



**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNCILLORS' BULLETIN
ISSUE DATE 3RD MARCH 2004**

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR COUNCILLORS

COMMITTEE MEETINGS			
FROM: 8th March 2004 to 12th March 2004			
MONDAY 8 th March 2004	10 am	Sustainability and Community Planning Portfolio Holder Meeting	Committee Room 2
	12 noon	What do residents really, really want? *	Council Chamber
	2.30pm	Area Joint Committee	Council Chamber
TUESDAY 9 th March 2004	10 am	Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder Meeting	Finance and Resources Director's office
WEDNESDAY 10 th March 2004	9.30 am	Housing Portfolio Holders Meeting	Housing Director's Office
	2pm	Conservation Advisory Group	Committee Room 1
THURSDAY 11 th March 2004	11am	CPA briefing for Members *	Council Chamber
	2pm	Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Council Chamber
FRIDAY 12 th March 2004			

* Lunchtime Seminars

Enjoy a relaxed lunch, chat with officers and other councillors and learn a bit more about South Cambs at an informal presentation, followed by questions and answers. The first seminar 'What will it be like to work for South Cambs in 2008?' was successful and a video of the presentation is available on request for anyone unable to attend. Forthcoming seminars include:

What do residents really, really want? Understanding our community strategy.

12pm, Monday 8 March, The Council Chamber

Cascade, CRM, GIS, DIP?!? ICT decoded, and making a difference. Everything explained!!

12pm, Thursday 25 March, The Council Chamber

Changing Rooms. New location, new office, new furniture and new travel plans.

12pm, Monday 5 April, The Council Chamber

Sprucing up our image. Introducing our new corporate identity.

12pm, Monday 19 April, The Council Chamber

ALL councillors are invited. Places are available on a first come, first served basis. Each presentation will last a maximum of half an hour, followed by questions and answers and then

lunch. To watch the video, or to reserve a seat call Jackie Tindill on Ext. 3025 or email jackie.tindill@scambs.gov.uk

*** CPA Briefings**

A series of one-hour briefing sessions for non-cabinet Members to explain a bit more about the CPA inspection process and how we can do our best for the Council. Members need have only attended ONE of these sessions. If you are planning to attend a briefing session please notify Kirsty Simmons (ext. 3297) or by email kirsty.simmons@scambs.gov.uk

TRAINING COURSES, SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

Subject	Location and Date
<u>Modernisation & Local Democracy (Seminar 1)</u> - Developing modernisation and corporate - 10 things local government really needs to do - Strategies for encouraging a culture of democracy - Developing the Democratic Services function - Politics versus policy	Infolog Conference Facilities Russell Square House 10-12 Russell Square London, WC1B 1st April 2004 8.45 – 16.30pm
<u>Local Democracy, Innovative Approaches (Seminar 2)</u> - Effective local democratic engagement - Community strategy as tools for engagement - Supporting ward Councillors - Making e-democracy work for Members - Member Development	Infolog Conference Facilities Russell Square House 10-12 Russell Square London, WC1B 11th May 2004 8.45 – 16.30pm
<u>Managing Through Leadership and Influence</u> The quasi- progress of Leadership Theory and Leadership as a relational process. The primary question to be explored therefore, will not be how do people become leaders but why do people follow them in the first place?	University of Birmingham INLOGOV Edgbaston Birmingham, B15 2TT 19th May 2004 9.30 – 4.15pm
<u>Chairing Meetings for Councillors</u> Designed for Councillors who are likely to chair Committees, panels or meetings, or for Councillors who wish to learn about effective conduct of meetings.	EERA Flempton House Flempton, Bury St Edmunds 20th May 2004 9 – 4.30pm
<u>Supporting Members to deliver Community Leadership (Seminar 3)</u> - True Partnership working not just warm words - Making sense of new localism - Supporting Members to deliver to LSP's - What does the future hold for local democracy?	Infolog Conference Facilities Russell Square House 10-12 Russell Square London, WC1B 24th June 2004 8.45 – 16.30pm

DRAFT RECCOMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

Paper and CD-ROM copies of the Draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire County Council are available in Democratic Services. Public consultation on the recommendations runs from 24 February to 26 April.

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 Democratic Services

Manager must be notified of any call in by **Wednesday 10th March 2004 at 5pm**. All decisions not called in by this date may be implemented on **Thursday 11th March 2004**.

Any member considering calling in a decision made by Cabinet is requested to contact the Democratic Services 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.

DECISION MADE BY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Subject	Action Taken
<p><u>Arts Project Grant Aid</u> To give young people an opportunity to put their opinions across through a creative medium and build their confidence. To give them experience of working with a professional film makers and composer and introduce them to the skills of filmmaking.</p>	<p>Grant awarded of £1,649 to Hardwick Action Group towards a film project with the young people of Hardwick. (AP12)</p>

DECISION MADE BY HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Subject	Action Taken
<p><u>Vehicular Right of Way</u> Application for vehicular right of way from Brickhills into land rear of 47 Church Street, Willingham. A right of way had been declined in February 2003 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Possible increase in traffic using Brickhills ii) Possible obstruction of vehicles turning in the car park area iii) Possible greater likelihood, in the long term, of development to the south of Brickhills. <p>The Council had been requested to re-examine this decision by the Ombudsman.</p>	<p>After discussion the Housing Portfolio Holder agreed to uphold the original decision not to approve the granting of vehicular access from the end of Brickhills into land rear of 47 Church Street, Willingham</p>

DECISIONS MADE BY OFFICERS

Subject	Action Taken
<p><u>Community Grants</u> The trip will provide an opportunity for the pupils to learn from a different culture and pass on their skills. The applicant is "Edendale Volunteers 2004"</p>	<p>Award of £60 towards an excursion to Edendale School in South Africa as volunteer teaching assistants.</p>
<p><u>Historic Building Grants</u> Issued under the approved delegation scheme by the Conservation Manager in February 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G/27/03 13 North End, Meldreth - Mr. K Pryke - £510 (10%) towards the cost of re-thatching the rear elevation with long straw and rewiring. • G/28/03 56 & 58 Church Street, Gamlingay - Trustees of the Sir John Jacobs Almshouses - £3834 (40%) toward the costs of specialist repairs to brickwork, doors and windows. • GWM/3/03 The War Memorial, Church Walk, Little Gransden - Parish Council - £250 for cleaning, re-pointing the joints and repainting the lettering of the memorial. • GWM/4/03 The War Memorial, St. Johns Churchyard, Waterbeach - Parish Council -£1000 for cleaning, re-pointing of stonework and re-cutting and repainting the lettering on the memorial. 	

MINUTES AND AGENDAS

NOTES OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER MEETING ON 20 FEBRUARY 2004

Present: Cllr C Barker
Stephen Hampson
Dale Robinson

Apologies: Cllr Mrs Spink

Item 1: Notes of Previous Meeting – Agreed

Item 2: Matters Arising – None

Item 3: Proposed Fees & Charges for Licensing, Services and Training 2004/05
Dale Robinson explained that the proposed fees and charges reflected the increases included within the CIP's and that in general fees had been increased by 2.5% for inflation. The charges for trade refuse and septic tank services were reported to the Portfolio Holder for the first time and it was noted that these were under review and would be subject of a separate report over the next few months.

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder **CONFIRMED** the proposed fees and charges for 2004/05 as set out in the report.

Item 4: Footway Lighting Grants 2003/04
Dale Robinson emphasised that as a result of the "savings" offered up by the Portfolio in 2004/05 this was the final year these grants would be available from the Council. The Portfolio Holder requested that a report be brought to a future meeting addressing the new policy arrangements and that this report should take into account that he wished to no longer provide a footway lighting service over the medium term. Dale Robinson was asked to investigate how best this could be achieved.

The Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to award grants of:

- (i) £447 to Caldecote Parish Council
- (ii) £271.17 to Milton Parish Council and,
- (iii) £600 to Waterbeach Parish Council

Item 5: Adoption of Environmental Health Enforcement Policy
Dale Robinson presented the Enforcement Policy highlighting its relevance to the enforcement activities of Officers and its status with regard to legal action, BV166 and the Hampshire Matrix.

The Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to **ADOPT** the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy.

Item 6: Taxi Emission Testing

The Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the contents of the report and supported the aims of the initiative.

Item 7: Non-Payment of Invoices

A short discussion took place on the performance of the Department in meeting the Councils target for payment of invoices. It was noted that this was a specific Departmental target for Environmental Health in 2004/05.

Item 8: Four Monthly Rolling Programme

It was noted that the future of the footway lighting service was likely to be a key decision and should be included on the programme. The Portfolio Holder had nothing further to add to the programme and agreed that approval of the Food Service Plan should be delegated to him and not as present reserved to Council.

Item 9: Any Other Business

(i) DEFRA £20M Grant to Relieve Spending Pressures in Waste in 2004/05

The Portfolio Holder was briefed on the above and welcomed the fact that South Cambridgeshire District Council would be receiving a further £32,271.02 in 2004./05 from DEFRA, in addition to that awarded for plastics recycling. The Portfolio Holder expressed a view that this money be coded to the refuse budget but only spent if pressures within the year dictated the need.

(ii) PFI Outline Business Case

The Portfolio Holder was informed that the partnership had submitted the OBC and were awaiting the result. He also **NOTED** that work had begun with the commissioning of Robson Rhodes, on the Value for Money study to inform the Councils future decision on whether to join the joint procurement project.

(ii) Integrated Alternate Weekly Collection Fact Sheet

A draft fact sheet on the issues surrounding the new refuse and recycling services was tabled and a short discussion held on its contents and audience. It was **AGREED** that these basic facts should be put into a user friendly fact sheet by the Media and communications unit and that this should be distributed to all Members, Senior Officers, media groups and Parish Councils.

(iii) Appeal by Anglian Water re: Odour Nuisance Notice

The Portfolio Holder was updated on the latest position regarding the above.

Item 10 Date and Time of Next Meeting

- To be arranged.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD: NOTES

Date: 3 February 2004

Time: 1600h – 1825h

Place: South Cambridgeshire Hall, Hills Road, Cambridge

Present:

D Ball	Business Representative
J Ballantyne	South Cambridgeshire District Council
J Barker	Business Representative
P Barlow	Faith Representative
Councillor R Collinson	South Cambridgeshire District Council
D Kanka (substituting for S Hind)	South Cambridgeshire PCT
D Spreadbury	Voluntary Sector Representative
G Redhead (substituting for A Cooper)	Village College Representative
Councillor J Reynolds	Cambridgeshire County Council
R Rogers	South Cambridgeshire PCT
S Smith-Rawnsley	Voluntary Sector Representative
Councillor D Spink (Chairman)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
S Traverse-Healy	CALC Representative

In attendance:

S McIntosh	South Cambridgeshire District Council
S Smith	Cambridgeshire County Council
M L Rowe (Secretary)	Cambridgeshire County Council

Apologies:

C Brown	Business Representative
M Campbell	Cambridgeshire Constabulary
A Cooper	Village College Representative
S Hind	South Cambridgeshire PCT
K Lloyd	Youth Parliament Representative
I Stewart	Cambridgeshire County Council

ACTION

1. INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed Geoff Redhead to his first meeting.

2. NOTES OF BOARD MEETING ON 2ND DECEMBER 2003 AND MATTERS ARISING

The notes of the meeting of the Board held on 2nd December 2003 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Note 3 – Feedback from Joint Meeting Cambridge City Strategic Partnership Board

Work on developing new facilities in the Cambridge Northern Fringe was continuing against a deadline for signing the Section 106 agreement with the developers. Joint work on community provision had commenced on the understanding that there would be a school, which could provide other community facilities. However it had become clear that there was a question mark as to whether a school would be needed. It was therefore proposed to establish community facilities in a separate building in the middle of the site linked to health care and other services. Discussions would take place with Impington Parish Council soon.

J Barker, Councillor Reynolds and S Smith-Rawnsley agreed to be appointed to a Sub Group of the Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Strategic Boards. It was noted that terms of reference would need to be determined for the Group to develop areas of joint work.

Note 4 – Information from the Eastern Region LSP Network Meeting

A representative of the Board was invited to attend an Eastern Region LSP Network meeting on 12 February 2004.

Note 6 – Revised Draft Community Strategy/Action Plan

A Vision for South Cambridgeshire

It was noted that targets, which were achievable in the next twelve months and measurable, had been added to the draft Community Strategy wherever possible.

Aim 4: A High Quality Environment

J Barker asked officers to investigate whether Coton Country Park could be delivered within three years now that the Cambridge Preservation Society had received a Government grant of £700,000. He asked if this would enable it to be included as a target in the draft Community Strategy. S McIntosh

Aim 5: Sustaining the Local Economy

Research undertaken by the Greater Cambridge Partnership had identified staff skills and lack of affordable housing for staff as the main constraints for business. J Barker suggested that lack of suitable premises was often a hidden problem and primarily an issue for established businesses. It was suggested that these constraints were also an issue for other sectors.

Job Centre Plus had been invited to appoint a representative to the Officer Steering Group.

Aim 6: Building New Communities

A Working Group had been established to identify the range of community facilities needed for Northstowe. The Board would receive a report on the civic governance arrangements for the settlement at a future meeting.

S McIntosh

Draft LSP Board Target Actions

The role of the Board 'Champions' had yet to be progressed. David Spreadbury who had been appointed 'Champion' for developing Parish Plans expressed concern about the lack of progress for developing a Guidance Framework for Parish Plans. He explained that officers were proposing to target four communities but there was a question mark as to who should identify them. He was also concerned about the commitment and resources available to support parishes to prepare Parish Plans within the proposed timescale.

S McIntosh acknowledged that resources were very stretched with a number of parishes making enquiries. Therefore there was a need to balance the District Council's resources against the expectations of Parish Councils. Parish Plans were a useful tool to identify the needs of a community and the appropriate support. The Guidance should address the confusion regarding their scope, including on Planning issues and what steps were required for agreement of supplementary planning guidance

It was noted that an officer group had met and the Guidance should be developed by July 2004.

Note 8 - Addenbrooke's NHS Hospital Trust Application for NHS Foundation Status

A Member of the Board queried whether it was appropriate for continued significant expansion on the Addenbrooke's site. He was concerned about the effect of concentrating more services, such as Papworth Hospital, on one site. He was particularly concerned about the spread of infection, the possible failure of the electricity supply and the impact on the local labour market.

Councillor Reynolds explained that the future of expansion of Addenbrooke's Hospital had been debated in detail for a number of years. Government had subsequently approved the County Council's Structure Plan, which made reference to the expansion plans. He was concerned that the Board should not spend time discussing something which had already been decided.

The Chairman informed Members that the medical and economic implications of moving Papworth Hospital were of concern to the local people of South Cambridgeshire and therefore the Board. She suggested that it be discussed at a future meeting.

S McIntosh/
S Hind

Note 9 – Programme of Topics for Future Meetings

The make up and work plans for each theme group would be circulated with the minutes.

S McIntosh

Note 10 – Any Other Business

S McIntosh reported that he had added the accommodation needs of travellers as a target in the draft Community Strategy. He had recently attended an Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) seminar on the development of traveller sites, which had identified the need for Government guidance.

3. THE REVISED COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Board received a copy of the revised Community Strategy for South Cambridgeshire. It was noted that the Officer Steering Group due to a range of pressures had been unable to move the Strategy on to a final document since the last Board meeting. In the face of these pressures, officers had worked to ensure the timescale for developing the Strategy dovetailed with the agreement of Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) targets for Cambridgeshire particularly as the latter reflected a number of the priorities in the Community Strategy.

Members were informed that Government guidance had identified the need for Community Strategies to be realistic. Therefore some priorities might need to involve establishing structures and processes, which would affect future work outcomes. It had been very difficult to reduce the number of priorities as required by the Board. Four priorities had been removed and one target relating to travellers had been added following discussions at the last meeting.

The Learning Partnership had highlighted the need for the Strategy to address learning issues. This matter had subsequently been addressed at a recent Partnership meeting and consultation event. Some further development of learning priorities would be needed over the next few months to ensure that the targets were appropriate. Members were informed that the role and resourcing of the Officer Steering Group would need to be reviewed. The Chairman welcomed any offers from partners for funding to resource the Group.

Members considered the document in detail and raised the following issues:

S McIntosh

Why have we drawn up the Community Strategy (page 3)

- the need to include a positive statement for drawing up the Community Strategy rather than just stating it as a Government requirement.

Working in Partnership (page 4)

- the need for the Learning Partnership to have a two-way arrow.
- the need to include the Cambridgeshire Community Legal Service Partnership in the “Working in Partnership” section. This was a relatively new partnership providing public access to legal advice, benefits etc.

A Vision for South Cambridgeshire (page 6)

- suggested that the order of aim one should be changed to “Active, Healthy and Safe Communities”. It was noted that the order of the aims had already been changed to focus on communities first.

Aim 1: Empowering South Cambridgeshire Communities (page 7)

- noted that the title had been changed from “supporting” to “empowering” in order to reflect the need for communities to help themselves.
- endorsed the need for a resident survey in villages covered by new Community Police Support Officers (CPSOs) to measure the proposal to increase residents’ feelings of safety in villages. It was suggested that the survey should also be targeted at specific groups such as the elderly and young people. There was concern that this approach would only include larger villages. Members were informed that the Distraction Burglary Rogue Trader Task Group was currently considering public perception of crime. The Police were also undertaking an evaluation exercise of CPSOs, which could provide some useful data and help avoid duplication.
- noted that proposal 3 was likely to be a countywide LPSA target. It was therefore important to identify issues locally to be incorporated into a countywide strategy. It was also important to identify any issues of concern relating to current initiatives such as safer routes to school.
- noted that the voluntary sector proposal 4 would be reworded at the request of the Voluntary Sector Forum to highlight existing support work as well as identify the need to strengthen support.
- the need to include a target to increase the number of public leisure facilities, which prohibited smoking, as part of proposal 5. There was particular concern about the impact of passive smoking on staff employed in the leisure industry as well as the public, and

the possible impact on business in the form of legal action and insurance claims. Members were informed that this target could be monitored by the Cambridgeshire Smoke Free Alliance as one of its targets. Voluntary co-operation as opposed to legislation was welcomed. The Chairman suggested a small multi agency group involving Health and Environmental Health to discuss the feasibility of such a target.

- the need for clear performance measures in relation to proposal 6.

Aim 2: Building New Communities (page 9)

- the need to amend "Our Vision" to include 2020.
- the need to include renewable energy, although it was acknowledged that it would not be possible to measure all aspects.
- the need to include accessible in relation to the built environment.
- the need to mention tenure type in relation to the types of housing needed to meet the changing needs of the population. Members noted that there could be some difficulty about describing tenure type in relation to affordable housing. It was suggested that this should be included as text rather than a specific target.

Aim 3: Sustaining the Local Economy (page 11)

- noted that the development of access to Broadband was already well underway and had therefore been removed as a target. Some Members suggested that it should be retained as it was very achievable. It was noted that funding for this target came from the PSA rather than the LSP.
- concern that increasing the number of adults under Level 2 being assessed and undertaking training was too restrictive. It was stressed that skills were needed across the workforce. Members were informed that the District had the highest number of people in the County below this level.
- queried whether this aim should be widened to include good electricity supplies, water supplies and road systems. It was noted that these issues were part of the Greater Cambridge Partnership's five strategic objectives. Therefore it was proposed that the Board should acknowledge the work of the Partnership by including a cross reference in the Strategy. Members were also informed that the newly established Infrastructure Partnership funded by Government had the primary responsibility for developing local infrastructure. Members highlighted the need to find out what other partners were doing and whether there was a gap, which could be filled by the LSP. The Chairman suggested including some wording relating to the work of other partners in relation to this aim.

- the possibility of including a target relating to homeworkers. It was noted that the County Council's Research Group was carrying out detailed work in relation to work patterns.
- the need to include a target to increase the number of people entitled to benefits. It was acknowledged that this could be linked to the work of the Cambridgeshire Community Legal Service Partnership.
- concern that lifelong learning was the only target identified for this aim.

Aim 4: Improving Access to Services and Transport (page 12)

- suggested that the expansion of taxi services would help local communities particularly people with a disability.
- suggested that the lead partnership for proposal 12 was the Access and Transport Group and not PARSINCAP.
- noted that the PCT was proposing to provide services from three locality bases. Members proposed using the new Library Access Points in the District as the base for 'Information Hubs'.
- the need to include a target to increase the use of existing cycleways. It was noted that the County Council had sensors which measured the usage of cycleways. J Barker offered to circulate to Members the Sustrans report on the creation of new cycleways in the County.

Aim 5: Quality Homes for All (page 14)

J Barker

- the need for affordable housing to cater for the number of single older people in the District.
- noted that work was being undertaken countywide to assess the needs of travellers in relation to land and accommodation. It was suggested that it should also include health, education, as well as inequalities and exclusion. There was concern that any proposal to increase facilities for travellers could attract more travellers from Eastern Europe particularly when restrictions were lifted from 1 May. Members were informed that the Government appeared likely to

restrict the powers of local authorities to deal with illegal traveller sites if it failed to make provision to meet their needs. The Board stressed the need for strategies to deal with economic migrants and asylum seekers.

Aim 6: A High Quality Environment (page 15)

- queried why the promotion of smoke-free environments was mentioned in Aim 1 and Aim 6. It was suggested that there should be a cross reference from proposal 5 “Promote Healthier Lifestyles” to proposal 20 “Smoke-free Environments”. The co-ordination of these targets was different as smoking reduction was an issue for the NHS and smoke-free environments an issue for other agencies.
- queried whether pollutants should be included in proposal 20.

The South Cambridgeshire Strategic Partnership (page 18)

- noted that more detail was needed in relation to the composition of the LSP.

4. PUBLICATION AND LAUNCH ARRANGEMENTS

Members considered the timetable for the launch and decided to defer the publication and launch of the Community Strategy until October/November to coincide with the finalisation of the LSPA . The Board would receive a strategy at its next meeting, which could then be made publically available.

S McIntosh

5. LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

The Board was updated on progress being made in relation to preparations for Cambridgeshire’s second LPSA. A new target on “Affordable Housing” had been added to reflect the responses of Local Strategic Partnership Boards. The LPSA framework covering improvement objectives and supporting topics would be submitted to the ODPM for its approval by 5 March 2004. This would then be followed by a six-month negotiation process with Government.

It was anticipated that there would be a Service Level Agreement between the County Council and its partners, which would cover a target outcome action plan, performance management arrangements, the distribution of pump priming grant and reward grant. The management of the PSA would be undertaken by an extended version of the Chief Executive’s Liaison Group, and the LSP Boards in relation to district based topics.

6. REPRESENTATION ON THE BOARD

The Board received a request from the Learning Partnership for a formal link between the Partnership and the Board. Members expressed concern about any proposal to expand the Board. It was suggested that the Partnership’s views could be represented by the Village Colleges representative or a representative could be invited to attend a specific meeting where expert advice was required. A suggestion of the need to invite a representative from an environmental or cultural organisation was likewise not supported. It was noted that at least one member of the LSP Board could provide an environmental view in

respect of other responsibilities and expertise.

One Member highlighted the need for good quality schools to invest in success. He was concerned that very few County state schools were high in tables reflecting attainment. Simon Smith explained that the LPSA had identified public service areas where stretching outcomes could be achieved. Reducing the number of low attainment schools in the County was a target. However, it would be very tough to deliver a stretching outcome for South Cambridgeshire. He explained that some tables were based on sixth form results and very few LEA schools had sixth forms. The recent OFSTED review had highlighted the need for more investment in an alternative curriculum for 14-16 year olds. Members were advised of the need to consider added value as well as performance when considering attainment.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

South Cambridgeshire Compact

The Board was advised of proposals to prepare a South Cambridgeshire Compact between the voluntary and statutory sectors. Members would receive details of the proposal at a future S Smith meeting.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 6 April 2004 at 2.00p.m.

All

COUNTY COUNCIL: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 10th February 2004

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 4.15 p.m.

Place: Shire Hall, Cambridge

Present: Councillor: R Driver (Chairman)

Councillors: P D Bailey, C M Ballard, I C Bates, T J Bear, B S Bhalla, A J Bowen, S V Brinton, J Broadway, C Carter, R L Clarke, J E Coston, P J Downes, J A P Eddy, M Farrar, H J Fitch, S A Giles, J L Gluza, P D Gooden, A Hansard, B Hardy, G F Harper, V A Hearne-Casapieri, G J Heathcock, W G M Hensley, J L Huppert, S F Johnstone, J D Jones, A C Kent, I C Kidman, S J Kime, S J E King, M L Leeke, V H Lucas, A R Mair, R B Martlew, A K Melton, A S Milton, S B Normington, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, A G Orgee, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P A E Read, A A Reid, J E Reynolds, C E Shaw, P W Silby, R C Speechley, A B Stenner, P L Stroude, J M Tuck, J K Walters, R Wilkinson, L J Wilson and F H Yeulett

Apologies: Councillor L W McGuire

180. MINUTES: 17th DECEMBER 2003

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 17th December 2003 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

181. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Death of Former Councillor

The Chairman announced with sadness the death of Neil Payne, a member of the former Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council, who had represented the Wisbech Isle West division from 1972 to 1974. Members observed a minute's silence in his memory.

Assistant Director in Social Services, and Head of Human Resources

Members noted that Graham Wrycroft, Assistant Director in Social Services, would shortly be leaving the Council. The Chairman and Cabinet Member for Social Services paid tribute to his achievements during his time with the Council. The Chairman reported that Jon Sparkes, Head of Human Resources, would also be leaving shortly and thanked him for his hard work during his time with the Council. Members wished both officers well for the future.

Hereward Hall

The Chairman reported that he had recently opened Hereward Hall, the Council's new offices in March. He thanked all those staff who had been involved in the building project for their efforts.

Congratulations

The Chairman led members in offering congratulations on the following achievements:

- The accreditation of ten libraries and learning centres to the Matrix Standard, a national quality standard for information, advice and guidance for learning and work
- The singling out of six Cambridgeshire primary schools in the annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools for being particularly successful or making significant improvement
- The recommendation of Camlearn, the Council's project for electronic learning, as a showcase for the Community Grids for Learning project
- The securing of additional Government funds for the development of the Trading Standards Ask Cedric project
- The securing of over £20 million additional funding from Government for local authorities in the Cambridge Sub-Region to help deliver infrastructure in support of the Structure Plan.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors M Farrar, J D Jones, A R Mair and S J E King declared personal interests under paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct in item 8 under Minute 183a as members of the Shire Hall Club Management Committee.

Councillor G J Heathcock declared personal interests in item 2 under Minute 183b (Guided Bus – Proposals for Transport and Works Act Submission) as a member of RailFuture and CAST-IRON, and in item 3 under Minute 183b (Integration of Older People's Services – Feedback from Consultation and Next Steps) as a Trustee of Age Concern Cambridgeshire and a Trustee of the Cambridge Hot Meals Service.

183. REPORTS OF THE CABINET

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, moved receipt of the reports of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 6th and 27th January 2004.

a) Report of the meeting of Cabinet held on 6th January 2004

Key decisions for information

- 1) Waste Management Private Finance Initiative
- 2) Transport Infrastructure
- 3) Market Town Transport Strategies – Huntingdon and Godmanchester;

Wisbech

Other decisions

4) Best Value Review of Highways Maintenance and Network Management

Councillor J A P Eddy asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, what was being done to minimise the theft of road signs, which was not only costly to the Council but also the cause of potential serious danger to road users. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport reported that the Council was working with the police to address this issue. Stolen signs were replaced with steel versions, which were heavier and harder to carry away.

Councillor J E Coston expressed concern at the poor condition of roads in many of the County's villages and reported that she would be giving the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport a list of those causing particular concern in her ward. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport explained that highway maintenance had until recently been focussed on improving the condition of principal roads, with considerable success. Attention was now being turned to non-principal roads.

5) Persistent Complainants Policy

Councillor S V Brinton and the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, welcomed the introduction of a Council policy on managing persistent complainants. Both emphasised that the Council would continue to investigate genuine complaints fully. This policy would help members and officers to manage those few situations in which further work on an individual's complaint would not be fruitful.

6) Annual Adoption and Permanence Report April 2002 - March 2003

7) Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel on Foster Care: Final Report

The members of the Panel, Councillors C M Ballard, S V Brinton and P L Stroude, thanked the Panel's co-optees, a former foster carer and a young person leaving foster care, for their contribution to the review. The members drew attention to the Panel's findings and recommendations. They welcomed the proposal in the 2004/05 budget to increase payments to foster carers of children of all ages to the rates recommended by the Fostering Network. However, they noted that a reduction in the number of in-house carers was leading to increasing dependence on independent fostering agency placements, which were much more expensive and would account for 25% of the Social Services overspend in 2003/04. Panel members therefore emphasised the need also to invest in advertising activities to recruit new carers and in support for existing carers. They also commented on the importance of applying Council policies on support for fostered children consistently throughout the County.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, welcomed the Panel's report and emphasised his commitment to recruiting and retaining in-house foster carers.

8) Shire Hall Club

Councillor M Farrar, a member of the Shire Hall Club Management Committee, explained some of the circumstances leading to the Cabinet's decision to authorise the Director of Resources to take debt recovery action leading to the winding up of the Club. He noted that the Policy Scrutiny and Audit Committee (PSAC) had called in the decision and expressed concern that, by the time of the PSAC meeting, the Club Management Committee had put forward an alternative, five-year recovery plan, which had not been considered. He also noted that the County Council held the Club's premises on a long lease at a peppercorn rent and suggested that, if this lease were renegotiated, it could be an asset more valuable than the debt currently owed.

Councillor P J Downes, the Chairman of PSAC, noted that the Committee would be reporting its comments to the meeting of Cabinet on 11th February 2004. These included emphasis on the importance of continuing to provide a recreational facility for officers and members, but did not include a request for Cabinet to reconsider its decision.

Councillor S J E King, Chairman of the Club Management Committee, expressed sadness at the decision which would lead to the Club being wound up and recognised the importance of continuing to provide a facility. Councillor J D Jones, another member of the Management Committee, reported that she would be sending her comments to the Cabinet in writing.

Responding to Councillor Farrar, the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor J K Walters, explained that the lease for the Club's premises would have had to be renegotiated irrespective of the Club's position, because the Management Committee's constitution had changed. He emphasised that the Cabinet decision to wind up the Club had not been taken lightly and that the provision of a recreational facility would continue.

Other matters

9) Bus Service Changes in the Shepreth and Meldreth Areas and Public Transport Service Pressures

Councillor A S Milton expressed serious concern at the withdrawal of commercial bus services from the Shepreth and Meldreth areas and the Council's inability to subsidise replacement services. For many people, trains from these villages were not a practical alternative, as they were difficult to access and offered a less flexible and less frequent service.

10) Comprehensive Performance Assessment: Refreshed Score for 2003

11) Performance on Local Public Service Agreement (PSA) and Key Performance Indicators for the Second Quarter of 2003/04

Councillors I C Kidman and C M Ballard asked the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, about Social Services targets that were unlikely to be met, particularly those relating to older people's services. The Cabinet Member for Social Services stated that many targets for adults' services would be met, but the ambitious targets for children's services, particularly those linked to educational attainment, were unlikely to be achieved. These would be reviewed jointly with Education. He asked Councillor Ballard to provide him with a list of the targets to which he had referred, to which he would respond in detail.

Councillor P J Downes expressed concern at the suggestion that the Council had signed up to unrealistic targets for schools performance, noting that targets that were not achievable could be demotivating. The Cabinet Member for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Councillor R Wilkinson, noted that new PSA targets would be negotiated to ensure that they were challenging but achievable.

Councillor J L Huppert expressed disappointment that, of a possible £9 million PSA Reward Grant, the Council was likely to receive only £2.2-3.5 million. He and Councillor S V Brinton asked whether the Council was certain to receive at least £2.2 million. The Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor J K Walters, emphasised that PSA targets were not ordinary targets, but were intended to be stretching. Their achievement was by no means certain and his best estimate of the reward grant was around £2 million. He undertook to send a written response to the members' question.

b) Report of the meeting of Cabinet held on 27th January 2004

Key decisions for determination

1) County Council Budget 2004/05

The Chairman reported that the Council was still awaiting the decision of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on whether to issue an Order reconfirming his Direction on a minimum schools budget for Cambridgeshire. The Chairman therefore deferred consideration of the County Council Budget 2004/05 and the related reports from the Scrutiny Committees to 17th February 2004, the likely date of a reconvened Council meeting.

2) Guided Bus – Proposals for Transport and Works Act Submission

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, moved the following recommendation, which was seconded by the Lead Member for Strategic Planning, Councillor J E Reynolds:
That the Council:

- i) Approves a Transport and Works Act (TWA) application for the guided bus scheme, the proposals for which were outlined in the officers' report to Cabinet, to be submitted to Government on 19th February 2004, and delegates to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport the authority to finalise the detailed TWA application in consultation with the Director of Environment and Transport;
- ii) Agrees to delegate to the Huntingdonshire, South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Environment and Transport Area Joint Committees the responsibility for approving the detail of the on-road sections in accordance with the broad specification in the officers' report.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and other members thanked the Council's officers and consultants for their hard work in preparing the proposals.

A number of members spoke in support of the recommendation:

- Noting that the scheme would provide high quality, frequent public transport between Cambridge and Huntingdon, reducing car journeys and thereby reducing noise and air pollution, congestion and accidents on the A14 and in Cambridge
- Emphasising the importance of welcoming Government investment in transport infrastructure in Cambridgeshire, given the context of the existing deficit and pressures of future growth
- Emphasising that light or heavy rail schemes were not viable alternatives, as they did not have the support of the Government or the Strategic Rail Authority
- Welcoming the proposal that the on-street sections of the route be developed through the Environment and Transport Area Joint Committees, making use of their members' local knowledge
- Noting that a number of measures were proposed to aid on-street running in Cambridge, including new bus lanes and bus priority measures, local authority parking enforcement and on-street ticketing and smartcards to reduce bus dwell times.

A number of members spoke against the proposals:

- Noting the recent statement in the House of Lords which suggested that the £65 million from Government would comprise a £32.5 million grant and authorised borrowing of £32.5 million. Concern was expressed that, whilst the present Government was offering an assurance that all of the Council's borrowing costs would be met, there appeared to be no guarantee that this assurance would be recognised by future Governments
- Expressing concern that a disproportionate element of developers' Section 106 contributions might be used to fund the scheme,

- reducing investment in other essential infrastructure
- Expressing concern at the environmental impact
- Expressing concern that the envisaged journey time from Huntingdon to Cambridge by guided bus was only four minutes less than that for a journey by ordinary bus and would not be sufficient for people to change their mode of transport
- Noting that, whilst the Council's public consultation on the scheme had shown good levels of support for guided bus, it had not offered respondents the opportunity to comment on light or heavy rail alternatives. CAST-IRON's membership of 700 showed that there was strong support for rail options, which had not received the same funding as guided bus to be developed
- Expressing concern at the layout and cost of the on-road routes into Cambridge, which were few and narrow, and the lack of alternative routes for buses in the event of these being obstructed
- Emphasising that it would be essential to pursue the second stage of the scheme, which would route guided buses along the railway line through Chesterton to Cambridge station
- Expressing concern that the construction of a guideway, instead of a flat track, would make it more difficult to convert the route to rail use should this prove desirable in future
- Expressing concern that the use of the Cambridge to St Ives railway line for guided bus could make it more difficult to construct an east-west rail link, when this proposal was finding increasing support
- Emphasising the need to take a wider perspective of transport needs, particularly in the context of the recent Government report on development in the London to Stansted corridor, which envisaged this extending as far as Peterborough, and proposals for future housing developments closer to Cambridge than the new settlement at Northstowe.

Some local members raised issues specific to their wards:

- Councillor I C Bates, the member for Houghton and Wyton, expressed concern that the scheme would lead to a reduction in bus services to Fenstanton
- Councillor S V Brinton, the member for Castle, reported residents' continuing concerns at the practical difficulties of routing buses along Histon Road
- Councillor J E Coston reported that she had received representations from residents in Waterbeach expressing concern at the impact of the scheme on roads and cycleways leading into Cambridge
- Councillor P D Gooden reported that whilst the Parish Councils of Histon and Impington had reservations about the scheme, he had not received many representations from residents, and recognised that doing nothing was not an option. If the scheme proceeded, he would be committed to minimising the detrimental impact of development
- Councillor J L Huppert, the member for East Chesterton, reported concerns about the widening of Milton Road and the difficulties that buses would have in passing around Mitchams Corner. He also

expressed concern at the impact of possible delay to the construction of Chesterton station

- Councillor A C Kent, the member for Trumpington, welcomed the proposal to extend the route south of Cambridge to Addenbrooke's and the Trumpington Park and Ride, particularly in the context of planned development in this area. However, she asked that consideration be given to running guided buses along the planned major new road, rather than constructing a separate route, to minimise the environmental impact.
- Councillor P W Silby, the member for West Huntingdonshire, suggested that the scheme would be more accessible to residents of her ward if the route were extended to a Park and Ride site located to the west of the A1
- Councillor R Wilkinson, the member for Huntingdon North, emphasised the need for the on-street running sections in Huntingdon to be considered in the wider context of the development of transport infrastructure in the town.

Responding to the points made,

- The Lead Member for Environment, Councillor L J Oliver, reported that considerable work on the environmental impact of the scheme and proposed mitigation measures had already been done. The environmental benefits in reducing car journeys would be significant
- The Lead Member for Strategic Planning, Councillor J Reynolds, drew attention to the infrastructure deficit already identified and noted that needs would intensify with future development. It was therefore essential to work constructively with Government to continue to attract investment into the region
- The Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor J K Walters, noted that the Government's intention was to fund all major schemes on the basis proposed for guided bus, namely 50% grant and 50% authorised borrowing. The Council was therefore likely also to have to accept this for other major schemes it was promoting. However, the Parliamentary answer on the guided bus scheme had specifically stated that the proportion of grant to authorised borrowing for this scheme would not be settled until final approval was given. The Leader also emphasised that any approved borrowing would be revenue neutral, as the Government would pay both the capital repayment instalments and the interest charges through the Council's Formula Spending Share (FSS)
- The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, emphasised that rail alternatives were neither financially viable nor desirable, as they would not offer the same access to Cambridge city centre. She highlighted the Government's 'agreed contribution' of £65 million and urged members to vote for the recommendation to enable the guided bus scheme to progress.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was approved.

[Voting pattern: Conservative and most Labour members in favour, most

Liberal Democrat members against, four abstentions. A recorded vote was requested, the details of which are attached at Appendix A.]

3) Integration of Older People's Services – Feedback from Consultation and Next Steps

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, moved the following recommendation, which was seconded by the Lead Member for Vulnerable Adults, Councillor D R Pegram:

That the Council:

- i) Agrees to proceed with the integration of older people's services from 1st April 2004, subject to completion of negotiations on the detailed Section 31 agreement;
- ii) Delegates to the Cabinet Member for Social Services the authority to approve and sign the proposed Section 31 agreement in consultation with the Director of Social Services;
- iii) Approves the proposed transfer of staff from the Council to Primary Care Trusts and authorises the Head of Human Resources to proceed with the necessary Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment (TUPE) transfer process.

All members who spoke indicated that they supported the principle of integration. However, a number of concerns were raised, including:

- Concerns at the lack of involvement by backbench members in the democratic arrangements for developing the proposals, including the Children and Adults Member Working Party – The involvement of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee was welcomed, but felt to be too late in the process. The Cabinet Member for Social Services was particularly asked to take into account the comments that the Scrutiny Committee would be making at its meeting on 12th February 2004
- The very tight timescale for integration from 1st April 2004, especially as negotiations on the Section 31 agreement were not yet complete – It was suggested that it might be appropriate to defer integration to enable further preparatory work to be carried out
- The challenge of managing and overcoming cultural differences between Social Services and the PCTs
- The challenge of drawing together health services, which were provided free of charge, and social care, for which charges were made
- The need for a robust financial management framework, particularly to involve the Council in the in-year management of pooled budgets and to address any overspends that might occur
- The need for governance arrangements to reflect members' continuing statutory responsibility for transferred services. The proposal to include four County Councillors on the Partnership Board

- was welcomed
- The suggestion that the unions did not fully support staff transfer, as reported to the Children and Adults Member Working Party and Cabinet, but would welcome further consideration of secondment options. The Working Party was asked to consider this further
 - The fact that formal staff consultation on TUPE would not begin until after this meeting, with its decisions likely to curtail the options available
 - The tight timescale for sorting out pension arrangements for transferring staff who wished to remain in the Local Government Pension Scheme
 - The need for early and ongoing reviews of the partnership arrangements
 - The need for effective management arrangements for services that were not transferred, particularly for older people with physical disabilities.

Responding to the comments, the Lead Member for Vulnerable Adults, Councillor D R Pegram, stated that the four PCTs would be admitted to the Local Government Pension Scheme with effect from 1st April 2004, enabling transferring staff to remain in the Scheme if they wished. He emphasised that accountability under the new arrangements would be ensured through the terms of the Section 31 agreement.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, emphasised the importance of the integration to improving older people's services. He accepted that there were a number of challenges to be addressed, but noted that integration on 1st April 2004 would be a first step and that work would continue over the coming months.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was approved.

[Voting pattern: unanimous.]

Key decisions for information

4) Local Authority Parking Enforcement in Cambridge

Councillor J L Huppert welcomed the application to Government to introduce local authority parking enforcement in Cambridge. He sought and received confirmation from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, that the contractor would be paid on the basis of staff employed and not fines collected.

5) Review of Formula for Funding Schools in Cambridgeshire

Councillor A C Kent noted that the shortage of transitional funding for 2004/05, which would mean deferring the introduction of Activity Led Resourcing until 1st April 2005, was due not only to levels of Government funding for Cambridgeshire but also to local decisions about the amount of income to be raised.

Councillor P J Downes emphasised that this review was long overdue, but expressed concern that transitional funding might also not be available in 2005/06.

Other matters

6) Social Services Budgetary Control Inquiry

Councillor J L Huppert welcomed the report of the Lead Member for Social Services, Councillor D R Pegram. However, he expressed concern that it did not identify the role of members, particularly the Cabinet Member for Social Services, in maintaining financial control. The role of Internal Audit and its investigations and that of the Policy Scrutiny and Audit Committee (PSAC) were also not mentioned. He and Councillor S V Brinton asked Councillor J A Powley to re-consider his position as Cabinet Member for Social Services in light of the inquiry's findings.

The Liberal Democrat Spokesman for Social Services, Councillor R B Martlew, reported that he had been willing to meet with Councillor Pegram to contribute to the inquiry but that, due to misunderstandings, this had not occurred. He highlighted a number of questions that he felt the inquiry had failed to ask, including whether demographic, inflationary and unavoidable statutory pressures had been properly understood; why financial trends had not been adequately taken into account; and whether software difficulties genuinely explained many of the problems.

The Chairman of PSAC, Councillor P J Downes, reported that the Committee had considered Councillor Pegram's report the previous week. Whilst the Committee had accepted the difficulties of predicting demographic growth, it had been very concerned by a number of the issues raised and would be inviting the Cabinet Member for Social Services to discuss these at a future meeting.

Councillor C M Ballard welcomed the clarity of the report and its courage in identifying shortcomings. However, he challenged the suggestion that the budgetary pressures were largely due to demographic growth and emphasised the importance of shifting the strategic focus of spending from reactive to preventative services to help prevent overspending in future.

Councillor S J E King emphasised the importance of moving forward and of ensuring that progress against the action plan resulting from the inquiry was rigorously monitored by Cabinet and PSAC.

Responding to the speakers, the Lead Member for Vulnerable Adults, Councillor D R Pegram, stated that he was confident that, if his recommendations were implemented to schedule, unexpected overspends would not occur in future. The Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, emphasised his commitment to

implementing the recommendations and stated that he would be pleased to discuss them with PSAC.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, congratulated Councillor Pegram on his report and endorsed his recommendations for achieving more effective financial management. However, he suggested that neither the agreed budget for 2003/04 nor the alternative proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group would have been sufficient to meet the very severe pressures arising during the year.

7) Annual Audit Management Letter 2002/03

8) Delegations by Cabinet to Individual Cabinet Members and Officers

184. WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Members noted that eight written questions had been submitted under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules:

- Councillor J E Coston had asked the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone and the Cabinet Member for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Councillor R Wilkinson, about the actions being taken by the Council to ensure compliance with the Ragwort Control Act 2003. The response set out the Council's policies for controlling ragwort on highway verges, school premises and County Farms.
- Councillor M L Leeke had asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport when the Cutter Ferry bridge in Cambridge was likely to be re-opened for pedestrians and cyclists. The response explained that the severity of the structural defect to the existing bridge made replacement unavoidable. The time needed for design, procurement and manufacture meant that work was not expected to begin on site for at least six months.
- Councillor G J Heathcock had asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport when the Council's street lighting policy had last been reviewed and whether it should be updated. The response stated that the policy had last been updated in September 2003 and, with this most recent revision, was considered to provide an appropriate standard of lighting for housing estate roads.
- Councillor J L Huppert had asked the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor J K Walters, about staffing numbers in the Resources Directorate and Chief Executive's Department for 2002/03, 2003/04 and projected for 2004/05. The response set out these figures by category in the Budget Book, with a commentary to explain significant variations.
- Councillor J L Huppert had asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to outline the current position on the proposed station at Chesterton in Cambridge. The response explained that funding for and the precise location of the station were closely linked to the master plan

currently being developed for the Chesterton Sidings site. However, if funding were forthcoming, it was envisaged that the station could be delivered by 2008.

- Councillor J L Huppert had asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport about provision in the draft revenue budget for 2004/05 for bridge maintenance works. The response stated the sum budgeted, £189,000, and the implications of this for maintenance of the bridge stock.
- Councillor J L Huppert had asked the Cabinet Member for Resources about his proposals for producing a Council response to the Local Government Association's consultation on the Balance of Funding proposals. The response stated that, given the tight timescale, individual political groups would be asked to send their comments, but a Council response would not be prepared.
- Councillor J L Huppert had asked Councillor S B Normington, the Chairman of the Standards Committee, about the recent ruling by the Standards Board for England and Wales that members of the Freemasons should declare their membership in the register of members' interests. The response stated that this ruling and the consequent requirement for affected members to update their declarations of interests would be brought to all members' attention.

Copies of the questions and responses are available from Democratic Services.

185. ORAL QUESTIONS

Two oral questions were asked under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules:

- Councillor G J Heathcock asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Councillor S F Johnstone, for information on the changes to bus services in Cambridge expected to be introduced from May 2004. She agreed to respond in writing.
- Councillor J L Huppert asked the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport if she was aware of the petition in circulation seeking the prompt reopening of Cutter Ferry Bridge in Cambridge. She replied that she was aware of the petition, but emphasised the need both to replace the bridge appropriately and to balance this request with others from other communities.

A full transcript of the questions and responses is available from the Democratic Services Division.

186. MOTIONS

One motion had been submitted under Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules.

Motion from Councillor J A P Eddy

Councillor J A P Eddy proposed the following, which was seconded by Councillor A R Mair:

'This Council regrets both the failure of HM Government to fully fund Cambridgeshire in accordance with the Formula Spending Share (FSS), and the Secretary of State for Education's peremptory instruction to Cambridgeshire to pass on to schools a level of funding it has not received. Therefore, this Council calls on Government Ministers to deal constructively and fairly with Cambridgeshire's appeal.'

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor J L Huppert and seconded by Councillor S V Brinton:

To add:

'Additionally, in view of the unfairness of Council Tax, particularly for those on low fixed incomes, this Council calls on the Government to replace Council Tax with a tax based on ability to pay, such as Local Income Tax'.

The following issues were raised during the debate on the motion and the amendment:

- The importance of allowing decision-making to take place locally, without undue intervention from central Government
- Whether it was timely to submit the motion to Government now, given the negotiations currently taking place on the Direction
- The challenge of identifying a method of local taxation that was based on income and ability to pay, took into account regional variations in prosperity and was cheap to collect
- The national debate currently taking place on the future of local government funding and the opportunities to contribute to this.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was defeated.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrat members in favour, Conservative and Labour members against.]

Members then voted on the substantive motion, which was carried.

[Voting pattern: Conservative and Liberal Democrat members in favour, Labour members against.]

187. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

The following membership changes were proposed by the Chairman of Council, Councillor R Driver, seconded by the Vice-Chairman, Councillor S B Normington, and agreed:

- Councillor T J Bear to replace Councillor S V Brinton on the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee and Social Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- Councillor S V Brinton to replace Councillor T J Bear as a substitute members on the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee and Social Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- Councillor A B Stenner to replace Councillor J A P Eddy on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Fire Authority.

[Voting pattern: unanimous]

188. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

The Chairman then adjourned the meeting. He advised that it would be reconvened on 17th February 2004 at 10.30 a.m., when it would consider the deferred item on the Council Budget for 2004/05, including the reports from the Council's Scrutiny Committees.

Chairman: