

**COUNCILLORS' BULLETIN  
17<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2004**

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Cambridgeshire  
District Council**

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**COMMITTEE MEETINGS FROM:  
22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2004**

<b>Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 04</b>	All Day	Modern.Gov and Intranet Training	Council Chamber
<b>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 04</b>	9.30am	Resources & Staffing Portfolio Holder	G Harlock's Office
<b>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November 04</b>	12-1pm	Members Training Advisory Group	Council Chamber
	2 –5pm	Council	Council Chamber

**Meeting Room names**

The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council have reviewed the suggestions for the Name the Meeting Room Competition and have agreed that the winning entries were:

First Floor Meeting Room -- The Monkfield Room  
Ground Floor Meeting Room -- The Swansley Room

Both names have a historic connection to Cambourne: Monkfield Farm was the original site of what is now Upper / Great Cambourne, thus it is the name for the Upper Meeting Room, and Swansley Wood Farm was the site of Lower Cambourne and thus the name for the Lower Meeting Room.

**Driving Safely**

The local Member for Conington, Cllr Mark Howell, has asked us to draw to the attention of all staff and Members some concerns raised by villagers in his ward. In recent weeks, there have been an increasing-number of complaints about speeding cars and dangerous driving through Conington, Boxworth and Elsworth in particular.

Whilst there is nothing to link these complaints necessarily with the driving of District Council employees and Members, SCDC is keen to support local initiatives to promote safer driving. The Council has already signed up to an action, working with partner agencies in the district, to **increase road safety** through safer driving and cycling as part of the agreed Community Strategy for the district. One immediate step towards this is for staff within all the partner agencies to drive carefully and within the speed limits at all times

Now that the clocks have gone back and with the prospect of winter weather in the coming months, we would encourage everyone to take care on their way to the offices - whatever your route - and to be considerate to other road users and local villagers. The Council is also committed to promoting more sustainable forms of travel and commuting. For more information about car-sharing, cycling or public transport plus any other features of the Council's Travel for Work Plan, please contact Cameron Adams on Ext 3135.

**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 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004 at 5pm**. All decisions not called in by this date may be implemented on **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November 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 the Housing Portfolio Holder

Decision	Applicant and Reason
<p><u>Supported Housing for Older People</u> The Housing Portfolio Holder agreed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note the conclusions of the Best Value Review of Sheltered Housing and the resulting Action Plan</li> <li>Endorse the Vision Statement set out in the Executive Summary</li> <li>Decide on the appropriate member representation for an Advisory Group on Housing for Older People and ask for Cabinet's agreement</li> <li>Approve the project plan as a means for taking forward to Action plan and other identified tasks</li> </ol>	<p><u>Housing for Older People Advisory Group (HOPAG)</u></p> <p>The remit of the new Advisory Group will be</p> <p>To provide overall guidance to the project to ensure that the Council's sheltered housing in South Cambs meets the current and future needs of older people and is financially sustainable.</p>
<p><u>Housing and Planning in the Regions</u></p>	<p>The Housing Portfolio AGREED to recommend that this Council supports the suggested Sub-Regional response detailed in the following table:</p>

Proposal	Sub-Regional Response
<p><b>Merging Regional Housing Boards (RHBs) and Regional Planning Bodies (RPBs) within Regional Assemblies (RAs)</b></p>	<p>At a meeting of the Regional Housing Forum on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November, it was suggested that the response include a requirement for sub-regional member level representation on the Housing and Sustainable Communities Panel, in order to encourage member level ownership of and engagement in the sub regional agenda. Whilst recognising the practical difficulties of agreeing a single member rep for a sub region, I would suggest we consider this as a key part of a Cambridge sub-region response.</p> <p>Key points for a response from the Cambridge sub-region might be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome proposals to bring housing and planning closer together</li> <li>• Concern that new structures could be driven by planning, and the focus on new housing provision, to the detriment of wider strategic housing issues, including government priorities, such as homelessness</li> <li>• Concern that a planning dominated system could lose the focus on long-term management of housing, and see provision of new housing without sufficient thought or safeguards for managing the rented housing, and working with the community, for the long term</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues of capacity to support the rented sector, and housing in its wider sense</li> <li>• Questions arising about the relationships of sub-regions to regional bodies – welcome the coherence that the merger could bring, so long as Regional Assemblies can link the housing and planning sub regions effectively</li> <li>• Questions arising about the future relationships of regional Assemblies and Government Offices: councils, and others, need clarity about how central government operates through RAs and Government Offices (GOs), and about their respective areas of operation. For example, if the RA is responsible for producing the RHS, will it be signed off by the GO? How does the work of the Go with sub regions and districts relate to the EERA/ RHB work?</li> <li>• Issues of capacity of EERA to effectively facilitate the RHB: RHBs have not been effectively resourced until now, and they need more support to develop the individual members of the decision making panels, as well as support for research and administration.</li> </ul>
<b>Creation of a national independent advice unit</b>	No specific comments made.

**Decisions made by the Housing Portfolio Holder continued...**

Decision	Applicant and Reason
The Housing Portfolio Holder agreed to note the key findings of the Pathways to Accessible Housing Report and the proposed improvements to the Orchard System.	<u>Pathways to accessible housing in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire</u>
The Housing Portfolio Holder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endorsed the approach and policy and the procedures attached as Appendices to the report</li> <li>• Noted the action being taken</li> </ul>	<u>Anti-Social Behaviour Policy</u>
The Housing Portfolio Holder agreed with the recommendation not to dispose of any part of the site to Shepreth Wildlife Park.	<u>Shepreth Wildlife Park</u>  The Lands Officer introduced the report to seek approval, subject to valuation, for the disposal of some or all of the Recreation Ground off Station Road, Shepreth to Shepreth Wildlife Park for grazing and amenity purposes as shown on the plan and photographs.



**SPECIAL MEETING OF  
SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT  
AREA JOINT COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 8th November 2004  
2.30 p.m.**

**Ground Floor Meeting Room  
South Cambridgeshire Hall,  
Cambourne Business Park  
CAMBOURNE**

**DECISION SUMMARY**

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Michelle Rowe  
(01223) 717293

Councillor J E Reynolds declared a personal interest under the County Council's Code of Conduct in relation to Agenda Item No.2 by reason of him being an employee of a company owning land in Cowley Road.

**2. CAMBRIDGE NORTHERN FRINGE – FOR INFORMATION**

Alistair Frost  
01223 717585

Agreed to note the progress made and support the public information and consultation programme.

**3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL CYCLE NETWORK IN THE  
CAMBRIDGE AREA**

Patrick Joyce  
01223 716025

Agreed:

- a) to note recent progress in the development of the National Cycle Network;
- b) to endorse the construction of an improved surface to "The Halingway" downstream of the Pike and Eel public house in Chesterton, the cycleway between Sawston and Stapleford, and a cycle link from the Sawston roundabout to Whittlesford Station; and
- c) to note the extremely limited time frame for the scheme to be carried out to completion.

***Members of the Committee:***

**County Councillors:**

**T J Bear, J E Coston, S F Johnstone (Chairman) & J E Reynolds**

**District Councillors:**

**Dr D Bard, J D Batchelor, S G M Kindersley, D S K Spink and R Summerfield**

**CALC Councillors: G Everson**

**This Decision Summary is printed on recycled paper**

## CABINET

At a meeting of the Cabinet held on  
Thursday, 11 November 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	Planning & Economic Development Portfolio Holder
	JD Batchelor	Information & Customer Services Portfolio Holder
	Mrs JM Healey	Conservation, Sustainability & Community Planning Portfolio Holder
	Mrs EM Heazell	Housing Portfolio Holder
	SGM Kindersley	Environmental Health Portfolio Holder
	Mrs DP Roberts	Community Development Portfolio Holder

Councillors RF Bryant, R Hall and Mrs GJ Smith were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs CAED Murfitt and Councillor RF Bryant apologised for his late arrival.

Members and officers observed a two-minute silence at 11.00 am.

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### Procedural Items

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#### 1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Leader was authorised to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2004, subject to the following amendments:

##### **Sawston – Green Road – Fulbourn Reprovision (Minute 8)**

- “The Housing Portfolio Holder had...approved the scheme on the legal and professional advice that it fell under the delegated responsibilities...”
- “Councillor Mrs SA Hatton...read her own ~~prepared~~ statement...”

With four in favour, three opposed and one abstention, Cabinet **AGREED** that the paragraph following the statement from Mrs Hatton be removed. Cabinet further **AGREED** that the amended Minute 8 attached as Appendix A to the original minutes be adopted with the above changes incorporated.

##### **Tenants’ Survey (Minute 19)**

- “The results were acceptable and there was still room for improvement.”

Cabinet

**AGREED** that more abbreviated minutes be the preferred form for all future meetings and that this decision be made clear to all members.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Housing and Environmental Services Director declared a personal interest in item

10 (Duxford – Drainage Easement), as his wife was an employee of the Cambridge Housing Society, although not associated with development.

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### **Recommendations to Council**

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#### **3. LICENSING ACT 2003 - POLICY**

The public had been consulted on the Licensing Act 2003 – Policy and some amendments had been made to the final document. The Licensing Committee had already agreed the new policy.

Cabinet **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL** the adoption of the Licensing Policy.

#### **4. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT RECRUITMENT**

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder explained the recruitment difficulties the Council faced trying to fill the positions of the Northstowe Project Manager and the Principal Planning Officer – Cambridge City Edge. Although Cambridgeshire Horizons had been able to guarantee funding for two years, advertising the posts as two-year contracts had been unsuccessful and Cabinet was asked to re-evaluate the positions as permanent posts. If re-advertisement were also unsuccessful, market supplements may have to be considered and Cabinet was asked to delegate responsibility to the Portfolio Holders for Planning and Economic Development and Resources and Staffing so the matter did not have to return to Cabinet.

Confirmations were sought and given:

- Market supplements did not breach the Monks Factor 6 scheme;
- If the positions could not be filled, the Council risked losing management of the project to Cambridgeshire Horizons, which could employ the officers and second, rather than transfer, them to the Council;
- The new officers would report to the New Town Officer with the same level of responsibilities as the New Village / Special Projects Officer (Cambourne);
- If market supplements were required for the new officers, the Planning and Economic Development and Resources and Staffing sought delegated authority, with the Chief Executive and Development Services Director, to consider existing salaries for officers at the same level of responsibilities;
- Changes in employment law meant that short-term contracts no longer benefited the Council with regards to pension contributions or redundancies; and
- There was a high demand for planning staff amongst authorities locally.

Cabinet **RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL**

- (a) the re-advertisement of the Northstowe Project Manager and Principal Planning Officer – Cambridge City Edge posts offering permanent contracts and that the Council thereby accepts the risk that this implies;
- (b) in parallel to recommendation (a), to continue discussions, led by Cambridgeshire Horizons, with the other to Local Planning Authorities to see what benefits could flow from a joint approach; and
- (c) to delegate authority to the Planning and Economic Development and Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holders, with the Chief Executive and the Development Services Director, to consider including market supplements to the posts should the re-advertisement prove unsuccessful.



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## Decisions made by the Cabinet and reported for information

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### 5. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Head of Legal Services had prepared a report on proposed changes to the Constitution regarding delegated powers for the transfer of land and Local Members' power to require decisions to be taken by the Cabinet.

Cabinet **DEFERRED** this item and **REFERRED** it to the Constitution Review Working Party and asked that a simplified report be included with the agenda for that committee. The Constitution Review Working Party was requested to invite all members to their meeting and to draw attention to the implications of recommendation B – Local Members' Power to Require Decision to be taken by Cabinet.

### 6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING - 6 MONTH REPORT

This quarterly report showed performance against targets and progress on milestones, Performance Indicators and Corporate Action Plans. The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder noted that it was a critical time to make suggestions for improvements as the next report, nine months into the financial year, was almost too late to implement changes. He reported that the Performance Information Management and Monitoring System (PIMMS) had been a success and taken on board by staff.

Members commented on the report:

- There had been slight slippage on the two targets scheduled for completion by the end of September 2004, with one likely to be completed in November and detailed work on-going on the other;
- BV185 (% of housing response repairs where appointments made and kept) showed an achievement of 64%, caused by the computer software calculating the figures appearing to have lost information during the move to Cambourne. The Council's IT team was investigating and the achievement was now back to 90% and on target for the end of the year;
- The Contact Centre satisfaction survey could not have commenced until the proper staffing levels had been reached. As all vacancies had been filled by mid-October, there had been a marked improvement in service levels. Full integration between the Contact Centre and the back office would be achieved during Phase 2 and a report would be made to the December meeting of Cabinet to show the performance during Phase 1. Call monitoring and review of drop-out rates had been tracked during the early days of the Contact Centre; and
- The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder had agreed to support further real nappy trial kits, as disposable nappies contributed to 3% of the landfill in South Cambridgeshire.

Cabinet **AGREED**

- (a) to congratulate officers for readily adapting to the PIMMS technology;
- (b) to request Management Team to direct the Policy and Performance Team to work with officers responsible for the following milestones and PIs to monitor progress. It was considered unlikely that Cabinet intervention was required in these areas:  
**M16** – demolition of 12 sheltered bed-sits / construction of new homes at Bassingbourn

**M36** – increase support for the real nappy campaign  
**SF703** – Contact Centre satisfaction  
**BV4** – satisfaction with complaints handling  
**SH320** – affordable housing planning permissions  
**SX13** – annual Sports Strategy action plans implemented  
**SX16** – villages with completed Parish Plans  
**SX17** – income attracted from other funding agencies  
**SE200** – missed collections put right next day  
**SE201** – household waste collections missed per 100,000  
**SE203** – Environmental Health complaints responded to within 3 days  
**BV84** – waste collected per head of population  
**BV66a** – rent collected

- (c) to identify Cabinet actions for the remaining Corporate Action Plans and Performance Indicators to ensure timescales or targets were achieved wherever possible:  
**CAP 4** – CPA Improvement Plan implementation timetable  
**BV185** – % housing response repairs where appointments made and kept  
**BV109a** – % major planning applications in 13 weeks  
**SX25** – average days for standard search  
**BV8** – % undisputed invoices paid within 30 days  
**BV12** – number of days lost to sickness absence
- (d) that all Portfolio Holders pass on improvement suggestions to their Chief Officers.

## **7. HOUSING / COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Resources and Staffing Portfolio Holder reminded Members that the Council's benefit service was to be inspected by the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate in December and needed Cabinet endorsement of the policies and procedures.

Cabinet

- AGREED** to support and adopt the following policies and procedures demonstrating the Council's policy on tackling Housing and Council Tax Benefit fraud:
- Benefit Fraud Team Code of Conduct
  - Housing and Council Tax Benefit Fraud Strategy
  - Counter Fraud Business Plan 2004/05
  - Benefit Prosecution Policy
  - Benefit Fraud Team Terms of Reference
  - Overpayment and Recovery Policy and Procedures

## **8. PROVISION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

Cabinet, at its meeting of 20 July 2004, had previously considered this issue and had asked officers to look at new ways for providing and managing community facilities. The report highlighted the problems experienced with the Cambourne development under the current section 106 system and made recommendations for a different approach to be applied to Northstowe. The Community Development Portfolio Holder advised Members of the existing limits on officer time and resources and drew attention to the proposal that the cost of professional role could be part of the developer contribution. She also highlighted the costs experienced by other authorities who directly managed community and sports facilities.

Councillor JD Batchelor noted that any commuted capital sums must be inflation proof as years could elapse between the sum being paid and the trigger point being reached.

Councillor Dr DR Bard suggested that the sum could be paid when the reserved matters application was submitted, in which case the Council could invest the sum and accrue interest. The Cultural Services Manager clarified that officers felt it important that they take the lead on large facilities to ensure the appropriate quality and timing of facilities and also to allow greater flexibility in the final design. Changes of policy relating to S 106 contributions would have to be incorporated into the Local Development Framework and Supplementary Planning Documents.

Members welcomed any opportunities to strengthen the delivery of facilities and commended the Cultural Services Manager on the report.

Cabinet **AGREED**

- (a) to endorse further work to review and strengthen Section 106 policy and working practice relating to community facility provision for Northstowe and other new developments. The review would consider further the need for financial contributions from developers rather than the direct provision of community facilities;
- (b) to endorse the further exploration of a Development Trust for Northstowe based on some or all of the following actions:
  - establishment of a Member-Officer steering group;
  - visits to existing Development Trusts;
  - discussions with Cambridgeshire Horizons (formerly The Infrastructure Partnership);
  - discussions with developers; and
  - commissioning of a feasibility study / scoping exercise with partners.

**9. SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE - JOINT FUNDED POST**

Miss Sheila Bremner from the South Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) was in attendance for this item.

The Housing Portfolio Holder explained that, since the previous Cabinet meeting from which this item had been deferred, the PCT had released its formal staff consultation paper on primary care and community services in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, proposing the establishment of a small Community Living team which would focus on the development of healthy communities for older people. She noted the importance of looking seriously at the needs of an ageing population.

The Housing and Environmental Services Director explained that the report added more detail to the proposed job role, although it was not intended to be too prescriptive as the officer would be expected to respond innovatively to challenges. The voluntary sector forum had been consulted on the proposal and had been very supportive, feeling that such a role was more appropriate in a local authority than in a voluntary organisation. Miss Bremner added that the central theme of the new PCT strategy was to support older people in the community, preferably in their own homes, and that this post would be crucial for the delivery of the strategy.

It was clarified that the PCT would be the employing authority and an agreement would regulate the contribution from partner authorities. The post would be co-located between the PCT and the Council. Support services had been built into the management structure of the PCT and would be employed and funded by that authority. Members thanked the Housing and Environmental Services Director for the additional detail in the new report.

The Housing Portfolio Holder agreed to use caution in using communal rooms at

housing schemes, but hoped that residents would be happy for additional activities being offered. The report contained a reassurance about a memorandum of agreement ensuring appropriate workplaces.

Cabinet **AGREED**

- (a) to support the proposal for the creation of the post of Strategic Lead for Community Living;
- (b) to the allocation of up to £15,000 per annum in 2005/06 and 2006/07 as the Council's contribution to that post; and
- (c) that the role profile include under "Community Development – Older People": to stimulate schemes to increase the income of older people, with regard to claiming benefits".

#### **10. DUXFORD - DRAINAGE EASEMENT**

The Housing Portfolio Holder read out a letter from the Flagship Housing Group, which included the Cambridgeshire Housing Society, explaining that the valuation for the easement added £26,000 (72%) to the price, so the future rents received would not pay back the loan for 36 years, although the government's target was 30 years.

Members queried whether the unadopted roadway would cause maintenance costs to return to the Council. It was confirmed that it was an existing road, not new development. The Housing Portfolio Holder agreed to investigate the adoption process, although the lack of adoption would not stop the progression of the scheme. Councillor Mrs DP Roberts agreed to speak to the Housing Portfolio Holder about one of the families possibly involved.

Cabinet

- AGREED** to offer to the Cambridge Housing Society free of charge for the proposed development off Lacey's Way, Duxford:
- right of vehicular access over Council land from Lacey's Way, Duxford to the proposed new development of social housing; and
  - an easement to connect the new development to the existing Council-owned foul water drainage network.

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#### **Information Items**

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#### **11. REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

The Leader reported that she had attended the recent Regional Assembly and had voted against the Hertfordshire and Essex proposals to reduce their housing allocations, which would have increased the development in Cambridgeshire: the proposal had been defeated. She had also commented on the lack of District Council representation on the Planning Panel, to which the Regional Assembly had agreed to review its Constitution to allow District Council representatives to attend the Planning Panel in a non-voting capacity when issues concerning District Councils were considered.

The Leader confirmed that the Regional Assembly had voted against the 18,000 new homes and that it had been clarified that this did refer to a new town.

**12. MATTERS REFERRED BY SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

Cabinet **NOTED** the call-in of the decision on the Sawston – Green Road – Fulbourn Reprovision.

**13. 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).

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**Confidential Items**

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**14. MANAGEMENT OF HOUSING PROPERTY SERVICES**

The Housing Portfolio Holder explained that the proposed variation to the Housing and Environmental Services departmental management structure stemmed from the PriceWaterhouseCoopers review, which had originally recommended the creation of three division heads reporting to the Director to fully integrate the former Housing, Environmental Services and Depot teams. Management Team felt that more effective integration could be achieved with the Head of Shire Homes and the Chief Environmental Health Officer taking direct responsibility for the depot functions relating to their particular services, and that the post of Assistant Director (Commercial Services) be deleted from the establishment, replaced with a new post of Property Services Manager, reporting directly to the Head of Shire Homes.

The Chief Executive confirmed that this and the next report were aimed at operational aspects and were required no matter the outcome of the management re-organisation.

Cabinet

**AGREED** to authorise adjustment of the Housing and Environmental Services departmental structure to reflect the more integrated approach, subject to costs not exceeding those of the approved structure, the detail of the changes to be agreed between the Chief Executive, Housing and Environmental Services Director and the Head of Shire Homes.

**15. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ORGANISATION REVIEW**

The Environmental Health Portfolio Holder explained that the Environmental Health department had undergone great changes since 1999, as reflected in the proposals which presented a strong policy emphasis on service delivery. He drew Members' attention to the financial implications which forecast a savings on establishment, confirming that this was a separate area from services. He congratulated the Housing and Environmental Services Director and the Chief Environmental Health Officer on the proposals and noted that:

- in light of recent public consultation, officers had been asked to progress the Cleaner Streets Strategy as soon as possible; and
- the government expected the Council to have two contaminated land officers and the Revenue Support Grant included funding for two full-time equivalent posts.

Cabinet

**AGREED**

that the proposals for the Environmental Health organisational staffing structure be approved for subsequent implementation.

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**The Meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.**

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