



# SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCILLORS' BULLETIN – ISSUE DATE 24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2003

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR COUNCILLORS

<u>COMMITTEE MEETINGS</u>			
FROM 29 <sup>TH</sup> TO 3 <sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2003			
	<b>TUESDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2003</b>	<b>10 AM</b>	<b>JOINT MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL &amp; PLANNING POLICY</b>
			<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER</b>
	<b>WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2003</b>	<b>10 AM</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION CONTROL COMMITTEE</b>
			<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER</b>
	<b>THURSDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER 2003</b>	<b>10 AM</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
			<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER</b>
		<b>2 PM</b>	<b>INFORMATION &amp; CUSTOMER SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDERS MEETING</b>
			<b>ROOM 132</b>

### Training Courses:

<b>Name of Course</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date and Venue</b>
Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Delivering Race Equality and Good Race Relations	The Refugee Council has organised this conference which will investigate the implications of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 for service providers to refugee communities. Speakers include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trevor Philips CRE Chair</li> <li>• Fiona McTaggart, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Race Equality</li> <li>• Bill Jeffrey, Director General IND</li> <li>• Maeve Sherlock, Chief Executive, Refugee Council</li> </ul>	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2003 at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in Westminster, London

More details on this course are available from Patrick Adams, who can be contacted on (01223) 443408 or [patrick.adams@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:patrick.adams@scambs.gov.uk)

### Call-In Arrangements

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee or any five other Councillors may call in any executive decision recorded in this bulletin for review. The Committee Manager must be notified of any call in by **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2003 at 5pm**. All decisions not called in by this date may be implemented on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2003**.

*Any member considering calling in a decision made by Cabinet is requested to contact the Committee Section to determine whether any relevant amendments have been incorporated.*

The call in procedure is set out in full in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, 'Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules', paragraph 12.

## **OFFICER DECISIONS REPORTED FOR INFORMATION**

### **Grants Agreed by Community Development Partnerships Manager**

Applicant	Decision	Reason
Sawston Village College	The awarding of a £250 Arts Project Grant (AP06) for a Sawston Family Day – The Secret Garden. A day of arts activities including an artist residency and a film screening based on the Secret Garden on Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> October.	The day aims to target underachieving and disadvantaged young people and their parents and carers. It is happening in partnership with primary schools and arts organisations hoping to promote good practise in the classroom and to create a set of educational resources which can be used in the future.

Applicant	Decision	Reason
Cambridge and South Cambs Domestic Violence Forum	The awarding of a £500 Arts Project Grant (AP07) for a Training and Awareness Day on 25 <sup>th</sup> November with Interactive Theatre Company to highlight the issues.	The use of a theatre company encourages front line staff to see issues differently and helps to train them in how to deal with domestic violence issues. It also will help to promote multi agency working.

Applicant	Decision	Reason
Townley Memorial Hall Trust, Fulbourn	The awarding of a £250 Guarantee Against Loss Grant (AGAL01) Fulbourn Autumn Arts Programme – a full season of arts events happening in venues in Fulbourn from 23 <sup>rd</sup> September to November 28 <sup>th</sup> 2003.	The programme aims to offer activities for all ages and to cover a wide range of art forms including visual arts, literature, drama and music.

Applicant	Decision	Reason
Choir 2000	The awarding of a £250 Guarantee Against Loss Grant (AGAL02) for the Advent Concert on 4/5 <sup>th</sup> December	Choir 2000 produce challenging work to a high standard with a community choir from Histon and Impington. They aim to attract local support and to offer members top vocal training and the chance to sing alongside professional musicians.

### **Grants Agreed by Community Development Partnerships Manager**

Applicant	Decision	Reason
RSPB at Fowlmere Nature Reserve	To award a Wildlife Enhancement Scheme Grant of £1,500 to the reserve. 10% of the total cost of the replacement of a wooden boardwalk through a reed bed with a new one constructed from recycled plastic	The nature reserve is visited by approx. 30,000 per year.

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY PLANNING PORTFOLIO HOLDER MEETING

At a meeting held on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2003 at 10.00am

#### PRESENT:

Councillor RF Collinson	Portfolio Holder
Cameron Adams	Strategic Development Officer
Maggie Jennings	Democratic Services Officer
Simon McIntosh	Ast Housing & Community Services Director

Apologies were received from Iain Green, Nick Grimshaw, Clare Roberts, Councillor Mrs DSK Spink and Jane Thompson.

#### 1. MINUTES

- 1.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2003 were approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 8.3 (Photovoltaic System) The second sentence amended to read: 'A £55,200 grant if successful, would result in a net cost to this Council of £36,800.'

- 1.2 In addition, the Portfolio Holder was informed that, should a decision to re-submit SCDC's PV bid to the DTI be made, Paul Barnes, the Special Projects Officer had recommended this occur once the new building at Cambourne was occupied.

Minute 8.9 (GM Debate) Sally Carroll, the Information Manager would be preparing an article for inclusion in the next issue of the South Cambs Magazine.

#### 2. MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 Minute 2.2 (Cambs Wildlife Trust) - CA had yet to pursue with the Wildlife Trust.
- 2.2 Minute 2.4 (Climate Change Menu Programme Workshop) - The Workshop had been re-scheduled to take place on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2003 in the Council Chamber.
- 2.3 Minute 5.2 (Health Policy/Land Use Planning – additional post) – It was noted that the Chief Environmental Health officer would be pursuing this matter.
- 2.4 Minute 7.2 (Solar Heating Systems) – Following reservations expressed by the Conservation Manager at the last meeting, CA reported that designs were becoming available whereby systems could be installed either below the roofline or concealed within the roof tiles making them more discreet. A particular membrane could also be used in the construction of new build in Conservation Areas.

#### 3. TOURISM UPDATE

- 3.1 The Portfolio Holder reported that Sam Alper, the owner of Chilford Hall, Linton and a member of the East of England Tourist Board had requested a meeting with him, Clare Roberts and her manager concerning tourism in the area. **RC to action.**

#### **4. PROPOSED NEW POST FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES PROJECT MANAGER**

- 4.1 SM reported that the Job Description had been considered and supported by the LSP Board, the Leader and the Community Development Portfolio Holder. The Chief Executive had reported to the Board meeting that funding may be available from a 'New Communities Funding' budget within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and felt it would be appropriate to request funding of the post.
- 4.2 The County Council had been approached by SM with a view to a contribution towards the post, however the County had indicated that they may not be considering the request in the near future. In these circumstances SM suggested that a report be presented to Cabinet concerning the new post, indicating a contribution of around £8,000 from this Council. **SM to action.**
- 4.3 CA requested that a reference be made in the job description to include sustainable communities and it was agreed that CA would provide SM with a paragraph to that effect. **CA to action.**
- 4.4 In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder supported the proposed new post for a Community Facilities Project Manager and that funding be pursued from the ODPM, the City and County Council.

#### **5. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY UPDATE**

5.1 SM reported on the following:

(a) Timetable/process for finalising the Community Strategy

- Discussion at LSP Board meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, and a draft to go to the next meeting in October
- Final agreement now due at meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> December
- David Cooper (County) seconded to DEFRA for a year
- Process to check 'deliverability' of priorities/targets
- Finalising local Public Service Agreements by end of 2003
- Community Strategy feeding into draft policy for Local Development Framework. At the request of CA, both SCDC's Community Plan for Climate and Change (forthcoming) and its Climate Change Action Plan (forthcoming) would be included in the Strategy
- Community Strategy would feed into revised Corporate Strategy

(b) LSP Board

- New members are from Voluntary Sector (Directions Plus) and CALC
- Youth representative being invited/timing of meetings may need to be put back(to allow students to attend)
- Contribution of members to the meetings -  
proposed role as 'champion' of each of the Board's priorities

RC suggested that John Batchelor, the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder be consulted in respect of the development of access to Broadband for all homes and businesses.

(c) Draft LSP Board Priorities – see attached table appended to these Minutes

(d) Officer meeting with City LSP

- Comparisons of progress etc
- Agenda items for joint meeting:
- Priorities etc
- Northern Fringe/Infrastructure implementation (John Onslow or Brian Smith to update the meeting)
- Old people living independently/integration (Helen Taylor) \*
- Date to be found in early November

\* The Portfolio Holder noted that consideration was being given to incorporating Social Services within Health structures in 2004. It was as yet unclear whether they would all be handled by one of the two Primary Care Trusts, or by separate City/District Council organisations.

(e) Presentation to Members on 22<sup>nd</sup> September

It was agreed that SM would explain the process of the LSP and some of its priorities, including climate change.

**6. ATTENDANCE AT LEARNING PARTNERSHIP MEETINGS**

6.1 It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 24<sup>th</sup> September in Melbourn. RC to attend.

**7. SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES**

- (a) EMMA Day
- (b) PULSE

7.1 The contents of the reports were noted.

- (c) Self-build Solar Workshop

7.2 The Workshop had been publicised in the South Cambs Magazine. RC would attend both the 8<sup>th</sup> October meeting and workshop on the 29<sup>th</sup> November.

- (d) Delivering Renewable Energy in the Cambridge Sub-Region, Feasibility Study

7.3 The content of the report was noted.

- (e) Cambridgeshire Real Nappy Network (CRNN)

7.4 At the request of the Portfolio Holder it was agreed that funding would be made available from the 2004/05 Sustainability budget to support CRNN.

- (f) British Wind Energy Association

7.5 It was noted that CA would attend a one day conference to be held in Hull on 30<sup>th</sup> September. Details on how to attend had been emailed to all Members and the Planning Department. The conference would address the forthcoming Planning Policy Statement 22 with guidance from the ODPM to promote renewable energy in new developments.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### Rainwater Harvesting

- 8.1 The Portfolio Holder noted that Paul Barnes and the Chief Executive were liaising with Wrenbridge. £5,000 towards the provision of a rainwater harvesting scheme at the Cambourne office may be obtained from the Sustainability budget, and the remainder funded from cost savings.

### GM Debate

- 8.2 CA reported that six Local Authorities, including the City and County Councils had signed an agreement that any food used in their establishments would be GM free. The Portfolio Holder gave his support to GM free food, however it was requested that prior to consideration by Cabinet, CA would discuss the issue with the Leader and Chief Executive. **CA to action.**

### Sheltered Housing

- 8.3 Councillor N Cathcart had queried with the Portfolio Holder the sustainability issues surrounding the demolition of sheltered accommodation in Bassingbourn. In response SM informed the Portfolio Holder that those particular bed-sit properties had been difficult to let and as there were two other sheltered schemes in the vicinity and a need for larger properties to house families, the decision had been taken to demolish them.
- 8.4 The Portfolio requested that either SM or the Head of Strategy Housing, together with CA, liaise with Councillors Cathcart and Gravatt.

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 9.1 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2003 at 10am in CR1.

The meeting closed at 11.57am



Aim	Key LSP Board Actions DRAFT	LSP Board 'Champion'
<b>1. Supporting South Cambs communities, priority groups and the voluntary sector</b>	a) Develop a Guidance Framework for Parish Plans and coordinate support for Parish Plan work.	
	b) Oversee the partnership work to establish new Police Community Support Officers and develop the use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts.	
	c) Establish a Voluntary Sector Forum and set up a coordinated system for funding voluntary organisations.	
	d) Increase community action to promote safer driving and cycling.	
<b>2. Improving access to services</b>	a) Bring together new community transport schemes/develop existing ones to respond to local demand.	
	b) Develop 'community information hubs' in villages and new settlements with access to learning points and partners services.	
	c) Create new cycleways linking villages.	
<b>3. A high quality environment</b>	a) Support waste minimisation schemes in the work of all partners, including promotion with the business sector.	
	b) Promote opportunities for access to and use of the countryside, including the creation of local 'Greenspaces' for wildlife habitat.	
	c) Lead on tackling climate change through partners actions on their own use of energy, water and other resources.	
	d) Tackle antisocial behaviour and reduce the effects of fly tipping and abandoned cars.	
<b>4. Sustaining the local economy</b>	a) Develop access to Broadband for all homes and businesses.	
	b) Increase the provision of work experience and apprenticeships amongst partners and businesses.	
<b>5. Creating new communities</b>	a) Establish project management for community facilities and services, and oversee their planning and provision.	
<b>6. Quality homes for all</b>	a) Improve coordination of services to enable older people to continue live independently at home.	
	b) Increase the supply of land for new development through partners' use of the relaxation of duty to obtain best consideration.	

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **LAND DRAINAGE ADVISORY GROUP**

At a meeting held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2003 at 10.30 am.

PRESENT: Councillor RF Bryant  
Councillor EW Bullman  
Councillor LCA Manning, JP  
Councillor WH Saberton  
Councillor J Shepperson

Councillor CC Barker, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health

Councillors Mrs MP Course and Mrs BE Waters were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors PL Stroude and AW Wyatt, MBE.

#### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

On the nomination of Councillor WH Saberton, seconded by Councillor EW Bullman and there being no further nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor J Shepperson be re-elected Chairman.

#### **2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

On the nomination of Councillor RF Bryant, seconded by Councillors EW Bullman and WH Saberton and there being no further nominations, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor LCA Manning be re-appointed Vice-Chairman.

Councillor Manning, in accepting his appointment, stated that when he had first been elected to this authority, he had announced that he would not hold any office, but that he was honoured by this appointment and pleased to work with the Chairman and Advisory Group.

#### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **4. TOTAL MEMBERSHIP OF THE ADVISORY GROUP**

Cabinet had asked the Group to determine whether it would be appropriate to raise the Group membership from seven to nine. The Group felt that there would be a great advantage in an increased membership, citing how the absence of one or two members from a meeting would not have as much impact on a larger group. As some members would be retiring at the end of the current year, increasing the size of the group at this time would ensure some continuity in membership in the coming year.

There was a request that any appointments to the Advisory Group be made from amongst members with an understanding of the issues involved. Further to this point, at the end of the meeting members requested that site visits to various drains be arranged, which could benefit both current and potential members of the Advisory Group.

The Land Drainage Advisory Group **AGREED** to increase the membership from seven to nine and asked Cabinet to appoint two new members.

## 5. MINUTES

Members recalled that it had not been possible for their recommendation regarding the Willingham Watercourse to be implemented (minute 5). Councillor Manning reported that that watercourse had been dry for the past eight weeks and noted that water voles would not be able to survive for that length of time without water. Members of the Group felt that it was unfortunate that their recommendation had not been successful, as the watercourse now remained in the ownership of various authorities, making overall maintenance difficult.

The Advisory Group confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2002 as a correct record.

## 6. POLICY ON CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DEVELOPERS FOR THE USE OF THE COUNCIL'S AWARDED WATERCOURSE SYSTEM FOR THE DISPOSAL OF SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

The Advisory Group, at its meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> October 2002, had recommended that a draft policy on contributions from developers for the use of the Council's awarded watercourse system for the disposal of surface water drainage be published for consultation. Detailed responses from developers and other stakeholders, collected by the Council's consulting group, BMG, were presented in the report. The Environment Agency's initial concerns had been taken into account within the draft policy. A fund had been established for the contributions, monies from which would be used only for drainage purposes.

Adoption of the policy would give a consistency of approach towards all development within South Cambridgeshire. The policy allowed sufficient flexibility for developers to put forward other drainage solutions if possible. Each individual development needed to be considered in its own right based on its impact on drainage. It was noted that a change of land use from agricultural to residential development meant a change in the nature of watercourse maintenance.

There was a need to look at fundamental maintenance in addition to the resultant increase in flows and to determine a way to recover the cost to the Council, which did not currently receive payment for allowing drainage into its system. There would also be a need to develop a formal policy covering the adoption and maintenance of newly constructed drainage infrastructure such as SUDs.

Developers' plans would be used to calculate the number of impermeable hectares for which developers would be charged. Members felt that the suggested rate of £34,585 per impermeable hectare was appropriate, especially when considering the number of dwellings which could be constructed per hectare. Councillor Manning expressed concern that the developers could seek to reclaim the infrastructure costs by raising house prices, making it even more difficult for young people to afford a house in South Cambridgeshire. The Land Drainage Manager explained that developers would be able to avoid the additional cost if they could attenuate flows without increasing the rate of run-off.

The Land Drainage Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET** that the policy on the use of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Award Drain System for the Disposal of Surface Water Run-off from Developments be adopted.

## **7. FLOOD DEFENCE FUNDING – CRITICAL ORDINARY WATERCOURSES (COWS)**

Following a review of high-level flooding, the government had introduced Critical Ordinary Watercourses (COWs): watercourses which were not main rivers but which had the potential for major flooding. Government policy sought to transfer management of COWs to the Environment Agency. Three COWs had been identified in South Cambridgeshire: one award drain in each of Bourn and Longstanton and an ordinary watercourse in the Parish of Elsworth. Members asked that the Environment Agency also consider the Willingham award drain along Station Road as a COW. It was recognised that an Act of Parliament may be required to transfer responsibility of the two Awarded Drains to the Environment Agency.

The Environment Agency could contract the Council to maintain the COWs, both within and on the borders of South Cambridgeshire, which could generate additional revenue for the infrastructure reserve fund. This, in turn, could help the watercourse maintenance service become self-financing. SCDC would reserve the right to refuse any maintenance work if the costs to the Council were too high.

The Chairman expressed some concern that the transfer of the Elsworth watercourse from a private owner to the Environment Agency did not alleviate the problem of having multiple owners along one stretch of drain, as the Council owned the drain up to the Elsworth parish boundary. If the watercourse were transferred to the Environment Agency, the Council could discuss maintaining it as contractors, thus having maintenance responsibility for the entire length. Councillor Mrs BE Waters, local member for Elsworth, approved the recommendation and felt that it was a satisfactory solution for the Elsworth watercourse.

The Land Drainage Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:**

- (a) That no objection be raised to the proposed 'enmainment' of the award drains at Bourn and Longstanton and the ordinary watercourse at Elsworth;
- (b) That officers enter into discussions / negotiations with the Environment Agency with a view to developing contractual arrangements for the maintenance of Critical Ordinary Watercourses (COWs) within the district and possibly others outside; and
- (c) To discuss with the Environment Agency the possibility of identifying the Willingham award drain along Station Road as a COW.

## **8. REMEDIAL WORKS ALONG AWARD NO. 6 IN FULBOURN PARISH**

Three award drains in Fulbourn parish ran alongside each other within a distance of about 5-6 yards. This unusual system had been dug for drainage and milling purposes nearly 200 years ago, but the banks of Award Drain No. 6 were now collapsing, making it difficult to maintain the drains. After considering piping or introducing sheet piling / gabions to No. 6, it was determined that the most cost-effective solution would be to dig a new drain alongside the existing, filling in No. 6. Discussions had been held with the local landowner, who was very positive and supportive of the proposal, although it would require a land loss for him of approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre. The Land Drainage Manager noted that work would have to begin on the new drain in the next 2-3 weeks because of the weather.

Members discussed the proposed compensation amount for the landowner and whether it would be seen to be setting a precedent, but it was decided that any similar case would be considered on its own merits. The compensation amount had been

based on the current land values. Councillor Saberton noted that some of the Internal Drainage Boards have an agreed compensation policy for land needed for drainage purposes and the Chief Environmental Health Officer and Land Drainage Manager agreed to draft a similar policy for future Member consideration.

The Land Drainage Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** that:

- (a) As a solution to the required remedial works for No. 6 Fulbourn Award Drain, a new ditch be dug alongside the existing drain, involving a total land take of approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre, subject to permission being obtained from the local landowner and the Environment Agency; and
- (b) The local landowner receive a compensation payment of £2,500 for the  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre land loss.

## **9. BOURN AND LINTON FLOOD STUDIES**

The Advisory Group **NOTED** the report.

## **10. COVELL'S DRAIN, SWAVESEY**

The Environment Agency had commissioned a report on the River Ouse between St Ives and Earith, including the Fen Drayton lakes. The report had made certain tentative commitments at that time, in particular removing some sections of the riverbank, but there was now some resistance at the Environment Agency to the removal. The resistance was due to consultation with parties downstream who felt that the removal of some sections of the bank could impact on wildlife in the washes further down or in the Fen Drayton sanctuary.

The removal had been proposed to alleviate flooding in Fen Drayton and pressure on the banks of Covell's Drain. An obstruction on the river allowed water to flood Fen Drayton up to the Covell's Drain banks. Previous floods had caused two breaches so far and another weak point had been identified as having the potential for a third breach. By removing sections of the existing riverbank, the floodwaters could return to the River Ouse more quickly and minimise the flood risk to residents.

Members were very supportive of the need to remove sections of the bank and for the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health to make representations to that effect to the Environment Agency. If a positive response to the representations could not be achieved, members suggested a meeting of senior officers of the Environment Agency with Council officers, the Portfolio Holder and the Chairman of the Land Drainage Advisory Group.

The Land Drainage Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**:

- (a) To make the following representation to the Environment Agency with regards to Covell's Drain, Swavesey:
  - (i) The removal of two short sections (approximately 100m) of the main river embankments in the Fen Drayton area would allow the rapid evacuation of flood waters from the lakes area thereby reducing the threat of flooding and the potential for a further breach to the right bank of Covell's drain downstream of Mow Fen Road.
- (b) That, should a positive response from the above representation not be received, to initiate a meeting with more senior Environment Agency officers, Keith Stonell, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, the Chief

Environmental Health Officer, the Land Drainage Manager and the Chairman of the Land Drainage Advisory Group.

**11. REVIEW OF THE USE OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE AWARDED WATERCOURSE SYSTEM**

The Chief Environmental Health Officer presented a review of the use of plant and equipment. He commended the work of the Land Drainage Manager, since whose appointment productivity had gone up while unit cost had come down, resulting in budget reductions. He reiterated that he would like to see the Council's watercourse maintenance service become self-financing, although this may take some years to achieve.

The report outlined the equipment needed in the coming years and the most cost-effective means of obtaining it. The Fund held sufficient funds to pay for the expenditure proposed in 2003/04 and 2004/05. The Land Drainage Manager had received a quotation from a dealership for a tractor which fit the recommendations and was within the budget.

Members expressed some reservations about the amount of money expected to be paid into the infrastructure fund in coming years, noting that the Old West Internal Drainage Board was negotiating with the developers of the new town at Oakington – Longstanton to allow drainage into the IDB rather than into the Council's awarded watercourses. Conversely, with the amount of development elsewhere in the District and the policy the Advisory Group was recommending to Cabinet about contributions from developers, there would remain many other areas which could create revenue.

Members discussed the need for purchasing three tractors over the next two years and the following points were made:

- The cost of purchasing two tractors and spot hiring a third as necessary over a twelve-year period was more expensive than the purchase of three tractors;
- There could be a need for three tractors throughout the year and not just in the August-September period, as the Council could be contracted to maintain attenuation sites for new developments and COWs;
- It was very difficult to hire flail mowers and any such mowers must be to the exact specifications to fit the tractors, otherwise an additional £1,000 (approximately) would be spent on adaptations;
- The tractors would still have low hours and a good resale value after 10 years; and
- There would be time to review the need for a third tractor in the year 2004/05.

The Land Drainage Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** that, subject to sufficient funds being available in the infrastructure reserve fund:

- (a) To purchase two new or nearly new tractors at a cost of approximately £66,000 in the current financial year;
- (b) To purchase one new or nearly new tractor at a cost of approximately £34,000 in the year 2004/05, subject to review in light of any change of circumstance;
- (c) To purchase three new flail mowers at a cost of approximately £66,000 in 2005/06, subject to review to take into account any shortening in the expected useful life of the existing flails.

**12. THREE-YEAR MAINTENANCE PLAN FOR AWARDED WATERCOURSES – 2003-2006**

The original three-year maintenance plan, as agreed by the Environmental Services & Health Committee had run its course, and a new document was prepared for the coming three years. The new plan was updated to reflect the recent organisational changes, but the main body of the document and the annual volume of the maintenance work proposed had not changed since the original plan was approved in 2000.

The Land Drainage Manager explained that he had a list of watercourses categorised by their priority (A, B or C). The maintenance staff strove to keep ahead of the maintenance schedule as much as possible and the Land Drainage Manager noted that he was reluctant to let any maintenance lapse for the full three years proposed, even on a category C watercourse. He also noted that a detailed risk assessment had been completed in line with current legislation and health and safety procedures were under continual review.

The Land Drainage Advisory Group **RECOMMENDED TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** to adopt the Three-Year Maintenance Plan for Awarded Watercourses 2003-2006.

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**The meeting ended at 13.00**

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## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S DECISIONS

1. Agreed:
  - (a) That no objection be raised to the proposed 'enainment' of the award drains at Bourn and Longstanton and the ordinary watercourse at Elsworth;
  - (b) That officers enter into discussions / negotiations with the Environment Agency with a view to developing contractual arrangements for the maintenance of Critical Ordinary Watercourses (COWs) within the district and possibly others outside.
  - (c) To discuss with the Environment Agency the possibility of identifying the Willingham award drain along Station Road as a COW.
  
2. Agreed that:
  - (a) As a solution to the required remedial works for No. 6 Fulbourn Award Drain, a new ditch be dug alongside the existing drain, involving a total land take of approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre, subject to permission being obtained from the local landowner and the Environment Agency.
  - (b) The local landowner receive a compensation payment of £2,500 for the  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre land loss.
  
3. Agreed:
  - (a) To make the following representation to the Environment Agency with regards to Covell's Drain, Swavesey:
    - (i) The removal of two short sections (approximately 100m) of the main river embankments in the Fen Drayton area would allow the rapid evacuation of flood waters from the lakes area thereby reducing the threat of flooding and the potential for a further breach to the right bank of Covell's drain downstream of Mow Fen Road.
  - (b) That, should a positive response from the above representation not be received, to initiate a meeting with more senior Environment Agency officers, Keith Stonell, the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, the Chief Environmental Health Officer, the Land Drainage Manager and the Chairman of the Land Drainage Advisory Group.
  
4. Agreed that, subject to sufficient funds being available in the infrastructure reserve fund:
  - (a) To purchase two new or nearly new tractors at a cost of approximately £66,000 in the current financial year;
  - (b) To purchase one new or nearly new tractor at a cost of approximately £34,000 in the year 2004/05, subject to review in light of any change of circumstance;
  - (c) To purchase three new flail mowers at a cost of approximately £66,000 in 2005/06, subject to review to take into account any shortening in the expected useful life of the existing flails.
  
5. To adopt the Three-Year Maintenance Plan for Awarded Watercourses 2003-2006.



## CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on  
19<sup>th</sup> September 2003 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT:	Mrs DSK Spink RT Summerfield	Leader and Conservation Portfolio Holder Deputy Leader and Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder
Councillors:	Dr DR Bard CC Barker JD Batchelor RF Collinson  Mrs EM Heazell Mrs DP Roberts	Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder Environmental Health Portfolio Holder Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder  Housing Portfolio Holder Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs JM Healey, SGM Kindersley and Mrs GJ Smith were also in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dr JPR Orme and from the Housing and Community Services Director.

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### Procedural Items

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#### 1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, subject to the following amendments:

Declarations of Interest (31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, Minute 2)  
"Councillor RT Summerfield...as a former partner..."

Policy Options for Airey Properties: Update (31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, Minute 6)  
"The Housing Portfolio Holder emphasised that...of the six families from Great Abington whose properties were redeveloped, all but one household would be housed in the new houses on that site."

Disabled Facilities Grants (31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, Minute 12)  
To be inserted after the minute: "Following the meeting it was clarified that the DFG budget was actually £400,000, supplemented by £100,000 released from the Precautionary Items budget. It was also confirmed that this decision would be subject to approval by full Council."

Letting of Vacant Properties 1<sup>st</sup> April 2002 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003 (31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, Minute 13)  
"A relaxation of the age limitation rule on certain empty flats..."

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following personal interests were declared:

Councillor Mrs SA Hatton Item 8 (Provision of Broadband in the District) as her son was an employee of British Telecom

Councillor JD Batchelor Item 14 (Linton Special School Swimming Pool) as a Governor of Linton Village College

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith Item 14 (Linton Special Swimming Pool) as having been active in the community group requesting the feasibility study for a swimming pool at Linton Village College

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### **Recommendations to Council**

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#### **3. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2002-2003**

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 required that the draft Statement of Accounts must be approved and signed within six months of the year end. Council must adopt the draft Statement of Accounts prior to completion of the audit. The audit had commenced on 15<sup>th</sup> September and would run for approximately a fortnight. Any material changes resulting from the audit would be reported in due course.

Councillor JD Batchelor commended the progress being made addressing the level of underspendings, but noted that reserves continued to increase. He suggested that the Council was in a privileged position and could fund any projects it chose, within reason. Councillor RT Summerfield replied that a strategy was in place to reduce the reserves in the coming years and cautioned that the sooner the reserves were spent, the sooner Council Tax would have to be raised to its underlying level.

Cabinet

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

that the draft Statement of Accounts 2003-2003 be approved.

#### **4. IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT (IEG) STATEMENT 2003**

The government required that all authorities produce an annual IEG statement. The Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder noted that the Council's IEG statements from the previous two years had resulted in a £200,000 grant and hoped that the current statement would achieve similar success.

Cabinet

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

that the Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement 2003 be approved.

#### **5. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY 2003-2006**

Best practice required that the Council produce an annual ICT Strategy reflecting the progress of the past year. The document was a statement of the Council's position, not a commitment to long-term expenditure on information technology.

Cabinet

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

that the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy 2003-2006 be approved.

## **6. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS**

Cabinet, at its meeting of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, had requested a detailed report on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) in view of the increased number of applications. Cabinet had agreed to delegate responsibility to any two of the Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing Portfolio Holder to consider any outstanding applications for DFGs, up to a total of £750,000 of the 2003/04 budget, until the meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> September. This decision had to be reconsidered as increasing the overall budget required the approval of Council. In view of the urgency of some grants, the Housing Portfolio Holder had vired additional funds to the DFG budget for the interim.

The Housing Portfolio Holder drew attention to the fact that clients' satisfaction levels with the service were usually extremely high, though there was some dissatisfaction with delays before schemes were progressed. She noted that key changes had been agreed within the Occupational Therapy (OT) services, which it was hoped would address the issue of clients' expectations being raised before practicalities were considered. She recommended a revised budget of £950,000, which should ensure the service was adequately funded before it was transferred to the Environmental Health Portfolio.

Cabinet discussed the issue at length and made the following points:

- Any further increases to the DFG budget could have a detrimental effect on other budgets, but that there appeared to be little choice about the increase proposed;
- The government had announced additional funding for improvement agencies, so there was a possibility of bidding for funds to meet running costs;
- While it was hoped that sufficient funding and staffing levels were set, the Council was legally obliged to consider all cases where need was demonstrated;
- The Council was statutorily obliged to continue to provide grants up to £25,000, of which 60% would be repaid by the government; any amount over £25,000 would be in the form of an interest free loan, in line with the Council's agreed policy;
- Applicants might be more willing to consider moving once made aware that loans would have to be repaid;
- It was hoped that by the end of the calendar year there would be more OTs able to do home adaptation assessments, reducing the delays at the beginning of the process;
- New targets had been set to reduce the assessment time from 18 months to 5 months by the end of October 2004 and to 3 months by the end of October 2005. The backlog of cases would be coming to the Council in the next two years and it was essential that resources were in place to meet the grant requirements; and
- The Portfolio Holder would consider the Scrutiny Committee's recommendation that the Housing Department employ an OT in partnership with the County Council to help speed the referral process.

Councillor Mrs EM Heazell commended the Home Improvement Agency team, including the Assistant Director of Housing and Community Services, for their excellent work, especially with a doubled caseload.

Cabinet

**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that

- (a) a revised budget for 2003/04 of £950,000 for Disabled Facilities Grants be approved; and
- (b) any case for waiving repayment of a zero interest loan be delegated for consideration and decision by any two of the Portfolio Holders for Housing, Resources & Staffing and the Leader of Council.

## **7. RESOURCING PLANNING ENFORCEMENT**

The report sought the immediate recruitment of an additional Planning Enforcement Officer on a part-time basis. There had been an increase in planning enforcement activity associated with the movement of additional Travellers into a number of sites in the north of the District. The Council had a duty to provide day-to-day planning enforcement services to all ratepayers, not just those in particular villages.

Cabinet discussed the need for a one- or two-year appointment. The Chief Executive explained that candidates tended to be from an enforcement background, often retired police officers, in which case a one-year appointment could be more attractive.

Cabinet, noting the urgency of the situation,

### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

that cash limits for 2003/04 be increased by £15,000 in order to allow recruitment of a new part-time Planning Enforcement Officer (2.5 days per week) to begin immediately.

Cabinet **NOTED** the increase in activity associated with Travellers.

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### **Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information**

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## **8. POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSOs)**

Cambridgeshire Constabulary had invited the Council to co-fund Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) for 2004-06. PCSOs would be members of support staff employed, directed and managed by the Police, working alongside Police Officers to provide a visible and accessible uniformed presence in villages. Superintendent John Raine of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary attended the meeting to answer questions about PCSOs.

### Role of PCSOs

Recruitment and retention difficulties were leaving a gap in police service delivery. Traditional Community Beat Managers received training in a wide variety of roles, resulting in their being called to other situations and thus removed from their beats. PCSOs would work with, and report to, Community Beat Managers, remaining in contact through the same radio network; but as they would not be trained to handle the specialist roles of Police Officers, they would not be subject to being called away to other duties. They would be territory-based, allowing them to form links with their communities. Residents of the communities served by PCSOs in Cambridge City and East Cambridgeshire reported being happy with the service and noticing an increased police presence within the first week.

Although not having full police powers, PCSOs would be able to issue fixed penalty notices (e.g. for dog fouling or litter), confiscate alcohol or tobacco, enter a property to save a life or prevent damage, demand the name and address of persons acting in

an anti-social manner and remove abandoned vehicles. They would also gain the responsibilities of traffic wardens.

#### Selection Criteria and Training

The officer responsible for the PCSOs would have the discretion to determine whether previous convictions would preclude an individual from becoming a PCSO. Formal policing experience was not a requirement, although previous experience dealing with situations of confrontation / hostility would be beneficial. Successful applicants would complete a four-week training programme, including lessons in radio / communications, self-defence and assertiveness. The training followed national guidelines, tailored for local requirements. Supt Raine explained that the additional training given to Community Beat Officers made them able to be relocated or promoted, thus taking them away from their original community. The more limited training given to a PCSO would preclude them from such instances.

#### Number of PCSOs

Members questioned whether three PCSOs would be sufficient for 101 villages. Supt Raine explained that three or four PCSOs would be allocated to South Cambridgeshire from police resources, as well as the three under consideration for funding by the Council. It was likely that seven to ten would be the adequate number to ensure best coverage. The three or four PCSOs funded by the Police would be put into areas with the highest levels of anti-social behaviour.

#### Cost of PCSOs

There was some concern expressed at the cost to ratepayers for PCSOs, and of the option that PCSOs be provided only in those parishes whose Parish Council made a financial contribution. It was noted that there were very few parishes in South Cambridgeshire large enough to contribute to the scheme. Supt Raine explained that some parishes had approached the Police about doing this. Parishes could work together to contribute and a service level agreement could be tailored to their joint requirements. Parishes would also receive a general memorandum of understanding, ensuring the officer would remain available for local needs except in case of extreme emergency, such as a plane crash or missing child. Cambridgeshire Constabulary would be holding a meeting with the parishes on 7<sup>th</sup> October to explain the scheme and the possibilities for parish involvement. The Police Authority, not the District Council, was asking Parish Councils for contributions.

Cabinet discussed the proposal, noting that crime or fear of crime was of prime concern to residents. It was felt that PCSOs would provide a more visible, accessible police presence in villages and the presence of an officer could prevent petty vandalism. Councillor SGM Kindersley noted that Gamlingay fell within a different policing division and Supt Raine advised that the Central Division, which included Gamlingay, had agreed to honour any arrangements made in the Southern Division.

#### Cabinet **AGREED**:

- (a) that this initiative be included in the Continuous Improvement Plan in this format:
  - To provide a financial contribution of £83,622 in 2004/05 to employ three Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in South Cambridgeshire and a contribution of £70,236 in 2005/06 to fund three officers for a further year regardless of any contribution by Parish Councils
- (b) that Cambridgeshire Constabulary work in conjunction with the Community Safety Officer and the Crime and Disorder Partnership to introduce the PCSOs in South Cambridgeshire.

Cabinet thanked the Community Safety Officer for her report and Supt Raine for his presentation.

## 9. PROVISION OF BROADBAND IN THE DISTRICT

The Council had recently received £300,000 from the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) towards providing broadband Internet access across South Cambridgeshire. Cabinet was asked to consider a policy for a phased introduction of service over the next two years. The Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder noted that spending restrictions on the grant meant that only villages without commercial prospects could receive funds. The priority would be to those villages which had also bid into the EEDA process. He cautioned that the aim and objective of the project was to have service to all settlements, but that could not be guaranteed.

The Assistant Director of Finance and Resources (ICT) distributed a map of the District, outlining the approximate areas covered by the main suppliers. He advised that the situation was changing rapidly as more people registered their interest in broadband: once a certain trigger level had been reached, the suppliers would deem an area commercially viable to lay the infrastructure.

The following points were raised during the discussion:

- Broadband service meant that residents would be able to communicate electronically with each other via the Internet in the normal way, whether they were using the same or different suppliers;
- Some villages had a cable service running through them to adjacent villages; one possibility of the Council's tendering process could be that this cable company would propose to connect villages along the cable length, although it was noted that the supplier would only do so if it were commercially viable;
- The list of villages included in the report to Cabinet was not exhaustive: the intention was to introduce service across the District in two phases and ensure that there was sufficient funding to do so;
- The Council's aim was to introduce a basic broadband service in all the villages rather than an integrated community-based server with links to CCTV and Neighbourhood Watch schemes, although the Assistant Director of Finance and Resources (ICT) agreed to investigate the possibility of an integrated service. He cautioned that such an ambitious service would require a lot of time and effort within the community to administer it and without community volunteers the service might not be sustainable in the long-term;
- A consultant for the project was about to be appointed and the Council was about to discuss the service with communities and broadband suppliers; and
- Councillor Dr DR Bard asked for consideration of a "future-proof" service: one which could be easily upgraded to new technologies.

Councillor RF Bryant noted that because Orwell had chosen not to submit a bid to EEDA, preferring to wait for the results of the District Council bid, service for the village was now not a priority under the current criteria. The Assistant Director for Finance and Resources (ICT) recognised that there had been a very active campaign in the Orwell area and explained that the Council would take a strategic view of service provision for the entire District.

Cabinet **AGREED:**

- (a) that funding would be allocated between two main phases, with the intention that there was sufficient to support the roll-out to all settlements;
- (b) the first phase would consist of those local entrants to the EEDA competition where there was no current or imminent provision, as is practical. This would include consideration of including nearby communities where there is a good case;

- (c) the second phase would cover the rest of the District, with priority being given (if necessary) to those communities which are least likely to be attractive to the market;
- (d) that the practical implementation of this policy in allocating the available funds be delegated to the Finance and Resources Director and the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder.

#### **10. MONITORING OF COUNCIL 2003/04 PRIORITIES FIRST QUARTER – APRIL TO JUNE 2003**

Cabinet had requested quarterly reports on the progress of Council priorities and performance indicators and received the report up to the end of the first quarter, to June 2003.

Councillor Batchelor noted that Priority 5 – Sustainability was to implement the Best Value recommendations, including hiring an additional officer to support the Strategic Development Officer in meeting the targets set by the Sustainability Best Value Review. Both Councillor Batchelor and the Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder supported hiring an additional officer.

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder noted that priority BV8 – Payment of Invoices, was a problem facing all departments, not just Finance. He asked that all Portfolio Holders include on their next agendas items addressing post opening, disputed invoices and prompt invoice payment.

Cabinet **AGREED**:

- (a) to recognise the need for an additional officer to assist the Strategic Development Officer in meeting the targets set by the Sustainability Best Value Review; and
- (b) that individual Portfolio Holders address payment of invoices within their Portfolios.

#### **11. NAMING THE NEW TOWN**

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder reported that the Council was in the fortunate position of having a town name, suggested by the Principal Planning Policy Officer, which had historic links and which had met the approval of the public.

Councillor Summerfield reported that Councillor PL Stroude, local member for Longstanton, felt that Longstanton had not been fully consulted on the name and had appealed for a delay to allow further consultation. Cabinet, mindful that a delay on consultation of the name Monkfield had led to developers naming the settlement Cambourne, felt that there had been ample public consultation on the name, both through the Council and the local media, with Northstowe emerging as the most popular name. The developers had agreed that they supported the name Northstowe.

Cabinet **AGREED**

- (a) to confirm the name of the new town as Northstowe;
- (b) that this name be used in all future dealings on the matter; and
- (c) that all partners and service providers involved in the development of the new town be advised accordingly.

#### **12. APPOINTMENTS TO WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP**

The Waste Management Advisory Group, at its meeting of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, had agreed that it wished to increase its membership from 7 to 9 members. There had

been a number of expressions of interest from Councillors and Cabinet was asked to appoint two to the Advisory Group.

There was some concern expressed at the possible perception of a conflict of interests if Councillor Mrs LM Sutherland were appointed to a group advising the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, but members noted that the whole group, rather than individual members, advised the Portfolio Holder. Cabinet also discussed the demands on Councillor Mrs JE Lockwood's time compared to the often ad hoc scheduling of Advisory Group meetings, and the expertise which Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt could bring to the Group.

Cabinet, with four votes to two, **AGREED**

to appoint Councillors Mrs CAED Murfitt and Mrs LM Sutherland to the Waste Management Advisory Group.

Councillor CC Barker abstained from voting.

### **13. PAPWORTH EVERARD DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

The Papworth Everard development brief had been completed following four public consultations. Cabinet noted that the local member for Papworth Everard supported the brief.

Cabinet **AGREED**

to adopt the Papworth Everard Development Brief with the changes recommended in Appendix 2 of the report as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Cabinet **NOTED** the results of the consultation.

### **14. LINTON SPECIAL SCHOOL SWIMMING POOL**

Linton Village College had been identified as the proposed site for a special needs school, replacing existing special schools, of which two were within South Cambridgeshire. Both special schools in South Cambridgeshire provided warm water swimming facilities, serving a large number of community groups and organisations. Plans for the new Linton Special School, to be built on land adjacent to Linton Village College, included a purpose-built warm water pool. Linton Village College, having previously sought its own swimming pool, had approached Cambridgeshire County Council officers to ask whether a second pool could be added to the plans, one to be used primarily by the community and village college. The report sought views on support from the District Council.

The Community Development Portfolio Holder advised that there were no capital funds budgeted for new pools in South Cambridgeshire. She highlighted the fact that the Cambridgeshire County Council had offered to pay 50% of a feasibility study but had not made any formal commitment to further capital funding and cautioned that a new pool potentially could cost £1 million in capital costs alone.

Councillor Batchelor, local member for Linton, commended the exceptional opportunity offered the residents of Linton and the wider community. He noted that the residents needed to know whether a new pool was feasible and urged Cabinet to invest £5,000 in co-operation with the County Council to carry out a feasibility study. He reported that the National Lottery had recently changed its policy on supporting pools in schools. Councillor Mrs GJ Smith, local member for Linton, outlined the history of the work within the community for a swimming pool and reported that the



nearest pool, in Haverhill, was over- crowded. She explained to Cabinet that residents were prepared to accept the findings if a study demonstrated that a pool were not feasible. The Parish Council had not had time to consider contributing funds to a feasibility study as the report had been brought to Cabinet sooner than expected.

Cabinet discussed the issue at length, including the technical considerations of having two different pools so close together and the benefit a pool brought to the wider community. The Leader read an e-mail from Councillor Dr JPR Orme, local member for The Abingtons, supporting the feasibility study.

The Community Partnerships Manager explained that a feasibility study would look at the viability of the project as a business case: expenditure versus income. She added that St Edmundsbury Borough Council were already considering a feasibility study for a second pool at Haverhill.

Councillor Collinson, seconded by Councillor Mrs Hezell, proposed that the Council agree to contribute up to £5,000 for a feasibility study, possibly dovetailed with the Haverhill study, subject to a financial contribution from Linton Parish Council.

This proposal, on being put to a vote, was **LOST** by four votes to three.

Cabinet **AGREED** that no action be taken.

Cabinet thanked the Community Partnerships Manager for her report.

#### **15. NEW INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICE – PROPERTIES TO REMAIN ON SACKS**

The Waste Management Advisory Group had recommended to Cabinet a policy for those properties remaining on a sack-based collection scheme under the new integrated waste management service. Councillor Mrs DSK Spink felt that it was unfortunate the local press had reported a reduction in sacks provided, when it was in fact an increase.

Cabinet **AGREED**

- (a) for those households on the sack collection list, 104 plastic sacks per year be provided free of charge for residential waste and 156 paper sacks for green waste and cardboard;
- (b) households on the sack collection database could purchase additional plastic sacks at £2.35 per roll of 30 collected or £3.50 delivered (charges inclusive of VAT);
- (c) households on the sack collection database could purchase additional paper sacks at £1.75 per bundle of 10 collected or £2.35 delivered (charges inclusive of VAT); and
- (d) households on the sack collection database who demonstrated that they were also on housing benefit, Council Tax benefit and/or income support could receive additional sacks free of charge by quoting their benefit number.

#### **16. COUNCIL TAX LEVELS OF THE AUDIT COMMISSION FAMILY GROUP AND NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITIES**

Cabinet, at their meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> July 2003, had asked the Finance and Resources Director to compare Council Tax levels with those in similar authorities. The Finance and Resources Director explained the calculations used for comparison and urged members to be aware that the projected expenditure for 2004/05 represented an underlying Council Tax of £153.10 (£193 with the average Parish Precept). He

suggested that this might represent a higher increase than would be likely in most of the comparator authorities.

Cabinet **AGREED**:

- (a) to retain the average (mean) as the appropriate statistic in reviewing Council Tax levels as it was easily understood; and
- (b) to retain the national group of all shire districts as being the appropriate comparator.

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### Information Items

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#### 17. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

Cabinet **NOTED** the report on the performance of the treasury management function.

#### 18. **EXPENDITURE / INCOME TO END OF AUGUST 2003**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that the report was the initial overview of expenditure and income to the end of August 2003 on significant areas of the budget. He cautioned members not to place too much reliance on the statement at such an early point in the financial year. A more detailed report would be brought to Cabinet in October. Cabinet asked that future reports highlight items requiring attention.

Cabinet **NOTED** the expenditure position.

#### 19. **BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES INTERIM POLICY MEASURES – STATUS REPORT**

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder reported that the staffing crisis in the Building Control service was largely resolved, and offered his congratulations to the Building Control Manager and Planning Director. The Planning Director reported that all but one position had been filled and an update would be brought to Cabinet in the new year. He explained that the service level had been pulled down by the staffing shortage, so it would take some time to bring it back to normal. Cabinet requested that an interim report be brought back in three months.

Cabinet **NOTED** the report.

#### 20. **FORWARD PROGRAMME**

Cabinet **NOTED** the forward programme and **DEFERRED** discussion until the next meeting.

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### Standing Items

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#### 21. **MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None.

**22. RE-LOCATION OF OFFICES TO CAMBOURNE**

Invitations had been sent for the topping-out ceremony at 3 pm on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September.

**23. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL BY CONSULTANTS**

Nothing to report.

**24. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that under section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

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**Confidential Items**

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**25. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR POST: H1.1**

Cabinet, at its meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> June 2003, had declared the post of Housing and Community Services Director at risk of redundancy. The Director had since indicated that he would not be applying for the new post of Direct Housing and Environmental Services Director and had since received confirmation of a University placement. The Chief Executive reported that the Director had withdrawn his request for funding for outplacement/training support in favour of an equivalent payment for notice period within the normal contractual entitlement.

Cabinet **AGREED:**

that the post of Housing and Community Services Director (H1.1) be declared redundant and notice of termination on the grounds of redundancy be served on the postholder, with a date of termination to be mutually agreed.

**26. CONTACT CENTRE: UPDATE ON STAFFING ISSUES**

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder introduced the report on the effect on certain posts of the move to a Contact Centre and noted that amendments had been made to the appendix, based on recalculations taking into account periods of service where the individuals had not contributed to the Local Government Pension Scheme. The Chief Executive advised that it would be sensible to adopt a formal policy for the future and it was agreed that a report proposing a policy for this aspect of interpreting the pension regulations would be brought to the next meeting of Cabinet.

Cabinet members reported concerns about the Contact Centre and queried whether it was premature to issue redundancy notices. The Chief Executive clarified that employment law required that individuals be advised as soon as possible if their positions were at risk of redundancy, thus affording them the opportunity to apply for available positions within the Council. He noted that the Council had a legal obligation to identify all posts at risk of redundancy, which by necessity meant a larger number of people than could be made redundant, for example all the posts of

a similar nature from which redundancies would be identified. Cabinet members acknowledged the legal obligations, but sympathised with the effects on the staff involved.

The Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder agreed to arrange for a report to be brought to Cabinet detailing the current situation with the Contact Centre. Councillor Kindersley announced that the Scrutiny Committee would be considering the Contact Centre at its next meeting.

Cabinet, with one against, **AGREED:**

- (a) that delegated authority be given to the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder to approve posts to be made redundant;
- (b) that delegated authority be given to the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder to approve posts being retained on the Establishment for a temporary period, where a business case is demonstrated; and
- (c) to delete posts D2.5 and F4.48 from the Council's Establishment from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2003.

Cabinet **NOTED** the progress to date on the staffing situation relating to the Contact Centre.

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The meeting ended at 3.30

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## **DECISIONS MADE BY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

### **Decision Made By Portfolio Holder For Planning & Economic Development**

Subject	Decision
Disabled persons' parking place, Granchester High Street	Support the provision of a disabled persons' parking space.

### **Decision Made By Portfolio Holder For Housing**

Subject	Decision	Reason
Temporary vehicular access over Council verge from Robinson Court to 10 Waresley Road, Gamlingay	Not to grant temporary permission for vehicular access over the Council's verge from Robinson Court to 10 Waresley Road, Gamlingay.	Unauthorised crossing of the Council's verge has occurred and this could set a precedent if access were granted