# COUNCILLORS' BULLETIN 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2004 **CONTENTS** South **INFORMATION ITEMS** Cambridgeshire District Council 1. **Committee Meetings** Councillor Training and Development update 2. 3. Councillor access to the Intranet! 4. \*New section\* Councillor Question and Answer session (contributions welcome) 5. Call in DECISIONS MADE BY HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER 1. Transfer of leases on 25 Denson Close and Freshfields, Primrose Lane, Waterbeach Grant vehicular access to 25 Mays Avenue, Balsham 2. 3. Grant vehicular access to 9 Papworth Rd, Graveley 4. Decline the Sale of Council Land adjacent to 20 Westmoor Avenue, Sawston **DECISION MADE BY OFFICERS** Wildlife Enhancement Scheme – Grant to Meldreth Parish Council 1. **MINUTES** Draft Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 2004 1. Draft Minutes of the Milton Country Park Advisory Group held 20th Sept 2004 2. Minutes of the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holders meeting 3. held 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2004

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FROM: 25 <sup>th</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup> October 2004				
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> October 04				
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 04				
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> October 04	10 am	Conservation Advisory Group	Grd Floor	
			Meeting room	
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> October 04	10 am	Licensing Committee	Grd Floor	
			Meeting room	
	2pm	Council	Council Chamber	
Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> October 04				

# **Councillor Training and Development update**

The Member Training Advisory Group has now agreed an on-going programme of seminars and courses. If you would be interested in attending any of the following courses, please contact Lucie Edginton (01954 713026) or email <u>lucie.edginton@scambs.gov.uk</u>. to register your interest. Dates and locations for these courses will be advertised shortly.

- Speed Reading (A repeat for those Councillors unable to attend the recent course)
- The Role of the Parish Council and where District Councillors fit in
- Chairing Meetings Useful for any chair or vice-chair
- Member/Officer Relationships How to maintain professional working relationships
- Local Government Finance explained, apportionment of recharges, budget setting and Council Tax
- Modern.Gov This is the new agenda and minutes software being used by Democratic Services, sessions for both officers and Councillors will be organised before the end of the year including how you access the intranet
- Planning Policy explained, this will be delivered by the Planning Policy section.

# Councillor Access to the Intranet!!!

Members now have access to the SCDC Intranet. Unlike previous access, this does not rely on using VPN software, but can be done through your Internet browser. To maintain the security of the site, the actual website address will not be published in the Bulletin but has been posted to Councillors separately, as has the information you will need to log in. Please check your post: if you haven't received your Intranet access information by 27 October, please contact Democratic Services on 01954 713030 for the instructions and ITNET on 0800 7837237 for a new username and password.

Training sessions for the intranet and Modern.Gov, the new Democratic Services minutes, agendas and decisions software, has been scheduled for Monday 15 November and Monday 22 November, with session at 10 am and 2 pm each day. Each session should last about 2 hours, with time for questions and answers. Places will be allocated on <u>a first come</u>, <u>first served basis</u>, so please e-mail democratic.services@scambs.gov.uk to book your place. If you have a chance to try out the intranet before the sessions, please bring your questions along to training!

# Councillor Question and Answer session – All contributions welcome

A new section for the weekly bulletin to share commonly asked questions and answers. If you have any queries that have been answered recently that you think would benefit your fellow councillors to know, please share your knowledge by contacting Lucie Edginton (01954 713026) or email <u>lucie.edginton@scambs.gov.uk.to</u>

# **Call in arrangements**

The Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview 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 27<sup>th</sup> October 2004 at 5pm**. All decisions not called in by this date may be implemented on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October 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.

# DECISIONS MADE BY HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Decision	Applicant and Reason
Agree to allow the leases of 25 Denson Close and Freshfields, Primrose Lane, Waterbeach to be transferred from Granta Housing Society to Cambridgeshire Learning Disability Partnership, or their nominated housing and care organisation, on existing lease terms. The legal fees for transfer of leases would need to be met by the new leaseholder.	To seek approval for the change in leaseholder for 25 Denson Close and Freshfields, Primrose Lane, Waterbeach currently in Council ownership from Granta Housing Society to Cambridgeshire Learning Disability Partnership, or the latter's nominated housing and care organisation
Agree to grant vehicular access, subject to valuation, over the Council's grass verge to 25 Mays Avenue, on condition that the access is constructed and maintained by the grantee and that no vehicles are parked on the access way.	To seek approval, subject to valuation, for granting vehicular right of way over the Council's grass verge to 25 Mays Avenue, Balsham as shown on the plan and photographs.
Agree to grant vehicular access, subject to valuation, over the Council's verge and ditch to 9 Papworth Road on the condition that the access is constructed and maintained by the grantee.	To seek approval, subject to valuation, for granting vehicular right of way over the Council's verge and ditch to 9 Papworth Road, Graveley as shown on the plan and photograph.
Disagree that the land should be offered for sale and recommend instead that it should be retained in Council ownership and that further research into the success and use of the new parking scheme be conducted.	To seek approval, subject to valuation, for the disposal of Council land adjacent to 20 Westmoor Avenue as shown on the plan and photograph.

# **DECISIONS MADE BY OFFICERS**

Decision	Reason
The Conservation Manager agreed to offer the Meldreth Parish Council a grant from the Wildlife Enhancement Scheme of £50 towards the partial re-seeding of Fenny Lane verge with a wildflower seed mix	Wildlife enhancement

#### CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday, 14 October 2004

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs DSK Spink MBE (Leader of Council) Councillor RT Summerfield (Deputy Leader of Council and Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder)

Councillors:	Dr DR Bard JD Batchelor Mrs JM Healey	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell SGM Kindersley Mrs DP Roberts	Housing Portfolio Holder Environmental Health Portfolio Holder Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors Mrs. SJO Doggett, R Hall, Dr SA Harangozo, Mrs SA Hatton, Mrs CAED Murfitt, Dr JPR Orme, Mrs GJ Smith, Dr SEK van de Ven and Dr JR Williamson were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor RF Bryant and the Chief Executive apologised for his late arrival.

Presentation Before the start of the meeting the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder presented an award the new Council offices had received, winning first place in the Industrial Agents' and Office Agents' Societies competition for the Best Development on a Business Park in the country. The offices had also been nominated for a similar award with the Civic Trust, members of whom would be visiting on 18th October.

# Procedural Items

#### 1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2004.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

Recommendations to Council and Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information

#### 3. AIREY RE-DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - UPDATE

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the update on progress on the redevelopment proposals for Airey properties, as agreed in principle by Cabinet on 24 February 2003. She reported that Circle 33 Housing Trust was currently negotiating with Anglia Housing Association about amalgamating, as the government had indicated that it would prefer to

work with fewer Housing Associations in terms of funding.

It was advisable that the redevelopment programme begin as soon as possible and Circle 33 had developed schemes which would be achievable with or without grant; however grant applications would still be submitted, but would not cause delays. Where appropriate, vacant properties transferred to Circle 33 could be used as short-term mixed lets pending redevelopment. Compulsory purchase orders would not be served on owner-occupiers and, if at the end of the process some tenants did not wish to move, Cabinet would be asked to determine what action to take.

In response to concerns from Councillor Mrs DP Roberts about the timing of the disposal of properties during the on-going Housing Stock Options Appraisal, Councillor Mrs EM Heazell explained:

- The Council had to consider new methods of affordable housing provision in light of limited government funding;
- Residents had been consulted on the proposals, and although some chose not to participate, others saw the redevelopment as a benefit;
- Circle 33 had planned new dwellings that included some similar-sized dwellings with floor areas larger than those in the Airey properties and with provision for lifts to be installed at a future date (Lifetime Homes standard);
- The Airey properties were different from the rest of the general needs housing stock and had been designed as temporary accommodation over 40 years ago using a now-discredited construction method;
- The number of relocations depended upon suitable vacancies arising; and
- The disposal of the properties would not affect the Housing Stock Options Appraisal.

Councillor Mrs Heazell asked Housing staff to investigate the provision of PVC solar water heating systems in the new units, similar to those used at Cambourne.

The Head of Housing Strategic Services explained that the amount of money required to improve these properties was higher than the capital receipts that could be achieved from sale of the sites for development purposes, i.e., the lower of the valuations included in the report. She agreed to liaise with Circle 33 to see if the Housing Trust would contribute to any Home Loss Payments for relocated tenants.

Members thanked officers for their considerate and sympathetic approach to homeowners and tenants, and commended the successful Airey redevelopment schemes already completed.

Cabinet, with one vote against, RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- (a) That vacant Airey properties at Coton, Elsworth, Girton, Sawston and Teversham be disposed of to Circle 33 Housing Trust and that the remaining Council-owned properties on these sites be transferred as they become available following relocation of current tenants on a temporary or permanent basis;
- (b) That the terms of their disposal be agreed as follows:
  - i. That the existing units be used for affordable housing purposes only pending redevelopment;
  - ii. That redevelopment maximise the number of affordable homes to be provided and that in any event any market dwellings should not exceed 23% of the total units to be provided;
  - iii. That all the properties be disposed of at nil cost in order to subsidise the approvals from the Secretary of State, with the exception of one improved unit at Sawston;
  - iv. That Circle 33 meet any legal costs incurred by the Council in the

disposal of these properties;

- That those properties that are not demolished as part of the redevelopment, as they adjoin sold properties excluded from the proposals, be refurbished and let as affordable housing only;
- vi. That the Council be entitled to receive nomination rights of 100% of initial lets and 75% of subsequent lettings of all social rented units provided through refurbished and new build affordable housing on the sites;
- vii. That the Council receive 100% nomination rights in perpetuity to any shared ownership and / or other intermediate tenures provided through refurbished and new build affordable housing on the sites; and
- (c) That an application be made to the Secretary of State for consent to dispose of the 63 properties to be demolished as part of the redevelopment proposals to Circle 33 Housing Trust as the Council's preferred Registered Social Landlord partner on the above terms.

Cabinet, with one vote against,

AGREED that two Airey properties at Longstanton be considered for redevelopment and that Circle 33 Housing Trust be asked to put together a scheme for consideration in addition to those five sites already identified for this purpose.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts recorded her opposition to the recommendation and the decision.

# 4. HOUSING ADAPTATION AND IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder reported that Cabinet's decision of 9 September 2004 to defer a decision on the budget for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) had disappointed many Councillors and residents and had had a negative impact on staff morale in the Home Improvement Agency. He reminded Members that DFG's up to £25,000 were mandatory, not discretionary. The funding sought would start to clear the backlog which would span the next two financial years and had been included in the financial strategy for the coming year.

A response had been received from GO-East confirming that, if other authorities had underspent their DFG budgets, this Council could have the difference, but there had not been any underspent budgets. A £300,000 bid for government assistance in the next financial year had been made to GO-East. The South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust was meeting with the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority in early November with regard to a capital funding application, and could look more favourably upon the Council if the Council demonstrated its commitment to DFG provision.

Members remarked upon the importance of assisting the most vulnerable people in the District and aimed to lobby GO-East, accompanied with a press release, as the government had made the grants mandatory without providing any additional funding, then reduced their support after the Council's budget had already been set.

# Cabinet RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

that the Disabled Facilities Grant budget be increased by £184,000 to £700,000, with approval for a further £100,000 to be released after a further review if this is supported by the Environmental Health and Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holders and the Leader as being required, to be funded by:

- i. Virement if identified from within existing budgets; and
- ii. The remaining amount up to £284,000 from General Fund Balances, should no further virements be identified or no further funding from the South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust be forthcoming.

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

# 5. COUNCIL TAX CONSULTATION RESULTS

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder introduced the results of the Council Tax consultation, suggesting that Members should concentrate on the headline results; £140 was the most popular option for next year's Council Tax and 60% of respondents favoured a medium cost / medium service approach. On the most and least important services indicated, the market research consultants had further reported that 78% responses from Cottenham had given traveller issues as one of the five most important services, as opposed to 40% from the rest of the district. The higher level of response through *South Cambs Magazine* rather than by public meetings was applauded.

Members queried the purpose of listing services in the questionnaire; partly because Cabinet had agreed that asking the public what services might be cut was not helpful without lengthy explanation and partly because some of the services were statutory. It was explained that the questionnaire had been devised by the joint Member/officer group appointed by Cabinet, who felt that a question on higher and lower priorities would be useful. However, as the public would not have detailed knowledge of everything the Council did, questions were limited to outward facing services, with a few words of explanation.

The Chief Executive advised Members that the results of consultation of this type were a useful test of opinion but that they would need interpretation in making Members' own judgements. Respondents' views on statutory services could be used to inform the level of service to be provided above the minimum. Members appreciated that views on the most or least important services would vary depending on individual interests or knowledge.

Cabinet

**NOTED** the findings of the Council Tax consultation, to be taken into account in the consideration of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the 2005/06 budget.

# 6. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL OUTLOOK AND FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder highlighted the main elements of the report, which aimed to enable the Council to develop its future planning processes, emphasising that it was a strategic report and that there was much more detailed planning to be done. Cabinet was asked to guide this further work.

The Chief Executive advised that Members needed to be aware of:

- The year on year need for growth in spending;
- The spending requirements brought by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA);
- Extra spending required for the new settlements before any increase in Council

Tax received;

- The need to reduce and eliminate reliance on reserves to fund spending;
- The need to maximise spending potential (through grants etc);
- The need to keep the level of Council Tax in touch with the average district council level of Council Tax; and
- The possibility of a future tighter capping regime.

The Community Development Portfolio Holder drew attention to the fact that £75,000 potential savings had been identified in her portfolio, rather than £65,000 as reported. Councillor Mrs Roberts also suggested that informal brainstorming meetings would be the way to progress and asked that all councillors should be involved in discussions. This was supported by other members of Cabinet.

In relation to the Decent Homes Standard, it was noted that housing authorities had to complete stock options appraisals by mid 2005, demonstrating how they were to meet the Standard by 2010. The Government had not yet indicated what action it would take if this could not be demonstrated.

Councillor Kindersley queried the value of a priority of "improved customer service" as this was non-specific and could refer to every aspect of Council work. He also queried the necessity for priorities when there were so many inescapable requirements. The Leader, however, considered the highest priority to be to provide what the public wanted but within a reasonable cost.

Cabinet

AGREED that strong representations be made at the highest level in Government on the Council's financial position.

Councillor SA Harangozo argued the case for retaining grants for community facilities, arts and sports and gained sympathy, especially given their importance for parish councils. This meeting, however, was not determining any specific cuts.

#### Cabinet AGREED

- 1. that the following approach be adopted for the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, subject to further discussions, the results of consultation and more detailed work:
  - (a) That the following be adopted as the Council's priorities for the three years 2005/6 to 2007/8: improved customer service (subject to further discussion to refine); the new settlements; and affordable housing.
  - (b) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy be based on the assumption that any capacity for new spending in the period 2005/6 to 2007/8 will be directed towards the following in the priority order given:
    - Inescapable requirements such as population growth and government requirements.
    - The three priorities (improved customer service; the new settlements; and affordable housing)
  - (c) That additional resources are unlikely to be made available corporately for service improvements in relation to any other priorities in the period 2005/6 to 2007/8 but that efforts will be made to maintain the existing list

of spending requirements;

- (d) That Management Team be requested to bring forward to the Cabinet clear targets, action plans and resource needs for the three priorities (customer service; new settlements and affordable housing) for the three years 2005/6 to 2007/8 (also required for the CPA Improvement Plan);
- (e) That the main thrust of the Financial Strategy should be to maximise the Council's ability to respond effectively to inescapable spending pressures and achieve the CPA Improvement Plan, by:
  - maximising the capacity to invest in services within the prevailing capping criteria.
  - using capital receipts to support spending on priorities and to meet inescapable commitments.
  - continuing to seek efficiencies and opportunities to re-direct resources to meet Council priorities and reflect the views of the public.
- (f) With support from public consultation, to agree **Option 4** in Appendix C to the report (with spending proposals and all possible expenditure financed from capital receipts but with savings of £500,000) as the base for the Financial Strategy, but with further scrutiny of the spending proposals in Appendix A to reduce them to what are truly inescapable or are necessary to meet the CPA Improvement Plan;
- (g) That Management Team be requested to bring forward recommendations for £500,000 achievable savings based on the results of consultation, views of all Members and avoiding High Impact savings.
- (h) That the scope for providing up to £1m capital funding for affordable housing for the three years 2005/6 to 2007/8 (and how this would be financed) be explored further with Members, including the possible redirection of resources from non-priority service areas;
- That Cabinet recognise the need to make provision for further new expenditure of at least £500,000 per annum in the years beyond 2005/6 to meet future spending pressures; and identify means of pursuing this, taking into account the possibilities considered by Management Team (paragraph 48)
- 2. that a special meeting of Cabinet be called to consider the further development of the proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy, with the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and all other Members invited.

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder reported that he had agreed with the Finance and Resources Director a briefing for new Members on finance before the Medium Term Financial Strategy came before Council. This could perhaps be expanded.

In response to the Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, the Chief Executive advised that the Constitution allowed the participation of the Committee in the development of policies, which was a good approach. He hoped that this would obviate the need for post-decision scrutiny but he was sure that, in the event of a serious divergence of views, arrangements could be devised for such scrutiny.

# 7. BENEFITS FRAUD INSPECTORATE (BFI) INSPECTION OF BENEFITS - ACTION PLAN

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder suggested that, regardless of the further 2week Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection in December there was a need to proceed with the action plan resulting from the earlier inspection.

Cabinet were critical of the level of detail required in the action plan, the additional resources that seemed likely, the change of approach by the BFI and the apparent contradiction between the results of the Benefits Service Best Value Review and the BFI inspection. They were concerned about the effect on morale of the staff and

**REQUESTED** the Chief Executive to pass on Members' confidence in them to the Benefits staff.

The benefit of a report to Cabinet was queried, but the Finance and Resources Director advised that the lack of engagement by Members had been a point of criticism. He further commented that he had included provision for implementing the action plan in the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy, but would be happy to achieve this at lower cost. Cabinet

AGREED to support the inclusion of resources in the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy to achieve the BFI Benefits action plan, but that the situation be re-considered in the light of any additional guidance provided as part of the BFI Inspection process.

# 8. SAWSTON - GREEN ROAD - FULBOURN REPROVISION

Members were reminded to limit debate to policy, as a discussion of planning issues could prejudice their participation in any discussion when the Development and Conservation Control Committee considered this planning application.

The Cabinet was asked to consider the transfer of land at The Green Road, Sawston at a nil cost to a Housing Association to provide a supported housing project for fourteen people with mental health needs. These individuals were currently living on long-stay wards at Fulbourn Hospital despite having been assessed as no longer needing hospital care, and some had been waiting years for appropriate housing.

The Housing Portfolio Holder introduced guests who were willing to answer Members' questions:

- Mr Anthony Davis, Mental Health Advocate;
- Mr Phil Wilson, Director of Service Development, South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust;
- Dr Subash Tandon, Associate Specialist Psychiatrist, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust;
- Ms Alison Baggott, Head of Supported Housing, Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association;
- Ms Judy Dean, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust;
  - Ms Jeannette Harding, Service User Consultant;

and drew Members' attention to the fact that funding was available for the scheme, which would improve the quality of life for these residents, that other schemes had been brought forward to address affordable housing needs elsewhere in Sawston; and that Sawston was the preferred location, with a number of facilities and proximity to Fulbourn.

Councillor Dr DR Bard, local member for Sawston, spoke against the scheme and explained that local opposition was not due to prejudice against the mentally ill, as the OWL project and Café evidenced an inclusive community, but due to the demand for affordable housing in the village and the limited locations available.

Confirmations were sought and given:

- The Housing Portfolio Holder had not sought to make the original decision, but approved the scheme on the understanding that it fell under the delegated responsibilities for the Portfolio. The decision was called-in but immediately before the Scrutiny and Overview Committee discussion it was discovered the wrong advice had been given and that Cabinet should make the decision in light of opposition from local Members;
- The existing Primary Care Trust site of the Sawston Health Centre would not be vacated for some time, nor would sites on the Cambridge Northern Fringe be available in the near future. Sufficient funding for construction was available now and any delay could jeopardise the project;
- The Primary Care Trust had not made a final decision on the site of the Sawston Health Centre but had indicated its preference was to sell the land to finance its deficit recovery plan. If sold for residential use, the Council's own affordable housing policies would influence development;
- The site would provide intermediate accommodation for people just leaving the hospital and before they felt comfortable seeking tenancies elsewhere in the District: it was not a scheme prohibiting people from choosing where they wanted to live;
- Although the public meeting in Sawston had received 73 expressions of opposition to the development, this should be weighed against the total village population of nearly 8,000 residents;
- The Primary Care Trust would not derive any savings from the scheme: the *Cambridge Evening News* article had been incorrect and the Mental Health Trust would be providing all services to the residents;
- A great deal of research, both local and national, had gone into the scheme, which was considered a beacon scheme and demonstrated successful partnership working, bringing a direct benefit to a group of residents;
- The potential residents had been interviewed about their hopes for the future and preferred this scheme;
- The scheme had always been for 14 residents but some confusion may have arisen over a visit to a similar scheme in Ipswich which accommodated 7; and
- Although there were 40 people in need of similar assisted living, no other schemes were ready to come forward, although the residents of The Green Road could choose to move elsewhere in time, freeing up spaces in Sawston.

The Head of Housing Strategic Services confirmed that the approval of the Secretary of State was not now required, as disposal would be covered by a general consent.

Councillor Mrs SA Hatton, local member for Sawston, read her own prepared statement and a letter from Dr T Wreghitt, Chairman of Sawston Parish Council, both opposing the scheme, and a letter from County Councillor Tony Orgee, also in opposition, was circulated. Councillor SGM Kindersley commended the fortunate position in which Sawston found itself, able to help people in need and also having its other affordable housing provision needs addressed ahead of other schemes in the District.

Cabinet, with five votes in favour and two against,

**RESOLVED** to approve the transfer of land at the Green Road, Sawston at nil cost to Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association, subject to planning permission and a legally binding agreement to use the site for supported housing.

The Chief Executive agreed to confirm whether this decision would need to be ratified by full Council in view of the local opposition.

# 9. DISPOSAL OF LAND FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Cabinet approval was sought for the disposal of various units to Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) at nil cost to enable the development of new affordable housing to meet identified local needs. The Housing Portfolio Holder explained that this and the following items were brought before Cabinet as they involved funds above Level 2 and commended the proposals to Members.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts expressed her disagreement with the proposals and felt unable to support the recommendations without a capital receipt to the Council or before the conclusion of the Housing Stock Options Appraisal. Councillor RT Summerfield suggested that the proposal be viewed as streamlining the existing housing stock, providing a stronger bargaining position for a potential transfer of stock, if that were the recommendation from the Options Appraisal, or limiting the number of properties in need of expensive redevelopment if the Council retained ownership. He advised Members that the transactions would show in the accounts as both disposal of land and an investment in affordable housing provision in the District, one of the Council's priorities.

#### Cabinet, with one against, **RESOLVED**

- (a) To dispose of the following sites on a free of charge basis to the relevant Registered Social Landlords to facilitate the provision of new affordable housing to meet identified local needs:
  - i. Thirteen sheltered housing units, communal facility and staff accommodation at Elin Way, Meldreth to Raglan Housing Association;
  - ii. Fifteen sheltered housing units and communal facility at Flaxfields, Linton to Hereward Housing Association; and
  - iii. Three existing units and adjoining land at Hunts Road, Duxford to Nene Housing Society;
- (b) That these disposals be subject to the Council having secured vacant possession of the site(s) and the following conditions:
  - i. That the Council's legal costs associated with the disposal of land be met in full by the Registered Social Landlords;
  - ii. That the Council will be entitled to receive nomination rights of 100% of initial lets and 75% of subsequent lettings of all social rented units provided through any new build affordable housing on the sites;
  - iii. That the Council will receive 100% nomination rights in perpetuity to any shared ownership and / or other intermediate tenures provided through any new build affordable housing on the sites
  - iv. That the sites be used only for affordable housing purposes; and
  - v. That any development of affordable housing be completed within three years of their disposal unless a variation is requested and agreed which will only be considered in the event of exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the Registered Social Landlord.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts recorded her opposition to this decision.

#### 10. SWAVESEY - WHITTON CLOSE, SALE OF AIREY PROPERTIES

The Housing Portfolio Holder commended the disposal of the five Airey properties to The Guinness Trust to facilitate the provision of twenty new affordable homes in Swavesey, and noted the support of the local member, Parish Council, neighbourhood manager and residents.

Cabinet, with one against,

**RESOLVED** to approve the sale of the five Airey properties owned by the Council at Whitton Close, Swavesey to The Guinness Trust for the amount of £270,000 to enable the redevelopment scheme to take place.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts recorded her opposition to this decision.

#### 11. BASSINGBOURN, KNUTSFORD ROAD, SALE OF PROPERTIES

The Housing Portfolio Holder introduced the report, which sought approval for the sale of the sheltered bed-sits at Knutsford Road, Bassingbourn, for redevelopment as a group home for people with combined learning difficulties and physical disabilities. She drew attention to the support of the local Members, Parish Council, Shire Homes and local residents, and added that Councillor NN Cathcart, local Member, had asked that a condition be included to preserve the green space in front of the site.

Cabinet, with one against,

**RESOLVED** that the site of the sheltered bed-sits at Knutsford Road, Bassingbourn be disposed of to the Papworth Trust in accordance with the valuation of £100,000, with a condition that the green open space at the front of the site be preserved, maintained and tended by the Papworth Trust.

Councillor Mrs DP Roberts recorded her opposition to this decision.

# Councillor Mrs DP Roberts left the meeting during discussion of the following item and did not vote.

#### 12. SUB-REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

The Housing Portfolio Holder outlined the purposes and content of the Sub Regional Housing Strategy and the amendments since the first Housing Strategy in February 2003.

Cabinet **ENDORSED** the Sub-Regional Housing Strategy.

# 13. LICENSING ACT 2003 - IMPLEMENTATION

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder explained that the full implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 on 7 February 2005 would require additional staffing to handle the expected caseload. It was likely the Council would receive over 1,100 applications (premises and personal) between 7 February and 7 November 2005 and the workload for officers and Members was detailed in the report. Officers had been asked to keep a tally of the overall cost of implementing the Act and were complimented on their

efficiency, building in provision for additional licensing staff in the latest round of Continuous Improvement Plans. It was noted that the recommendation was not for ongoing expenditure and that the additional Democratic Services Officer would be funded from underspends in the current financial year and therefore did not require full Council approval.

Councillor SGM Kindersley noted that the government had yet to inform the Council how much it could charge to carry out its new licensing service.

Cabinet

**AGREED** to the appointment of a Democratic Services Officer for a six-month period from the end of February 2005.

#### Cabinet NOTED

- (a) The additional staffing and member workloads;
- (b) The requirement of additional legal advice on licensing matters; and
- (c) That the appointment of a lawyer would be the subject of a future Cabinet report.

# 14. ORWELL VILLAGE SPORTS FACILITY GRANT

A letter was received from Councillor RF Bryant, local Member for Orwell, sending his apologies for being unable to attend the meeting but detailing his strong support for the many benefits the grant would bring to the village.

Cabinet

AGREED to award the maximum grant of £64,720 to Orwell Parish Council to make improvements to the Orwell Sports Pavilion.

# 15. PLANNING DELIVERY GRANT

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder updated Cabinet on the use of the Planning Delivery Grant for 2004/05. He noted the difficulties faced in attracting high-level officers, a situation common with all planning authorities, and explained that the Council would be re-advertising the position in partnership with the Infrastructure Partnership, allowing a higher salary and better career prospects for the successful applicant. The new officer would be the employee of the Council, not the Infrastructure Partnership. Councillor Dr DR Bard commended to Cabinet the addition of a technician for the Local Plan Team.

#### Cabinet AGREED

- (a) That the Council continue to implement the recommendations associated with the Planning Delivery Grant report in May 2004;
- (b) That the Portfolio Holders for Planning and Economic Development and Resources and Staffing be authorised to approve agreements to be negotiated between the Development Services Director and Mr Stephen Catchpole of the Infrastructure Partnership in respect of obtaining the services of Principal Officers for the Growth Area Posts; and
- (c) That a temporary two-year post of Local Plan Technician be created, funded from the Planning Delivery Grant.

# 16. WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE BUDGET

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder outlined the issues facing the Waste Collection Service budget for this and next year and commended the Chief Environmental Health Officer for his work in addressing them. Officers were congratulated for their work, especially with a change in management, and their inspired use of time and vehicles to arrange deliveries and collections on the same route. Councillor SGM Kindersley cautioned that there would be substantial expenditure coming as the level of development in the District increased as all houses would require rubbish collection.

# Cabinet RESOLVED

- (a) To increase the establishment to make post G4.4.75T permanent, funded by reduced overtime payments;
- (b) That the estimated additional costs to the 2004/05 refuse collection base budget estimate of £172,000 be included as part of the revised budget estimates process;
- (c) To the alteration of the service specification regarding the rectification of missed collections and revises the criteria for the Local Performance Indicator SE200 from "% of missed collections put right by the end of the next working day" to "% of missed collections put right by the end of the next working day following the reporting period", being two days after the scheduled collection;
- In principle, to increasing the on-going base-line budget with effect from 2005/06 by £130,000 due to the inescapable additional costs that will need to be incurred to consolidate the increased property numbers into a 5-day weekly collection service;
- (e) In principle, to the development of the trade waste service and to delegate authority to the Environmental Health Portfolio Holder, in consultation with the Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder, Chief Environmental Health Officer and Management Team, to approve an appropriate business plan based on the expansion of the trade waste service being self-financing and off-setting the household collection costs; and
- (f) To support the initiatives to ensure this service becomes competitive, and continues to be of high quality and value for money.

Cabinet **NOTED** the estimated additional on-going costs from 2005/06 and the work being undertaken to control and, if possible, reduce the costs of the service in future years, including that with RSM Robson Rhodes.

# 17. RECOMMENDATION FROM WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP

The Waste Management Advisory Group had considered the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) for Waste Management Infrastructure and Services at length and the Environmental Health Portfolio Holder commended their recommendations to Cabinet.

# Cabinet AGREED

- To confirm that the Council does not participate as a PFI partner in a joint procurement exercise with Cambridgeshire County Council and other Waste Collection Authorities to provide an integrated waste collection and disposal service under one contract;
- (b) To authorise the signing of the Statement of Understanding (as amended to reflect the decision of Peterborough City Council) by the Environmental Health Portfolio Holder; and
- (c) In principle only, to the Partnering Agreement option and to authorise the

Environmental Health Portfolio Holder and the Chief Environmental Health Officer to continue to work with the County Council and other Partners in negotiating appropriate Heads of Terms.

# Councillor Mrs DP Roberts returned to the meeting at this point.

# 18. SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE - JOINT FUNDED POST

The Housing Portfolio Holder explained that the proposed joint funded post, with support from the South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Cambridgeshire County Council, would share officer focus on services to older people. There existed a growing common agenda for older people but different funding regimes for the different authorities: this post would demonstrate the benefits of partnership working and bring together funding opportunities to bring together added value and to minimise the duplication of work. The post would be co-located with the PCT and the Council. Cabinet was asked for support in principle for the post, with further details and job milestones to be reported at a later meeting.

Concerns were expressed about:

- The level of funding sought;
- The amount of work the officer would do specifically for the Council and whether one officer could simultaneously represent three authorities;
- The job title could reflect that a significant number of older people had disabilities;
- How often the post would be reviewed to see if it provided value for money;
- The amount of committee meeting attendance predicted from the job description versus actual work with older people; and
- Whether approaching the voluntary sector with separate Service Level Agreements for each authority would provide the same results.

#### Cabinet AGREED

- (a) To defer a decision on the creation of the post of Strategic Lead for Community Living; and
- (b) To ask the Housing and Environmental Services Director to look at the post in more detail to reassure Members that the voluntary sector has been considered and that this post would benefit South Cambridgeshire residents and the District Council.

#### Information Items

#### 19. TENANTS' SURVEY

The Housing Portfolio Holder commended the result of the tenants' survey, making particular reference to the high levels of tenant satisfaction with the attitude of workers making repairs. The results were acceptable and there was room for improvement.

Cabinet **NOTED** the tenants' survey results.

# 20. TRAVELLERS COST QUARTERLY UPDATE

Cabinet received the quarterly report on expenditure associated with Travellers for the financial year 2004/05. It was confirmed that:

- The sum of £164,932 available from reserves represented the sum of costs of putative projects for which funds had not been used; and
- The solicitors' costs represented legal fees for a range of injunctions.

Cabinet **NOTED** the report.

#### 21. QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

The report commented on actual income and expenditure against budget for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme for the second quarter of 2004-05, and monitored the indicators under the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Finance and Resources Director advised that, if trends continued at the present rate, the Council was headed for a 1% underspend on the General Fund in this financial year.

Cabinet **NOTED** the report.

Standing Item

# 22. MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

None.

# 23. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt information as defined in Paragraph 11 of Schedule 12A of the Act).

**Confidential Items** 

# 24. SHELTERED HOUSING STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

The Housing Portfolio Holder explained that the proposed short-term arrangements were necessitated by the Working Time Directive (WTD) legislation and the workload of weekend staff. Refusing to implement the changes would leave the Council open to legal action by staff and the Union.

Members were concerned about presenting the changes to residents, especially as some sheltered housing occupants were already displeased with the original changes undertaken to accommodate WTD requirements. The Housing Portfolio Holder acknowledged the difficulties, but expressed her confidence in the Sheltered Housing Manager and Neighbourhood Managers and their staff to explain to situation to residents in a sympathetic manner. Scheme Managers had been involved in the preparation of the service changes to ensure that the most vulnerable residents would not be disadvantaged. An overall service review would be undertaken shortly.

Cabinet asked that a letter outlining all operational changes be sent to all Members immediately to enable them to answer any questions from residents.

Cabinet **NOTED** the short-term operational changes to the Sheltered Housing service and that a full service review would be undertaken over the next 9-12 months.

#### 25. TRAVELLERS UPDATE

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder commended the staffing and co-ordination issues to Cabinet. A report on securing land after direct action would be presented to the November meeting. The Community Development Portfolio Holder thanked officers, the police and the Council's agents who were co-ordinating the Council's approach to traveller issues, over and above their regular workloads. Members commended the report for detailing the extensive amount of work the Council had undertaken in response to recent events.

Cabinet, with one vote against, RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

that the post of Assistant Planning Enforcement Officer (part-time) be extended for a period of 18 months, starting from 15 March 2005, at the current pay scale of  $\pounds$ 19,538 -  $\pounds$ 24,748, with a contract of 30 hours per week and a budget to allow for full-time working where necessary.

#### Cabinet

#### AGREED

to set up a Member-Officer Working Group to consider the options for recruiting the Traveller Project Manager post, to be comprised of:

- The Leader and Portfolio Holders for Community Development and Planning and Economic Development;
- The Development Services Director and Deputy Development Services Director;
- The Head of Policy and Communications; and
- The Head of Community Services.

Cabinet **NOTED** the roles and responsibilities in co-ordinating the Council's approach to traveller issues.

Councillor JD Batchelor recorded his opposition to the recommendation to Council.

The Meeting ended at 3.56 p.m.

# SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Milton Country Park Advisory Group held on Monday, 20 September 2004 at 10am

Councillors:	R Hall	Mrs SA Hatton
	Mrs HM Smith	RT Summerfield

and Councillor Mrs. DP Roberts (Community Development Portfolio Holder)

Also in attendance was Mr S Bennett (Friends of MCP) and Mr P Oldham, Parish Council representative

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs HF Kember, MJ Mason and Mrs JA Muncey.

# 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE COMING YEAR

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs SA Hatton be elected Chairman of the Advisory Group for the coming year.

#### 2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE COMING YEAR

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs HM Smith be elected Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Group for the coming year.

#### 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs HF Kember and MJ Mason.

#### 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

# 5. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH APRIL 2004

The Chairman was authorised to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2004 as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Mins 6.5 and 7.3 – Simon Bennett to be amended to read Stephen Bennett.

#### 6. MATTERS ARISING

 $\underline{Min 4.1}$  – The Head of Community Services confirmed that a letter had been sent to Roger Day.

 $\underline{Min 4.3}$  – As requested at the last meeting, the Head of Community Services informed the Advisory Group of the legalities regarding the issues raised concerning the use of the Park by dogs and their owners.

- The Council would not be liable if an unleashed dog attacked a member of the public in the park.
- To designate the whole of the park under a byelaw that all dogs must be kept on leads would require the following action:
  - o submission of draft byelaw for provisional approval

- o make the resolution
- o sign and seal the byelaw
- o advertise the byelaw
- submit the byelaw to Dept for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

Guidance also suggests carrying out public consultation to gauge likely support before beginning the process and warns that there may be major opposition in applying a byelaw to an area where large numbers of dog owners have been used to allowing their dogs to exercise off the lead.

Paul Oldham advised the Group that he had checked the minutes of a Parish Council meeting that had indicated an area of the Park should be kept for unleashed dogs and that the Secretary of State would only have granted planning permission for the Park if such an area was provided.

Following discussion it was agreed that:

- (a) the Head of Community Services would prepare an article for publication in the Milton Parish newsletter and South Cambs magazine regarding the issue of unleashed dogs in the park and inviting users of the park for their views,
- (b) a notice reminding dog owners of their responsibilities to be placed on the board at the entrance of the Visitor Centre,
- (c) any incidents involving unleashed dogs in the park be recorded, and
- (d) the item be re-considered in six months

<u>Min 5.9</u> - It was noted that notices had been erected in accordance with the minute requirement.

# 7. TREE INSPECTION POLICY

The Head of Community Services clarified the position regarding the Council's liability in relation to falling trees. The Council has a duty to conduct a systematic inspection of trees on or close to a highway. Such an inspection is intended to reveal if trees are diseased or potentially dangerous so that suitable remedial action can be taken before accidents occur. In the case of Milton Country Park it would be necessary to treat the paths within the park as highways. The Group were reminded that a procedure was in place to close the park during high winds. Trial inspections were taking place to determine the length of time required to inspect the whole park, these were concentrating on trees near high risk areas such as the play area and car park.

A letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> September, sent by Milton Parish Council to the Head of Community Services was distributed at the meeting and the issues raised were considered by the Advisory Group as follows:

- <u>indiscriminate felling of trees, particularly in Tomkins Mead</u> the Head of Community Services reported that following explanation of the interim tree inspection policy, all parties had now agreed that the word *indiscriminate* was not appropriate in these circumstances and the word had subsequently been withdrawn. It was noted however that Tomkins Mead was owned by the Parish Council with Milton Country Park managing it on their behalf
- trees left, as they fell, in the lake this had been done on advice as additional shelter was needed for fish, however additional consideration would be given in the future to the locations used, if/when further felling was required
- <u>exposure of properties in Pearson and Shirley Close due to felling of trees</u> some concern was raised about the routine work being carried out in blocks of

the planted areas to the rear of Pearson and Shirley Close. The question was asked could the work areas be arranged so as to leave a screen. It was stressed that any area worked in would close-up following the subsequent regrowth of coppiced trees and shrubs.

- <u>felling of other trees between willows</u> the contractors or any other persons involved in felling, using powered tools must have a safe environment to work in.
- <u>exposure of CEN press building due to felling of trees</u> noted that this had happened but condition of trees had made the work necessary. Measures to limit exposure were not possible in the limited space available.
- <u>Liaison meetings between the Ranger and Parish Council rep</u> it was agreed that the Ranger meet on a regular basis with a representative from the Parish Council, to exchange information about what was happening or planned in the Park.
- <u>nesting sites and habitat have been destroyed in the felling process</u> there had been no evidence of this occurring
- <u>Lack of Litter bins</u> following discussion and various suggestions made, it was AGREED that
  - (a) the depot be consulted about supplying a SCDC trade bin on the community centre recreation area and emptying it as part of a weekly collection
  - (b) Milton Community Centre be contacted about the costs of providing and emptying an additional bin on the recreation area
  - (c) further consideration be given to its siting

# MB to action and report to the next MCP meeting

The Advisory Group, having noted the contents of the report

**RECOMMENDS** to the Community Development Portfolio Holder the adoption of a Tree Inspection Policy in respect of Milton County Park.

# 8. THE PARK THIS SUMMER

The Advisory Group, having noted the contents of the report also noted the following information provided at the meeting:

- para 9 erection of the No Smoking signs on the play equipment area were progressing.
- para 10 reference to Milton PC website, should read Milton Chat.
- para <u>11</u> ownership of the land had not yet been transferred. The Ranger had had an informal meeting with the new Resources Director of the Rowing Trust who wished to form links with the Park on areas of common interest. No discussions on specific items were discussed; details of the meeting were forwarded to the Head of Community Services.
- <u>para 12</u> the Group reiterated their disagreement with the proposal by Cambridge Mencap to provide a nursery.

# 9. WALK AROUND THE PARK

Due to the inclement weather, the walk around the park was cancelled.

# 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2004 at 10am.

# The Meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.

# SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Information and Customer Services Portfolio Holder Meeting held on Tuesday, 7 September 2004 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT:	JD Batchelor	Mrs DSK Spink MBE
Officers:	Sally Carroll Greg Harlock Steve Rayment	Communications Manager Finance and Resources Director Assistant Director of Finance and Resources (ICT)
	Susan May	Democratic Services Manager
		A oti

Action

2.

SC

SR

Received from JS Ballantyne.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** 

#### 3. MINUTES

1.

Minutes of the meeting held on 11th August 2004 were confirmed as a correct record.

#### 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING

- 4.1 Who does what Guide (Min 3.1) Only part of the necessary information had yet been put onto the Intranet, SC/SCM but it was hoped this would be completed soon.
- 4.2 **Member Access to the Intranet** (min 3.2) SR reported that the VPN was still an issue for many members. He did not want to give members an unreliable service and had asked ITNET to **SR** put their efforts into non-VPN solutions.
- 4.3 **Grapevine RIP** (min 3.4) Being printed.

# 4.4 **Signage** (mins 3.6, 4.2 & 4.3)

SC had meetings on signage at the Cambridge office and the Contact Centre on 16th September. JB reported that landlord's permission had still not been obtained to erect signs at the Contact Centre. SC had not been able to progress signs at Cambourne.

- 4.5 **Broadband for members** (min 3.7) Guide in progress.
- 4.6 **ITNET Annual Review** (min 3.8) Noted that there was not a six month review.

# 4.7 **Performance Indicators** (min 8)

JSB sent a message that detailed arrangements for PIs to be reported were being finalised, including a request that they should be reported to individual portfolio holders before presentation to Cabinet.

# 5. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

- 5.1 A written summary was circulated. Matters of note included:
  - The CEN had declined the offer of a 1 : 1 session on the Council Tax at this stage in order to assess public response
  - South Cambs Magazine was being distributed and the cost had been increased by 1p per copy
  - A special edition of South Cambs Magazine on planning consultation was to be distributed between 23rd September and 1st October
  - Leaflets on travellers' issues had been prepared 1 for travellers, 1 for landowners and 1 for parish councils
  - Plaques for buildings grant aided by the Council were being produced from recycled plastic
  - Quite a few entries had been received for the name the meeting room competition; Cllrs Mrs Spink and Summerfield to judge

#### 5.2 Lunch Seminars

Dan Horrex to be asked to make a presentation to members on the Freedom of Information Act.

# 5.3 Members' Letter Heads

The quotation for individually prepared letter heads was nearly £1 per sheet. Other ways of providing letter heads were discussed and JB asked for two options to be prepared for him.

SC/SCM

SR

SC

SR

# 6. CASCADE UPDATE

#### 6.1 Recruitment

The new agents had started and were being trained. They would start housing training on 13th September, followed by a week answering housing queries. They would go on to revenues and benefits training on 27th September and should be fully operational on October 18th. The intention was to remove the housing divert on 19th October, but S Hampson had not yet been advised. SR had a meeting arranged for the 30th September with the Contact Centre to check progress.

#### 6.2 **Performance**

This was still causing concern, but it was hoped the new agents would make a difference.

#### 6.3 Contract

This was still waiting on the Council's own legal review. The deadline was the end of September.

# 6.4 Integration

The presentation of "multi-view" was still programmed for 13th September.

The other issue was the version of CRM was being used by the County Council. It was understood that Huntingdonshire would be operating its own system although from the same building.

# 7. ICT UPDATE

#### 7.1 Recruitment

The only vacant post was that of LPG Officer and the advertisement was producing a reasonable response.

#### 7.2 Network

Installation of the wireless system was still tentatively programmed for mid-late September.

#### 7.3 **Phone System**

This was still being upgraded.

Noted that only the BT directory enquiry service could be accessed from the system (118 500).

#### 7.4 Cambridge Office

This was working well and the video conferencing facility was being used. The office was, however, difficult to find both from outside and inside the building.

#### 7.5 **PCs for Councillors**

Delivery of 3 PCs was still outstanding, but a time had been agreed for two of them.

The remaining budget would fund replacement of some of the oldest PCs and it was confirmed that Cabinet would be given the first option.

# 7.6 Business Analysts

JB reiterated his wish to meet the business analysts.

# 8. BROADBAND UPDATE

SR reported that the first deployment had been in July/August and that about 200 services had been notified. A customer satisfaction survey was to be carried out. The overall project could be deemed a success as it had galvanised BT into covering some 75% of the district.

The advice of the Head of Legal Services was awaited on the legal viability of using money set aside for wireless DSLs to provide Broadband for Lower Cambourne.

It was noted that BT should be able to provide Broadband to the business park area of Cambourne by July 2005.

# 9. USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN MEETINGS

#### 9.1 **Use of Voting Information**

As there were differing views on Council's intentions for the use of individual voting records it was agreed that a report should be taken to the next meeting of Council so this could be clarified. It was noted that the Freedom of Information Act could have an effect.

SCM

#### 9.2 **Recording of Debates**

JB was waiting for the views of Management Team and possibly of other staff before taking any further action on Council's decision.

#### 9.3 **Display of Agenda Item Numbers**

Plans for achieving this by computer were noted.

#### 10. FORWARD PROGRAMME

The ESD Strategy should be added for Cabinet on 11th and Council on **SR/SCM** 25th November.

#### 11. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Wednesday 13th October 10.00 a.m Wednesday 10th November 10.00 a.m. (clashes with Env Health PFH) Wednesday 8th December 10.00 a.m. (clashes with Env Health PFH)

#### The meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.