

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 24 April 2014 at 2.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor David Bard – Chairman
Councillor Sue Ellington – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Richard Barrett, Val Barrett, Trisha Bear, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Jonathan Chatfield, Pippa Corney, Kevin Cuffley, Neil Davies, Simon Edwards, Alison Elcox, Andrew Fraser, Jose Hales, Roger Hall, Lynda Harford, Tumi Hawkins, Roger Hickford, James Hockney, Caroline Hunt, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, David McCraith, Cicely Murfitt, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Robin Page, Deborah Roberts, Neil Scarr, Tim Scott, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Jim Stewart, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Robert Turner, Susan van de Ven, Bunty Waters, Aidan Van de Weyer, John Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

Officers:	Graham Aisthorpe-Watts	Democratic Services Team Leader
	Alex Colyer	Executive Director, Corporate Services
	Jean Hunter	Chief Executive
	Fiona McMillan	Legal & Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Hersom, Mark Howell, Mervyn Loynes, Raymond Matthews, Alex Riley and David Whiteman-Downes.

96. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Neil Davies declared a non-disclosable interest in minute number 109(a) as a staff member of Barclays.

Councillor Nick Wright declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in minute number 109(b) as he owned land that could be affected by the Cambridge to Huntingdon A14 improvement scheme.

97. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

The Chairman reminded Members that they needed to update their register of interests whenever their circumstances changed.

98. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to Councillor Tumi Hawkins' supplementary question at minute number 91(a) being amended to read:

“Where have the extra 5,000 houses come from?”

99. MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 13 March 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- the fourth line of Councillor Tumi Hawkins' account under minute number 95 (Chapters 1 – 3) to read:

“She asked where the additional houses proposed had come from”.
- the sixth to tenth lines of the same account to read:

“Councillor Hawkins added that Highways stated in the SHLAA document that there was the potential for over 19,750 daily trips to be generated from the Bourn Airfield Development, but that the County Council was providing nothing to support them. She referred to her paper that she had circulated to Members before the meeting, highlighting the fact that the only transport solution was the proposed dedicated bus lane, but asked who would pay for it and where the funding would come from.”
- the paragraph attributed to Councillor Alex Riley under minute number 95 (Chapters 1 – 3) to be replaced with the following:

“Councillor Alex Riley agreed that this process was not democratic because the Government had decreed that the Council must create capacity for a given number of homes, with failure to do so resulting in planning applications being allowed on appeal as a punishment. With regard to Northstowe, he thought that some rather silly suggestions had been put forward from previous speakers. The Guided Bus already struggled to cope in busy periods. Accelerating 1,500 homes in phase one would result in additional traffic on the B1050 which was already at capacity, and phase two could not proceed until the A14 improvements had taken place. It was therefore unrealistic to expect phase two to start until 2020. He understood the anger and frustration from residents and representatives of Bourn and Waterbeach but pointed out the Northstowe Plan had been for 600 homes to be completed per year, from 2006, so Northstowe should have had 5,000 homes by now, whereas nothing had yet been delivered. He added that the Government could lay down whatever targets it liked, but if the demand or infrastructure were not there the homes would not be built.”
- the inclusion of Councillor Sebastian Kindersley as a seconder to the proposed amendment by Councillor James Hockney under minute number 95 (Chapters 1 – 3).
- the inclusion of a note to state that Councillor Edd Stonham left the meeting at the conclusion of Chapters 1 – 3.
- the paragraph attributed to Councillor Bridget Smith under minute number 95 (Chapters 4 – 10) be amended to remove reference to Policy SC/5 regarding hospice provision and replaced with a sentence stating that she supported the policy relating to sustainable show homes.

100. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor David Bard, Chairman, reported that outline planning permission for the first phase of the Northstowe development, consisting of 1,500 houses, was granted on 22 April 2014. Work could now commence and he took this opportunity to thank everyone involved, stating that it was a major step for Northstowe.

Councillor Bard reminded Members that the annual Park Life event would take place on 28 June 2014 at the Milton Country Park. He urged Members to volunteer on the day or simply attend and enjoy the event, which he said was an excellent day out.

Councillor Bard provided an update on Councillor Raymond Matthews, who was still recovering in hospital. Councillor Matthews was making good progress and had asked the Chairman to send the Council his best wishes.

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, reported that a lady from Great Shelford had won a brand new bicycle as part of a competition in the South Cambs Magazine.

101. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions from the public had been received.

102. PETITIONS

A petition consisting of 118 signatures had been received entitled 'Upper Cambourne Bus Link / Emergency Access' and which included the following supporting statement:

"We the undersigned petition the Council to help facilitate the completion of a bus link / emergency access to/from Upper Cambourne to The Broadway by Cambridgeshire Highways / Cambourne Parish Council, McA Developments (Bovis and Taylor Wimpey) and interested landowners (William Topham and Nigel Pearson) using funds (£190,000) set aside from Section 4 Planning Obligations (Highways and Public Transport) in the Section 106 Agreement for the additional 950 homes in Cambourne (S/6438/07/O)."

Mr Clayton Hudson, as petition organiser, presented his petition and referred to the Council's Planning Committee in December 2010 which in considering the 950 additional homes in Cambourne agreed to an amendment to remove the bus link. Recognising that Bourn Parish Council and its residents had reservations about the bus link, Mr Clayton said that he was keen to protect the monies should it not go ahead, amounting to £190,000. This was secured in a subsequently signed Section 106 Agreement for future, yet undefined, transport schemes. Given the District Council's decision last month regarding the Local Plan and the inclusion of the proposed development of 3,500 additional houses on Bourn Airfield, Mr Clayton felt that it was the right time to resurrect the bus link and emergency access to The Broadway. He said that currently 932 occupied properties in Upper Cambourne had no access to public transport and that residents wishing to use the bus had to walk for around ten minutes to either Great Cambourne or the A428 Broadway junction. Stagecoach had indicated that the bus link was the only way to make a service from Upper Cambourne commercially viable and the developers of Cambourne, as he understood it, remained supportive of providing a bus link to The Broadway. The Parish Council was also in favour and funding was available. Mr Hudson closed by saying that the proposed bus link would be a huge benefit to the local community of Cambourne and beyond, boosting use of public transport and promoting a sustainable transport system making a positive contribution to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the communities it would serve. He urged the Council's Director of New Communities to organise a meeting of interested parties in order to reach agreement on how to move this scheme forward.

Councillor Alison Elcox responded to the petition as local ward Member and welcomed the opportunity to raise this matter and bring it to the Council's attention. She agreed that the bus way would bring many benefits to Cambourne and confirmed that Bourn Parish Council was supportive of the proposal, together with the fact that Upper Cambourne was not served with public transport currently. Councillor Elcox proposed

that this issue be considered at the next relevant Portfolio Holder Meeting, with invitations sent to all interest parties.

Councillor Pippa Corney, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Localism, seconded the proposal.

Council unanimously **AGREED** that the proposed bus link and emergency access to/from Upper Cambourne to The Broadway be referred to the next relevant Portfolio Holder Meeting and that all interested parties be invited to attend.

103. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

103 (a) Amendment to the Council's Standing Orders - Recorded Votes for budget decisions at Full Council (Civic Affairs Committee, 20 March 2014)

(Councillor Simon Edwards attended the meeting at this stage of proceedings).

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, proposed the introduction of a new paragraph 16.6 headed 'Recorded vote on budget decisions' to the Council's Standing Orders to read:

"If the Council is considering an item on the Council's budget or the setting of the Council Tax, the names for and against the motion or amendment, abstaining from voting or not voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the minutes."

This followed a recommendation by the Civic Affairs Committee at its meeting on 20 March 2014.

Councillor Simon Edwards, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing, seconded the proposal.

As a point of information, Councillor Douglas de Lacey referred to minute number 92(a) of the meeting of Full Council on 27 February 2014 where the Council agreed "to request that the Civic Affairs Committee considers and proposes amendments to the Council's Standing Orders so that all votes, except for those taken by affirmation and for appointments, are recorded in the manner described in Standing Order 16.5 (Recorded Vote)." He therefore questioned why no recommendation had come forward from the Civic Affairs Committee in relation to all votes, except those taken by affirmation of for appointments, rather than solely those relating to budget items at Full Council meetings.

It was noted that the Civic Affairs Committee considered and debated the issue of recorded votes for all decisions, except for those taken by affirmation and for appointments, but decided that the current system should be retained. The recommendation in relation to budget decisions followed the Standing Orders (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Discussion ensued on the interpretation of the Council's decision in relation to this matter as some Members felt that the Council had already decided that recorded votes should be held for all decisions, except for those taken by affirmation and for appointments, whereas other Members considered that the matter had been referred to the Civic Affairs Committee.

Councillor Douglas de Lacey moved an amendment to the proposal so that the introduction of a new paragraph 16.6 in the Council's Standing Orders read:

“For all votes, except for those taken by affirmation and for appointments, the names for and against the motion or amendment, abstaining from voting or not voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the minutes.”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Aidan Van de Weyer.

In voting on the amendment, with 16 votes in favour, 33 votes against and 1 not voting, the amendment was lost.

Enough Members as prescribed by the Council’s Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors Trisha Bear, Jonathan Chatfield, Jose Hales, Tumi Hawkins, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Cicely Murfitt, Robin Page, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Jim Stewart, Susan van de Ven, Aidan Van de Weyer and John Williams

Against

Councillors Richard Barrett, Val Barrett, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Pippa Corney, Kevin Cuffley, Neil Davies, Simon Edwards, Alison Elcox, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Roger Hall, Lynda Harford, Roger Hickford, James Hockney, Caroline Hunt, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, David McCraith, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Deborah Roberts, Neil Scarr, Timothy Scott, Ben Shelton, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

Not Voting

Councillor David Bard

Voting on the original motion, with 42 votes in favour, 5 against, 1 abstention and 2 not voting Council **AGREED** to the introduction of a new paragraph 16.6 headed ‘Recorded vote on budget decisions’ to the Council’s Standing Orders to read:

“If the Council is considering an item on the Council’s budget or the setting of the Council Tax, the names for and against the motion or amendment, abstaining from voting or not voting will be taken down in writing and entered into the minutes.”

Enough Members as prescribed by the Council’s Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In Favour

Councillors David Bard, Richard Barrett, Val Barrett, Trisha Bear, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Jonathan Chatfield, Pippa Corney, Kevin Cuffley, Neil Davies, Simon Edwards, Alison Elcox, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Roger Hall, Tumi Hawkins, Roger Hickford, James Hockney, Caroline Hunt, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, David McCraith, Cicely Murfitt, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Deborah Roberts, Neil Scarr, Timothy Scott, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Robert Turner, Susan van de Ven, Bunty Waters, Aidan Van de Weyer, John Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright.

Against

Councillors Jose Hales, Peter Johnson, Douglas de Lacey, Robin Page and Jim Stewart

Abstention

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley

Not Voting

Councillors Lynda Harford and Janet Lockwood

103 (b) CONSIDERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S CITY DEAL FOR GREATER CAMBRIDGE (Cabinet, 10 April 2014)

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, proposed that the Council endorsed the Greater Cambridge City Deal.

In presenting his proposal, Councillor Manning stated that the Government wanted to remove barriers to economic growth in the area through the Greater Cambridge City Deal. Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, the Greater Cambridge Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership and the University of Cambridge had all therefore been working together on a City Deal since the Autumn of 2012.

Councillor Manning explained that the City Deal had changed considerably since it was first put forward for consideration, following consultation with partners and Government. The Government's offer was different to the original City Deal proposal in mechanism but was similar in terms of intended outcomes. Regarding infrastructure funding, the Government would provide £500 million of grant funding and it was understood that this would be payable in three tranches, with the second and third tranches dependant on the achievement of certain outcomes. Councillor Manning was of the view that this provided the Council with less risk than borrowing, however, there would be tighter controls imposed by Government in view of the thresholds having to be met to ensure the next tranche of funding.

Successful delivery of the City Deal would require all partners to work together effectively and Councillor Manning was confident that this would happen, stating that there were already positive examples of how South Cambridgeshire District Council had formed good partnerships with the City and County Councils. The Greater Cambridge City Deal had also been recognised as good practice nationally.

In terms of housing, the Government had chosen not to increase the Housing Revenue Account debt cap, but had announced a scheme whereby Councils may be able to increase the cap through the Strategic Economic Plan process via their Local Enterprise Partnerships, subject to certain conditions. Councillor Manning said that he would explore ways of introducing more affordable housing and housing for key workers in the district through initiatives such as a municipal bond or other borrowing systems.

With regard to governance, partners were proposing that decision making would be in a five-person Executive Board, containing one representative from each of the three Councils plus representatives of the Local Enterprise Partnership and the University. It was emphasised that non-council partners would not be able to vote on all issues, such as those in relation to public money, due to the fact that they were not democratically elected. A twelve person 'Assembly' was also proposed, formed by three members from

each authority, as well as three wider stakeholder members. The Assembly would hold the Executive Board to account and provide a scrutiny function.

Under the current terms of the City Deal, partners were committing to sharing certain planning and transport powers and funding. The strongest formal arrangement to support this would be a new statutory vehicle called a 'combined authority'. The legislation on combined authorities did not currently allow the County Council to join a body covering only part of its geographical area and delegate its transport planning powers into it. In the interim, before a combined authority could be established, it was the intention of local authority partners to establish a joint committee to take forward the work in the scope of the City Deal.

In closing, Councillor Manning made it clear that the City Deal was a work in progress and the Council was today being asked to endorse it in principle so that a letter of intent could be submitted to the Government. A formal proposal with more detail would be submitted to another meeting of Full Council in due course, likely to be in November 2014. The Scrutiny and Overview and Partnerships Review Committees had considered the City Deal recently, and Councillor Manning hoped they would take the opportunity to consider the detail of the City Deal again before it came back to Full Council.

Councillor Simon Edwards, Deputy Leader and Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder, seconded the proposal.

During the debate a number of points were made relating to governance, as follows:

- the scrutiny role of the Assembly should be used more proactively so that it could provide an input before decisions were made, rather than solely to challenge the Executive Board on decisions it had already made. This would mean that decisions were better informed;
- questioning the decision making structure and whether individual Councils had a veto on decisions of the Executive Board, it was noted that decisions would be though consensus and individual Councils would therefore not have power of veto;
- the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting on 3 April 2014 raised concerns about the governance arrangements and would be looking at this again as soon as more detail became available;
- the Corporate Governance Committee would also be interested in reviewing the governance arrangements. The governance arrangements were vital when considering that £500 million of public money was potentially being spent;
- the Scrutiny and Overview Committee discussed the prospect of establishing a joint informal working group with the Partnerships Review Committee and Corporate Governance Committee to look into structures of governance for the City Deal. The Chairmen of these Committees would meet to discuss this further in due course.

It was noted that the money from each tranche could not be carried forward, so it was extremely important to consider and plan its allocation at an early stage in order that all of the funding could be spent.

The majority of Members speaking on this item endorsed the principles of the City Deal. Speaking against endorsement of the City Deal, however, some Members were of the opinion that it would ruin the rural nature of South Cambridgeshire and the character of Cambridge City.

With 42 votes in favour, 3 against, 3 abstentions and 2 not voting, Council **ENDORSED** the principles of the Greater Cambridge City Deal.

Enough Members as prescribed by the Council's Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors David Bard, Richard Barrett, Val Barrett, Trish Bear, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Nigel Cathcart, Jonathan Chatfield, Pippa Corney, Kevin Cuffley, Neil Davies, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Jose Hales, Roger Hall, Lynda Harford, Tumi Hawkins, Roger Hickford, Caroline Hunt, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Janet Lockwood, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, David McCraith, Cicely Murfitt, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Jim Stewart, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Robert Turner, Susan van de Ven, Bunty Waters, Aidan Van de Weyer, John Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

Against

Councillors Robin Page, Deborah Roberts and Neil Scarr

Abstention

Councillors Alison Elcox, Douglas de Lacey and Timothy Scott

Not Voting

Councillors Tom Bygott and James Hockney

104. REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE AND THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO COMMITTEES

The Leader of the Council presented a report on the review of political balance and the allocation of seats to committees and proposed that the Council approved:

- the allocation of seats, as set out in Appendix A of the report;
- the nominations of the political groups to seats on committees, as set out in Appendix B to the report, subject to Councillor Caroline Hunt being removed from the Planning Committee and replaced with Councillor Robin Page.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Douglas de Lacey.

Council unanimously **APPROVED**:

- (a) The allocation of seats, as set out in Appendix A of the report.
- (b) The nominations of the political groups to seats on committees, as set out in Appendix B to the report, subject to Councillor Caroline Hunt being removed from the Planning Committee and replaced with Councillor Robin Page.

105. APPOINTMENT TO CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH COMMITTEE

The Council had been invited to appoint a non-voting co-opted Member and substitute to sit on Cambridgeshire County Council's Health Committee, which would be responsible for the Council's public health function and for overview and scrutiny of the health service.

Councillor Sue Ellington was nominated as the co-opted Member by Councillor Lynda Harford, which was seconded by Councillor Charles Nightingale.

Councillor Bridget Smith was nominated as the co-opted Member by Councillor Susan van de Ven, which was seconded by Councillor John Williams.

With 28 votes compared to 20 votes, Council **APPROVED** the appointment of Councillor Sue Ellington as a non-voting co-opted Member to sit on Cambridgeshire County Council's Health Committee.

Councillor Andrew Fraser was nominated as the named substitute Member by Councillor Tom Bygott, which was seconded by Councillor Charles Nightingale.

Councillor Bridget Smith was nominated as the named substitute Member by Councillor Susan van de Ven, which was seconded by Councillor John Williams.

With 29 votes compared to 17 votes, Council **APPROVED** the appointment of Councillor Andrew Fraser as the named substitute Member on Cambridgeshire County Council's Health Committee.

(Councillor Robin Page left the meeting at this stage of proceedings).

106. RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Council was invited to note the Risk Management Strategy and Strategic Risk Register.

Councillor Simon Edwards, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing, informed Members that risk management training was offered free of charge by the Council's insurers and recommended that all Members attended a session.

Council **NOTED** the Risk Management Strategy and Strategic Risk Register.

107. QUESTIONS ON JOINT MEETINGS

No questions on joint meetings were raised.

108. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**108 (a) From Councillor John Williams**

Councillor John Williams asked the Council's representative on the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board the following question:

"Primary care has coped for years with a decreasing slice of the NHS cake. In 2005 GP services took 10.4% of the NHS budget and this had fallen to 8% last year. Indeed there are many GP services which are not funded by the NHS such as blood tests. Now the NHS is introducing changes which will reduce GP funding even further and many local GP practices now face having to reduce the level of services that can be offered at the

local surgery to balance the books. Could I ask this council's representative on the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board what action she is taking to ensure the Board is actively engaged with the NHS England East Anglia Area Team to stop them substantially reducing the value of the GP contract which threatens community GP surgery services, particularly the knock on effect to those facilities such as phlebotomy which are provided outside the NHS contract?"

Councillor Sue Ellington, Health and Wellbeing Champion and the Council's representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board, responded to the question, informing Council that she was aware of this issue which had been raised at the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board in February 2014.

Councillor Ellington explained that there were two categories of contracts for General Practitioner Surgeries, namely a General Medical Services contract and a Personal Medical Services contract. The Health and Wellbeing Board had been informed of a decision to top-slice General Medical Services contracts, whereas negotiations were still ongoing with regard to Personal Medical Services contracts. She reported that General Practitioners were being encouraged to apply for funding from other sources and highlighted as an example that £38 million was being made available as part of a 'better care' fund, which sought to encourage people being cared for in their communities rather than at hospital.

108 (b) From Councillor Bridget Smith

Councillor Bridget Smith asked the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services the following question:

"Can the Portfolio Holder please disclose to what extent the Council's Public Health role, including inspections of food premises, has been carried out in the past 12 months by people other than officers of this authority and what the cost of this has been to the Council?"

Councillor Mick Martin, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, responded to the question and stated that the net cost was £54,000.

Councillor Smith understood that some of the inspections undertaken by contract staff had needed to be done a second time by the Council's officers as they had not initially been carried out to expected standards. She was concerned that this was wasting tax payers' money and asked as a supplementary question whether the Portfolio Holder was aware of this issue and, if so, what would be done to resolve it.

Councillor Martin was aware that staff had returned to premises due to customers not being satisfied with the work undertaken. He reflected on the changes that had occurred in the department under his responsibility and the significant savings achieved last year, which totalled £235,000 from the salaries budget. A contingency of £45,000 had been included to cover instances such as this should they occur as part of transition into the new arrangements. Councillor Martin stated that a better service was being provided to residents as a result of the changes compared to a year ago.

108 (c) From Councillor Jonathan Chatfield

Councillor Jonathan Chatfield asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

“Could the Leader take this opportunity to welcome the engagement of local people in the planning process and could he confirm this Council's ongoing willingness to work with local communities and Parish Councils regarding future development within our villages?”

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, took the opportunity to welcome the engagement of local people in the planning process, stating that he wanted the Council to work with local people and Parish Councils and welcomed any suggestions for improvement in that respect.

As a supplementary question, Councillor Chatfield made reference to a planning application at Histon and Impington and sought assurance that the Council would continue to work with the Parish Council.

Councillor Nick Wright, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development, stated that the Council had maintained a close working relationship with the Parish Council throughout the Local Development Plan process. He reported that the specific planning application referred to was in the process of going through the Design Panel following its deferral by the Planning Committee and confirmed that the authority would aim to work closely with the Parish Council as part of that process.

108 (d) From Councillor Susan van de Ven

Councillor Susan van de Ven asked the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services the following question:

“A resident of Meldreth, together with his neighbours, clears leaves and debris from gutters in the High Street, saving work for our street cleaners and also for County drainage services. Additionally, following the publication of the Meldreth Parish Plan some ten years ago, a pavement warden rota was set up, and around the village several people carry out a similar role. Some volunteers are able to dump the organic debris they collect in their home compost heaps, but others don't have the space for composting. They are concerned about the reduction in green bin collections in the months when they are still actively keeping gutters and drains clear.

The suggestion was made that extra green bins might be allocated by South Cambs District Council to assist volunteers with carrying out this task. This is the same kind of service that volunteer village litter picking parties receive - residents do the work and SCDC assists by providing bags, litter picking devices, and prompt collection. Would it be possible to organise practical support for voluntary collection of green waste? Including Parish Councils in the arrangement would introduce unwanted fees, due to statutes that define Parish Council waste as commercial waste, so bypassing Parish Councils and making arrangements directly with village volunteers, perhaps liaising through District Councillors, might be the best avenue.”

Councillor Mick Martin, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, responded by saying that he had recently held a conversation on this very issue with the Council's Operations Manager. He made it clear that the Council wanted to help Parish Councils who were going out of their way to help themselves, but that there were certain legislative barriers that sometimes prevented this happening. Councillor Martin reported that if the Council provided two green bins as suggested, they would subsequently be classified as trade waste which incurred charges for the bins themselves and their collection. An alternative could be for parishes to appoint nominated village representatives with responsibility for storing and protecting additional green bins on their own property. Councillor Martin was of the view that if such an arrangement could be made then the Council may be able to

agree a deal with individual Parish Councils on that basis. It was noted that the Council did support litter picking in parishes and, where necessary, provided training, equipment and bags as well as collecting the waste free of charge.

Councillor van de Ven felt that the suggestion of nominating a village representative for storing additional bins on their own property was a good solution. Councillor Martin agreed to discuss this further with Councillor van de Ven outside of the meeting.

108 (e) From Councillor Ben Shelton

Councillor Ben Shelton referred to a barn that had recently been erected in his electoral ward without he or the Parish Council having had any notification and asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

“Can the Leader ask the planning department if they would kindly let District Councillors know of ANY applications this authority receives, including any agricultural applications, even if there is no comment to be made or any approval needed, merely for information purposes?”

Councillor Nick Wright, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development, responded to this question on behalf of the Leader and reported that all Members currently received details of all planning applications in their electoral wards as soon as they were entered into the APAS system, and they also appeared in the Members’ weekly bulletin. Responding to the example cited by Councillor Shelton, this related permitted development. Councillor Wright did not feel that it was appropriate for Members to be notified of every permitted development case as they would find themselves inundated with correspondence about them.

Councillor Shelton felt that it was courteous to inform the relevant Parish Council and local Members of approvals relating to permitted development and asked whether this would occur in the future.

Councillor Wright agreed to look into this issue further and provide a written response to Councillor Shelton.

(Councillors Neil Davies, Jose Hales, James Hockney and Jim Stewart left the meeting at this stage of proceedings).

109. NOTICES OF MOTION

109 (a) Standing in the name of Councillor Kevin Cuffley

Councillor Kevin Cuffley proposed the following motion:

“South Cambridgeshire District Council has grave concerns about the proposed closure of Barclay’s Bank in Sawston, which will have the effect of depriving one of the largest communities in the District of retail banking services and which appears to be part of a wider pattern of withdrawing banking services from rural areas.

The Council is particularly concerned about the impact of this closure on the viability of small businesses in Sawston and the surrounding villages and urgently requests Barclay’s to reconsider this decision.”

In proposing his motion, Councillor Cuffley made reference to the importance that people with disabilities in the area placed on the branch at Sawston. He also felt that retaining the branch in the village would attract new businesses to the area, particularly in view of the development that had been earmarked in the Local Development Plan. Councillor Cuffley was also very disappointed that the Bank had claimed to have consulted with Parish and District Councillors, which he understood to be untrue.

Councillor Tony Orgee seconded the motion and stated that the implications of the branch's closure would be much wider than the village of Sawston due to the fact that it was the only branch in the whole of the southern and south-eastern part of the district. Referring to future development, he reminded Members that sustainable development relied upon housing, employment and services and was of the opinion that taking banking out of this whole quarter of South Cambridgeshire was wrong. He had observed the branch to be busy and knew it was used regularly by local businesses, local schools and local residents. Councillor Orgee was disappointed that the Parish or District Council had not been forewarned of Barclays' decision to close the branch and reported that the local Member of Parliament would be contacting Barclays on behalf of the wider community to request that the decision be reconsidered.

The following points were noted in debating the motion:

- lots of bank branches had been lost throughout the district over many years, however, some villages had managed to retain cashpoints;
- with the introduction of internet banking, the majority of bank branches tended to be located in market towns or cities;
- businesses relied upon banking services and it would be difficult to attract further businesses to the area without a bank nearby;
- it was important to remember that Post Offices also provided banking services.

Council unanimously **AGREED** the following motion:

"South Cambridgeshire District Council has grave concerns about the proposed closure of Barclay's Bank in Sawston, which will have the effect of depriving one of the largest communities in the District of retail banking services and which appears to be part of a wider pattern of withdrawing banking services from rural areas.

The Council is particularly concerned about the impact of this closure on the viability of small businesses in Sawston and the surrounding villages and urgently requests Barclay's to reconsider this decision."

109 (b) Standing in the name of Councillor Aidan Van de Weyer

Councillor Aidan Van de Weyer proposed the following motion:

"This Council notes that:

- the rebuilding of the A14 represents an excellent opportunity to restore the many connections between our communities which were thoughtlessly severed by previous road building;
- through its policies, the Council aims to encourage active modes of transport wherever possible;
- the Council has undertaken to contribute a significant part of our budget to this scheme of national importance;

- the information provided by the Highways Agency as part of the current consultation shows promising signs of good provision for non-motorised users (NMUs) on some parts of the route, although no details are given about widths of paths or crossing configurations;
- provision for NMUs that is segregated from motor traffic has not been proposed along the de-trunked part of the A14 West of Swavesey;
- Cabinet, in its submission to the previous consultation, stressed the importance of provision for non-motorised users 'along the whole route'.

This Council recommends that:

- as soon as possible, Cabinet scrutinises in detail whether the proposals conform to the principles of local access that it previously expressed;
- Cabinet includes in its response minimum acceptable standards for widths and crossing treatments;
- Cabinet explores uses of the de-trunked A14 other than keeping it as a dual carriageway."

In proposing the motion Councillor Van de Weyer made reference to the Highways Agency's consultation and emphasised how important it was for the Council to scrutinise it very carefully. He was also of the view that the A14 improvement scheme was more about resilience and reliability rather than simply increasing volume.

Councillor Susan van de Ven seconded the motion.

(Councillor Deborah Roberts left the meeting at this stage of proceedings).

In debating the motion, the following points were noted:

- in terms of cost, if anything was done as part of the improvement scheme to the de-trunked road then money would be taken away from the construction of the main A14;
- the de-trunked road would provide a vital relief road should any problems occur on the main A14;
- the improvement scheme was about increasing capacity as there were simply too many cars on the road;
- the Council needed to concentrate on the A14 improvement scheme put before it, as per the Highways Agency's consultation, which would be scrutinised in detail at the next meeting of Cabinet;
- Parish Councils were not statutory consultees to the Highways Agency's consultation, whereas the District Council and County Council were. Those parishes along the route of the A14 had significant concerns that needed to be heard. The District Council therefore needed to ensure that it picked up the concerns and views of these parishes as part of its response to the consultation;
- it was important that the Highways Agency did not simply leave what was left of the current A14 to the County Council, as that still itself needed maintenance which the Highways Agency should be paying for;
- off-road transport was an important matter to consider as part of the A14 improvement scheme;
- a message should be sent to the Highways Agency that the Council was enthusiastic about the opportunities that could be provided by the de-trunked road;
- the Highways Agency must be keen for users of the A14 to be taken away from the main road to ease congestion and traffic flow;

- the motion was premature due to the fact that the A14 consultation would be considered at Cabinet in May and supporting it would not be helpful at this stage;
- the district could not afford to do anything that would slow down the development of this improvement scheme;
- the Transport Strategy was all about other means of getting around. The Guided Bus Way cycle route, which was out of use for 25% of the year due to flooding, would be an ideal alternative route to consider alongside the improvement scheme.

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, extended an invitation to all Members of the Council to attend the meeting of Cabinet on 8 May 2014 where the Council's response to the Highways Agency's consultation would be fully discussed.

Councillor Tim Wotherspoon, Portfolio Holder for Northstowe, reported that the Highways Agency would be attending the meeting of the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee on 12 May 2014 regarding the A14 improvement scheme consultation. He also welcomed the attendance of all Members of the Council.

Voting on the motion, with 20 votes in favour, 23 votes against and 1 abstention the motion was lost.

Enough Members as prescribed by the Council's Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors Trisha Bear, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Jonathan Chatfield, Andrew Fraser, Lynda Harford, Tumi Hawkins, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Cicely Murfitt, Neil Scarr, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Susan van de Ven, Aidan Van de Weyer and John Williams

Against

Councillors David Bard, Richard Barrett, Val Barrett, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Pippa Corney, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Alison Elcox, Sue Ellington, Roger Hickford, Caroline Hunt, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, David McCraith, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Timothy Scott, Ben Shelton, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

Abstention

Councillor Roger Hall

109 (c) Standing in the name of Cllr Tumi Hawkins

Councillor Tumi Hawkins proposed the following motion:

"The Council notes that:

- the Localism Act gives councils an opportunity to choose the system of governance that they think is best suited to their area;
- the existing "Leader and Cabinet" model leads to under-representation of the diverse viewpoints of this Council and the concentration of power with a handful of individuals where party and/or personal loyalty is rewarded above all else;

- it is in the public interest to have an accountable and representative system of local government that is inclusive of all political viewpoints.

This Council recommends that:

- the system of governance should be changed to the committee system to increase visibility, accountability and inclusiveness in the decision making process within this authority.”

In proposing her motion, Councillor Hawkins stated that Councils had the choice to return to a Committee system of governance rather than the Leader and Cabinet model that the Council currently had in place. She reflected that the district was represented by 57 Members, of which 8 formed the Council’s Cabinet and had the majority of the Council’s decision-making power. This meant that the remaining 49 Members were effectively backbenchers excluded from the decision-making process. She felt that significant policies and decisions were made ‘behind closed doors’ or had already been agreed by the leadership before being considered by the wider Council and questioned the democracy in such a governance model. Councillor Hawkins was of the view that a return to the Committee system would see all political views being taken into account, with all Members being part of decision-taking and having ownership of decisions, which she felt was better for the district’s residents.

Councillor Bridget Smith seconded the proposal.

Councillor Neil Scarr reflected on the Committee system that used to be in place at the Council and agreed that it provided all Members with a role in the decision-making process. He was concerned, however, with the wording in the second bullet point of the motion regarding the rewarding of political party or personal loyalty and in his experience had always found Cabinet Members to be competent and helpful. He moved an amendment to delete the words ‘where party and/or personal loyalty is rewarded above all else’ from the second bullet point.

Councillor Douglas de Lacey seconded the amendment, which was accepted by Councillor Hawkins as mover of the original motion.

In debating the substantive motion, the following points were noted:

- backbench Members had opportunities to contribute to the decision-making process through open meetings of Cabinet and Portfolio Holder Meetings and could hold Portfolio Holders to account at any opportunity;
- the Committee system meant that there was no-one ultimately responsible;
- other than regulatory committees, committees were often ‘talking shops’ where no real decisions were made;
- a Committee system of governance would work when there was a hung Council, but it made no sense whatsoever when a Council had a strong leadership;
- the Council’s political balance was very different when the authority had a Committee system of governance in place;
- decisions were not made ‘behind closed doors’. All Portfolio Holder Meetings and meetings of Cabinet were held in public and were very inclusive for any Member wishing to attend and put forward their views on any matter;
- the former Committee system involved lots of meetings, but decisions usually came back to Full Council for ratification. Cabinet was far more robust in terms of decision-making;
- the current system of governance meant that the leadership had 100% of the power and the real issue to consider was whether it wanted to share that power;

- a positive aspect of the Committee system was that every Member of the Council felt engaged;
- the Council already had a number of committees in place that Members of all political groups sat on, some of which such as the Licensing Committee and Planning Committee had significant decision-making powers;
- the electorate had indicated that it wanted the Conservative Group to run this Council and the Leader and Cabinet model of governance provided the Group with the ability to plan the strategic direction of the Council. It was about accountability, and a Committee system meant that people could hide behind decisions rather than being accountable for them;
- backbench Members, particularly those in opposition, felt as though they had less information about what was happening at the Council than other Members;
- a Committee system of governance would mean less daring and innovate decision-making;
- the issue was about fairness, transparency and all Members having an opportunity to be part of the process;
- being heard at meetings of Cabinet and Portfolio Holder Meetings was different to being a responsible Member of the decision-making process;
- the Council was full of talented and experienced individuals who were being excluded from putting that into practice.

Voting on the substantive motion, with 15 votes in favour, 28 votes against and 1 abstention, the motion was lost.

Enough Members as prescribed by the Council's Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors Trisha Bear, Jonathan Chatfield, Tumi Hawkins, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Janet Lockwood, Douglas de Lacey, Cicely Murfitt, Neil Scarr, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Edd Stonham, Susan van de Ven, Aidan Van de Weyer and John Williams

Against

Councillors David Bard, Richard Barrett, Val Barrett, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Pippa Corney, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Alison Elcox, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Roger Hall, Lynda Harford, Roger Hickford, Caroline Hunt, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, David McCraith, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Timothy Scott, Ben Shelton, Peter Topping, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

Abstention

Councillor Nigel Cathcart

110. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS

Council noted those engagements attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman since the last Council meeting, as set out on the agenda.

The Meeting ended at 6.00 p.m.
