

COUNCILLORS' BULLETIN

2ND JUNE 2004

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South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS FROM 7TH TO 11TH JUNE 2004			
Monday 7th June 2004			
Tuesday 8th June 2004	2 pm	Housing Portfolio Holder	1 st Floor Meeting Room
Wednesday 9th June 2004			
Thursday 10th June 2004	All day	Elections	
Friday 11th June 2004	All day	Election Count – verification from 8.30 am	Comberton Leisure (Comberton Village College)

FANCY SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR LUNCH?

Learn a bit more about South Cambs at an informal presentation, followed by questions and answers and lunch. Each presentation will last a maximum of half an hour, followed by questions and answers, then lunch. Seats available on a first come, first served basis. To reserve your seats call Emma George on 01954 713001 or email emma.george@scams.gov.uk.

Travel for Work – what's on offer?

Speakers: Cameron Adams, strategic development officer
Mark Webb, travel for work officer, Cambridgeshire County Council
12pm, Monday 14 June, Council Chamber

South Cambs' housing stock – what are the options?

Speakers: Steve Hampson, housing and environmental services director
Kari Greaves, head of Shire Homes
12pm, Monday 12 July, ground floor meeting room

Performance Plan 2004/05 – the present, the future

Speakers: Paul Swift, policy & performance review manager
Ian Salter, performance improvement officer
12pm, Tuesday 27 July, ground floor meeting room

Art in Cambourne – all work and no play?!

Presenter: Beverley Carpenter, Cambourne's artists in residence
12pm, Monday 2 August, Council Chamber

South Cambs Magazine and Key Issues – telling the story

Speakers: Sally Carroll, communications manager
Jo Fowler, communications officer
12pm, Tuesday 24 August, Council Chamber

SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES

You may be aware that a central government Select Committee Inquiry is taking place into Gypsy and Traveller sites. The arrangements for this Inquiry were mentioned at the District Council's evening meeting with Parish Councils about illegal traveller encampment issues on 20 May.

We have now heard that the Select Committee's initial deadline for evidence has been extended until Monday 7 June. This means that those parish councils which were interested in submitting written evidence, but might have been deterred by the original tight timescale, now have more time. Indeed, I am told that the Select Committee will accept views throughout its Inquiry, which is likely to run until late June.

The District Council's evidence - an outline

You may like to know that the District Council's evidence to the ODPM Select Committee raises five key issues:

- There needs to be a clear national policy on traveller sites. The Government cannot expect individual councils to cope on their own when faced by a huge influx of travellers in a single locality.
- Planning guidance needs to address issues relating to the private ownership of sites by travellers, not just the public provision of sites for travellers.
- Whilst councils should have a statutory duty to provide sites for travellers and be prepared to listen to travellers' proposals for sites, travellers should not be given permission for their own sites unless they consult the council first.
- The size of sites matters and should be a material consideration for planning applications & appeals. Large sites have an adverse impact on the local environment and infrastructure (eg, severe pressures on schools & GP surgeries).
- The human rights/needs of local households & the indigenous travelling community should not be overlooked. They can feel threatened, frustrated and helpless by unplanned settlements being endorsed via planning appeals.

Select Committee Inquiry

For more details about the Inquiry, click on:

http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/odpm/odpm042804a.cfm

You will see that, although the Select Committee will not be addressing individual cases, it does welcome views about the management of unauthorised camping, amongst other issues. Written evidence to the Select Committee should be e-mailed to: odpmcom@parliament.uk

CAR PARKING

Sixty spaces have been numbered in the main car park so that spaces can be reserved when there is need to do so. From now on, therefore, we need to more closely manage who is parking where. The Cambourne car parking policy and a plan showing the Cambourne car parking allocation have been posted on the staff intranet. Please make sure that you read the policy and familiarise yourself with the plan. Please ask Democratic Services for a copy of the policy if you are unable to access the intranet.

Spaces for scheduled meetings need to be reserved with reception and reserved spaces will be indicated on a white board at the entrance to the main car park.

To ensure that the car park can be managed effectively, Members are asked to check that the Car Reg Search under the STAFF link on the intranet has your current vehicle registration number. Please contact Democratic Services on 01954 713030 if you are unable to access the intranet. The Offices Services Manager, Bill Taylor (01954 713022), should be notified of any updates as soon as possible, including changes to vehicle registration numbers or temporary use of a different vehicle. Please let Bill Taylor know if you are a disabled driver or a car-sharer.

Just to remind you, parking spaces are marked out as follows:

- in the main car park, by the metal studs;
- on the grasscrete, not yet marked out – on the western perimeter grasscrete, please park in line with the cars in the marked spaces; on the northern perimeter grasscrete, please park next to the last parked car, so that we can accommodate as many cars as reasonably possible;
- in the brick paved parking area immediately outside the building, by the blocks of four grey bricks;
- disabled parking spaces are marked out by the extra metal studs or grey bricks, as appropriate, together with the disabled parking signs.

Please make sure you park within the marked spaces – and when you are expecting a visitor, please ask them to do so as well.

NATIONAL INSURANCE RATES

Some Members are on the incorrect NI rate. Females over the age of 60 and males over the age of 65 are not liable to pay National Insurance. Democratic Services have contacted Members affected; please check your voicemail and e-mail. Payroll will need your age exemption card or birth certificate to cease NI deductions.

COMMITTEE PREFERENCES

All election candidates have been sent a form asking for their committee preferences for 2004/05, to be returned to Democratic Services by **Friday 4 June** at the latest. Please contact Democratic Services if you have not received this form.

WEEKLY PLANNING LISTS

A letter was sent to all members on 14 May 2004 along with paper copies of the Planning Weekly Lists for weeks 18 and 19, advising members that the weekly lists would be distributed electronically in the future to help reduce paper consumption. Any members wishing to receive paper copies are asked to contact Democratic Services.

ID BADGES FOR CAMBOURNE OFFICE

Democratic Services are holding new ID and access badges for all Members. Please come and see us next time you are in to collect your badge, bringing your old access pass from Hills Road with you. Contact Lucie Edginton on 01954 713026 or by email lucie.edginton@scams.gov.uk

MEMBERS' TRAINING AND INDUCTION PROGRAMME

The Member Training Advisory Group agreed a training and induction programme for new and returning members at its' meeting on the 11th of May. The training and induction schedule shown below has now been finalised. This information will be sent to all prospective councillors for their information and advance notice of the dates. All training will be conducted in Cambourne and lunch will be provided. If you require more information, contact Lucie Edginton on 01954 713026 or by email lucie.edginton@scams.gov.uk

Day	Date	What	Time
Tuesday	15 th June	Corporate Induction (Part 1) - Internal	9 – 2pm
Friday	18 th June	The Role of Elected Members - EERA	9 – 2pm
Monday	21 st June	Corporate Induction (Part 2) - Internal	9 – 2pm
Thursday	1 st July	A Briefing in Planning – Trevor Roberts Associates	9 – 5pm
Monday	5 th July	Licensing Committee Training followed by the Licensing Committee meeting	9 – 5pm
Tuesday	6 th July	Media Awareness Workshop – John Venables Media	9 – 2pm
Thursday	29 th July	Internet and Email – Software Practice	9 – 5pm
Friday	30 th July	Word/Excel dependant on demand – Software Practice	9 – 5pm
Friday	6 th August	Ward Work and Surgeries – Councillor Skills	9 – 2pm
Friday	13 th August	Time Management – EERA	9 – 2pm
Monday	23 rd August	Speed Reading – EERA	9 – 2pm

ASYLUM SEEKERS – INDEFINITE LEAVE TO REMAIN PROJECT

New arrivals from Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Cyprus and Malta are not eligible for support by NASS or local authorities under the interim scheme.

They can:

- Register as workers and are eligible for certain in work benefits and social housing (the ODPM has written to local authorities setting out the arrangements)
- Remain in the UK as job seekers but become self-sufficient
- Leave the UK – local authorities will be reimbursed for costs of temporary accommodation and travel arrangements for families and adults.

From 1 May 2004 accession state nationals who applied for asylum in the UK are no longer eligible for NASS or local authority support under the interim scheme.

There will be applications for continued support to NASS and LAs for continued support – this may be continued under the European Convention of Human Rights. Asylum seekers have been asked to contact NASS / LAs for a decision rather than unnecessarily taking their cases to the courts.

EU Accession State nationals with indefinite leave to remain (ILR) or other immigration status allowing them to remain in the country will be eligible for benefits.

The Home Office advice is:

- If NASS receive an application they will decide on continued support
- LAs can make a decision on human rights applications for continued support under the interim scheme – the Home Office will meet the cost of continued support for up to 14 days while an assessment is made; LAs should link with the Home Office on individual cases and if support is continued under the interim scheme the support costs can be reimbursed through the usual grant scheme
- The ILR programme is continuing beyond 1 May 2004 and asylum applications will continue to be considered for ILR
- The Home Office will reimburse the costs of short-term accommodation and travel to enable EU Accession State nationals to return to their country of origin.

These arrangements follow consultation with the Courts; both NASS and LAs may make decisions on the continued support of people if there is a good reason for doing so in particular cases. The Home Office advise consideration of cases when an application is received and close liaison with NASS and immigration to minimise the number of Judicial Reviews.

LAs are asked to advise LGA of issues that cannot be resolved locally. It is essential that a record of expenditure is kept to enable claims; the LGA will be consulted about the grant instructions and will ensure that reasonable expenditure is properly repaid to LAs.

LGA are very concerned that these detailed arrangements have been left to the last minute. However there is now evidence that Government is addressing the complexity of the issues and showing a commitment to assist LAs in achieving the transition.

The Chairman of the LGA has been in continuing contact with Des Browne, Minister for Immigration and the LGA will inform authorities of any developments.

For further information please contact the LGA Information Centre on 020 7664 3131 or at info@lga.gov.uk.

Additional information about how nationals of the new member states can enter, live and working the UK can be downloaded from www.workingintheuk.gov.uk.

CALL-IN ARRANGEMENTS

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee or any five other Councillors may call in any executive decision recorded in this bulletin for review. The Democratic Services Manager must be notified of any call in by **Wednesday 9th June 2004 at 5pm**. All decisions not called in by this date may be implemented on **Thursday 10th June 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 CONSERVATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Decision	Reason / Notes
To continue to support the Linear Sites Project in 2004/05 and allocate a sum of up to £6,500 from the budget within the Heritage Initiatives Fund, specifically to support the interpretation and access improvements on the Fleam Dyke.	To secure the preservation and enhancement of this key archaeological site.
To support the development of wider conservation and enhancement works on the Fleam Dyke by authorising the development of complementary projects with partnership agencies.	To continue to support the development of wider conservation and enhancement works on this important archaeological and countryside site.
To support the development of a pilot project to develop Community Archaeology Projects in 2004/05 and to authorise the allocation of a sum of £5,000 from the Heritage Initiatives Fund to support the development of individual projects during the financial year, subject to approval of individual project design (to include evidence of partnership funding).	To facilitate the development of this new partnership initiative which builds on the success of the Archaeological Training Excavation undertaken in Fulbourn during the summer of 2003. The new initiative will assist community groups in their investigations of local heritage.

DECISION MADE BY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER

The Portfolio Holder **AGREED** to the appointment of

Dr Bernadette Nazareth and

Dr Kate King

as Proper Officers and to the appointment of

Dr Christine Macleod

Dr David Kanka

Dr Liz Robin

Dr Andy Liggins

Dr Dorothy Gregson

Dr Fay Haffenden

Dr Suan Goh

Dr Lincoln Sargeant

Dr Mark Kroese

Dr Shylaja Thomas

Dr Simon Sanderson

Dr Ulrike Harrower

Dr Aliko Ahmed

Dr Raj Lakshman

Dr Fiona Head

Dr Nora Pashayan

As alternate Proper Officers under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984; Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988 and National Assistance Act 1948.

DECISION MADE BY HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Decision	Reasons / Notes
To approve the allocation of £45,021 from the HRA Provision for Unanticipated Expenditure in order to fund a donation towards the costs of additional Supporting People initiatives. The payment is not to be made until written confirmation that the payment is legitimate has been received from the auditors.	The Supporting People Team requested the amount as a donation from the "windfall" to fund additional supporting people initiatives in 2004/05, and requested approval for the allocation of the required funding. A "windfall" arose as a result from additional funding of the Council's sheltered housing service following the introduction of the Supporting People Regime. As sheltered housing is accounted for in the HRA, any donation to the Supporting People Team will have to be paid from the HRA. There are strict rules limiting the items of expenditure that can be met from the HRA. Robson Rhodes has informed officers verbally that the payment can be made from the HRA but have yet to confirm this in writing.

NOTES OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PORTFOLIO HOLDER MEETING ON 24th May 2004

Present: Cllr C Barker (PFH); Cllr Mrs Spink (for items 1,2 and part of 7)
Stephen Hampson; Dale Robinson

Apologies: None

Item 1: Notes of Previous Meeting – Agreed

Item 2: Matters Arising –

Item 4 – Footway lighting grants – Both Cllr Mrs Spink and the PFH agreed that this service should be provided through one channel and that this should not be the District Council.

Item 6 – Taxi emission testing – 46 vehicle owners contacted; 8 plates returned prior to inspection, 6 vehicles advised they could not attend and alternative arrangements were made. 23 vehicles attended, 13 vehicles, including the 6 that had notified us, were subject to suspension because of non-attendance. 2 suspension notices were issued on the day both of which were lifted by the end of the next day. The summary from the inspectors was that the standard of vehicle was very high and well above the average that they would expect. The initiative will be repeated in the future.

Item 9 (i) – DEFRA £20M Grant Money to Relieve Spending Pressures in Waste in 2004/05 – *The Finance and Resources Director had agreed that this money would be coded to waste budgets and only spent if pressures within the year dictated the need.*

Item 10 – Awarded Watercourses – *Cllr Mrs Spink had had concerns expressed to her that a ditch leading from Cambourne into Bourn Brooke was going to be designated a Critical Ordinary Watercourse. DSR would ask Pat Matthews to investigate and advise Cllr Mrs Spink of the situation.*

Item 3: Environmental Health – 2003/04 Performance Against Indicators/Target.

DSR presented the report. He reminded the meeting that the targets had been set prior to the decision to implement the alternate weekly-wheeled bin service across the entire District in 2003/04, and therefore many of the targets were very ambitious. The PFH concentrated the discussion on the PI's were the department had failed to meet the targets set and specifically commented on the following indicators. It was noted that the Department was working to a smaller number of better-targeted PI's in 2004/05.

BV62 – The PFH did not consider this PI to be of a priority as in his view this was more a matter for the private market.

BV82a & b; BV84; BV86; BV90a & b; and BV91– The PFH was extremely pleased with the balance and performance obtained against this suite of often conflicting BVPI's. Comparisons with the national position were favourable, in particular BV82a & b. The drop in the number of home compost bins being delivered was not unexpected and had been taken into account during the 2004/05 budget setting process.

BV199 – The PFH holder noted the position regarding the reporting against this indicator and concurred with the view taken by DSR. It was noted that work had begun on reporting against this indicator in 2004/05 by use of the existing ex ENCAMS external consultant used to judge the Council's cleanliness baseline index in ACE1.

ACE2 & SE214 – The PFH commented that the performance in the removal of flytips and abandoned vehicles had still been good given all the pressures in 2003/04 and that he anticipated that the service would improve in 2004/05.

SE201 & 200 – DSR advised that the green box collection problems over the Christmas period had severely skewed the full year performance. If this period were excluded were then performance would have been 92 per 100,000 collections missed and not the reported 827. It was agreed that given the changes implemented in the year staff should be congratulated.

SE204 – DSR explained that the main reason for the failures against this indicator were resulting from Campylobacter notifications and advised that it was perhaps inappropriate to include this notification within our definition. The PFH agreed and asked that from 2004/05 Campylobacter notifications be removed from the PI definition.

SE217; SE218 & SE219 – DSR expressed his concern over the reliability of the figures reported and advised that a new Licensing software system was in the process of being procured which would allow for better management information to be obtained.

SE225 – The PFH expressed his satisfaction in how performance had improved since the best value review and noted that further improvement was expected now the third operative was fully operational.

SE228 – DSR and the PFH were both disappointed with the performance in this area but understood the reasons why. DSR would ensure that the planned risk based inspection programme was developed and implemented in 2004/05.

EH17 – The PFH agreed that this item was not a high priority and requested that it be deleted from any future work programme.

The PFH commented that in general he was pleased with the performance overall especially given the level of involvement in the corporate agenda and the implementation of the integrated wheeled bin scheme.

Item 4: Hampshire Quality & Performance Report 2003/04

The PFH noted that there had been annual improvements in the overall performance against the criteria in the matrix. DSR advised that the report also indicated the area of weakness to be private sector housing, which was to be addressed as a priority in 2004/05. The lack of a quality assurance system was also reducing the department's ability to improve its scoring against the matrix.

Item 5: Appointment of Proper and Alternate Proper Officers under Public Health Legislation and National Assistance Act 1948 –

The PFH **AGREED** to the appointment of

Dr Bernadette Nazareth and
Dr Kate King

as Proper Officers and to the appointment of

Dr Christine Macleod
Dr David Kanka
Dr Liz Robin
Dr Andy Liggins
Dr Dorothy Gregson
Dr Fay Haffenden
Dr Suan Goh
Dr Lincoln Sargeant

Dr Mark Kroese
Dr Shylaja Thomas
Dr Simon Sanderson
Dr Ulrike Harrower
Dr Aliko Ahmed
Dr Raj Lakshman
Dr Fiona Head
Dr Nora Pashayan

as alternate Proper Officers under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984; Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988 and National Assistance Act 1948.

Item 6: Purchase of New Tractors following Health and Safety Assessments

The PFH confirmed his agreement to the purchase of Renault tractors for the health and safety reasons explained on the record of decision. It was noted that this decision had already been published.

Item 7: Draft Governance Arrangements for the PFI waste Partnership Contract.

The draft proposals were discussed at length. Members felt that the proposal was generally sound but that it needed to be assessed over time and following operational experience. The following specific views were made and DSR was asked to communicate these back to the County Council Project team.

SCDC needed to influence the specification of the contract and that the specification should not be solely reliant on outputs especially given the need for a MRF in the area.

Representation of the WCA's by the Chairman of the CCA Waste Forum was a satisfactory proposal provided the Chairman was elected from and by the WCA's. The election of a substitute Chairman needed to be added to the proposal. The arrangements for the Chairman reporting back to the WCA's needed to be clarified. Signing of the Partnership Agreement may have to go to Full Council.

It was noted that the governance arrangements would be brought before Cabinet, probably in September, along side other reports relating to the PFI project.

Item 8: Four Monthly Rolling Programme

The PFH noted the changes to the timetabling of reports relating to his Portfolio.

Item 9: Any Other Business

Introduction of Kitchen Food Waste – This was still on schedule for late June although Donarbon were very much in the hands of the regulatory bodies.

Implementation of Plastic Recycling – Discussions with the Contractor had gone well. The delivery of the banks had been slightly delayed and was now expected to be on site in June.

Cllr Barker thanked both DSR and SH for their support during his time as Environmental Health Portfolio holder and wished his successor well.