which meant that the final actual expenditure was likely to be close to the estimated figure.

Planning Policy expenditure

It was understood that Planning Policy expenditure was difficult to estimate because of the uncertainty regarding the planning inspector fees, which had not yet been charged for 2007/08 and 2008/09. The position updated at the meeting was that these costs would be significantly higher than expected when the revised estimates were completed. However, the impact of this potentially large overspend had been largely reduced by virement from other budgets and savings achieved by the Planning Policy Manager. The Planning Policy Manager agreed to contact the Planning Inspectorate again and ask for up-to-date interim

invoices to be submitted as soon as possible. It was suggested that if this proves to be unsuccessful the New Communities Portfolio Holder should contact the District's two MPs regarding this matter. It was noted that it would be necessary to accrue for the full estimated costs of the inspector fees if the bill was not submitted in the current financial year.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the report.

48. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON PROHIBITION OF WAITING FOR COMMERCIAL VEHICLES IN HISTON AND IMPINGTON

The New Communities portfolio holder

AGREED that the Council should respond to the consultation by the County Council, as laid out in the report, namely:

- A)** South Cambridgeshire District Council supports the proposed prohibition of waiting of commercial vehicles in various streets in Histon and Impington.
- B)** However, the Council would request careful monitoring following implementation of the waiting restrictions to ensure there is no knock-on effect, either elsewhere within Histon and Impington or in other villages along the strategic road network.
- C)** The Council would also stress the urgency for a clear strategy for managing driver breaks for lorries using the strategic road network and the development of suitable alternative parking provision to avoid the displacement of commercial vehicles onto other streets in villages, particularly those along the A14 corridor.

49. CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL SPEED LIMIT REVIEWS ON A1303 MADINGLEY ROAD, A1307 HUNTINGDON ROAD AND A505 DUXFORD

The New Communities Portfolio Holder raised no objections to the proposed changes, with the exception to the short stretch of the A1303 between the turn off to Coton and Madingley Rise, which was currently 40mph and would increase to 50mph under the new proposals. It was agreed that as this part of the road was on a bend and downhill it would be inappropriate to increase the limit to 50mph and the current speed limit of 40mph should be retained.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder

AGREED To support the proposed reductions to the speed limits along A1303 Madingley Road, A1307 Huntingdon Road and A505 Duxford, subject to the retention of the 40mph speed limit between Madingley Rise and the turn off to Coton.

50. ARTS SERVICE REVIEW

The Cultural Services Manager presented this report on the consultants' review of the Council's Arts Service and its recommendations for the Service from April 2009 onwards. The Cultural Services Manager explained that the consultants had concluded that the Arts Service offered excellent value for money.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder explained that whilst he fully supported the employment of a full-time Arts Development Officer, he did not want to prejudice the full review of the service by agreeing to safeguard one of the posts within the section. It was

agreed that the Council could only continue to offer excellent value for money in its Arts Service, with the employment of a full-time Arts Development Officer.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder **NOTED** that the Council would continue to employ a full-time (Full-Time Equivalent) Arts Development Officer.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder **AGREED** the following actions, developed in parallel, with a view to commencement of a re-focussed Arts Service from June 2009:

- A)** The Arts Development Officer's Job description be reviewed and re-focused in line with the recommendations of the report to develop the strategic, advocacy and cross cutting elements of the role and to reduce the day-to-day operational responsibilities.
- B)** The Council secures the support of the village colleges in re-focusing the Arts Development Officer's and ADM's work through the annual dual use partnership agreements by end of March 2009.
- C)** The Arts Development Officer prepares a project plan for developing the new initiatives including member and senior officer briefings and liaising with other service heads on developing cross cutting initiatives. This will commence following the Portfolio Holder meeting in March for approval in June 2009.

51. SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Planning Policy Manager presented this report on the Local Development Scheme and its timetable for plan preparation for the 3-year period April 2009 to March 2011. He explained that the 2004 Act made this Scheme a statutory requirement.

A key milestone chart for 2009 to 2011 was circulated at the meeting, which showed the four Development Plan Documents, the Statement of Community Involvement and the Supplementary Planning Documents. The Planning Policy Manager explained that the Core Strategy would expire in 2016, thus creating a need for a further review.

It was agreed that it would be useful for the report to contain a glossary to explain not just what acronyms stood for, but also what they meant.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder

AGREED the Local Development Scheme as laid out in appendix 1 of the report.

52. ARTS CAPITAL GRANT AID - SWAVESEY VILLAGE COLLEGE

The Cultural Services Manager presented this report which sought a £22,740 arts capital aid grant for Swavesey Village College, which would ensure professional standard arts facilities in the new hall being built by the County Council at the College.

The New Communities Portfolio Holder

AGREED an award of £22,740 towards the cost of arts facilities at the new Swavesey Village College arts centre.

The Meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.
