

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNCIL held in the CIVIC SUITE, (LANCASTER / STIRLING ROOMS), PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 29 March 2023

PRESENT: Councillor M J Burke – Chair.

Councillors T Alban, B S Banks, A M Blackwell, R J Brereton, E R Butler, S Cawley, S J Conboy, S J Corney, A E Costello, S J Criswell, L Davenport-Ray, D B Dew, S W Ferguson, I D Gardener, C M Gleadow, J A Gray, K P Gulson, J E Harvey, M A Hassall, P J Hodgson-Jones, S A Howell, N J Hunt, A R Jennings, P A Jordan, M Kadewere, P Kadewere, D N Keane, J E Kerr, C Lowe, R Martin, S R McAdam, B A Mickelburgh, D L Mickelburgh, S Mokbul, J Neish, Dr M Pickering, B M Pitt, T D Sanderson, D J Shaw, R A Slade, S L Taylor, I P Taylor, D Terry, C H Tevlin, S Wakeford, N Wells and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors M L Beuttell, S Bywater, J Clarke and G J Welton.

70 THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

A 'Thought for the Day' was presented by Mr Phil Hayes.

71 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 22nd February 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

72 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

73 CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR'S ENGAGEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair referred to the recent death of former District Councillor and Chairman Alan Mackender-Lawrence who had served four years as a District Councillor for the Huntingdon North Ward. Members then observed a moments silence in memory of the former Councillor. Further tributes were then paid by Councillors T D Sanderson, S R McAdam and J A Gray.

The Council noted those engagements attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair since the last meeting (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

74 NOTICES OF MOTION

Councillor R J West moved and it was duly seconded by Councillor I D Gardener that

This Council

- a) Notes the data collected by the National Air Traffic Service regarding the recent flight path changes at London Luton Airport.
- b) Notes the increased noise and pollution experienced by Huntingdonshire residents caused by descending aircraft.
- c) Urges London Luton airport to abandon its recent flight path changes which have led to additional aircraft mileage above rural Huntingdonshire communities.
- d) Requests that the Leadership write to the Civil Aviation Authority as part of their Post Implementation Review of flight path changes.

In presenting his motion, Councillor West made specific reference to planes flying over Abbotsley at 5,000 feet applying their air brakes and the unpleasant nature of this noise for local residents. He went on to thank Councillor Ferguson for chairing the public meetings on the matter, together with South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet Member Councillor Hawkins and MPs Jonathan Djanogly and Anthony Brown for their support in meeting with the aviation minister.

In responding, Councillor S Ferguson the Executive Councillor for Customer Services thanked Councillor West for raising the issue. He went on to explain that he and Councillor West received thousands of noise complaints from residents of Abbotsley, Waresley, the Gransdens, Toseland and Yelling and the whole of Southern Cambridgeshire as a result of up to 40 flights heading into London Luton each day. Council were informed that there had been two public meetings held on the matter and excellent support had been received from Jonathan Djanogly MP and Anthony Brown MP on the matter.

Councillor Ferguson also drew attention to the problems that had been experienced during the consultation on these changes, whereby there had been very little parish engagement and no opportunity to comment on noise issues.

Councillor Ferguson also urged caution to those in the South of the District following the recent announcement of plans for Luton to expand its passenger numbers from 18M to 32M a year, which would almost double the number of flights in and out of the airport.

Finally, whilst the Executive Councillor supported the spirit of the motion, Council were informed that for technical reasons he could not support the entire wording of it because of his responsibilities for Environmental Health. However, he urged colleagues within the Joint Administration and Members to vote in solidarity with the rural communities across the District at this time.

A debate then ensued during which Councillors Davenport-Ray, Alban, Cawley, Sanderson and Gardener spoke in favour of supporting the motion. In so doing, comments were made regarding the negative impacts on the quality of life

experienced by Huntingdonshire residents living in the area, the inaccuracy and apparent abandonment of previous statements made by the Civil Aviation Authority on the matter regarding the height of the aircraft approaching London Luton, the desire to protect residents from pollution and noise and the previous commitment made for the Authority to be an agent for influencing environmental change.

Having been put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be CARRIED.

75 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chair reported that there had not been any public questions received by the deadline for consideration by the Council.

76 QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

In relation to a specific situation in his ward, Councillor T D Alban sought clarification regarding those sites in Huntingdonshire that benefited from planning permission for housing development, which were in the ownership of a housing association or associated / subsidiary companies or had been granted as a rural exception site where either no construction work had started or where construction work had started but there remain homes unbuilt. In response, Councillor Sanderson explained that unfortunately the information was not held in the format requested and planning applications could only be searched by the name of applicant as opposed to the registered provider. Applications from agents would also need to be cross referenced. However, he did undertake to follow this up and provide a more detailed written response. In response to a supplementary question, Councillor Sanderson agreed that it would be helpful for individual members to provide specific details of sites within their wards if they had similar experiences.

Councillor R J West with reference to a recent excellent performance report regarding bin collections, recycling and street cleansing rates asked Councillor Taylor if she would carry on with the present policies and build on the work initiated by the previous administration. In response to which, the Executive Councillor for Leisure, Waste and Street Scene praised the excellent work of the District Council's Operations Teams who would continue to operate in the same vein. Any opportunities to make further improvements would always be investigated and looked at favourably.

With reference to two pending planning applications concerning an industrial site in Great Staughton, Councillor S Cawley enquired when the residents of Great Staughton could expect a decision on these applications. In response to which, the Executive Councillor for Planning explained that although he was unable to give a specific date as to when the applications would be determined, the overall backlog in applications had been reduced by 28%. These specific applications had been reassigned to a case officer in January 2023 who was seeking to bring this to a conclusion. Councillor T D Sanderson undertook to respond further to Councillor Cawley once he had spoken with the case officer concerned.

In response to a question from Councillor D Shaw regarding the progress which has been made thus far to achieve the goal within the Climate Strategy to replant more trees and rewild the land, the Executive Councillor for Leisure Waste and

Street Scene reported that the planting of 151 standard trees had been achieved 150 whips. Within these targets 115 purple leaf plum trees had been planted at the Oxmoor, with crocuses and daffodils planted in between.

Arising from a question from Councillor C M Gleadow regarding planning applications and enforcement, the Executive Councillor for Planning explained that there were currently 224 planning applications over 26 weeks for determination which was down by 88 since the last data collection, a reduction of 28%. In terms of planning enforcement, it was reported there are currently 663 active enforcement cases, compared to over 1,400 in 2019 which had represented a positive improvement.

In response to a question from Councillor C H Tevlin as to how the Council proposed to support local people in the transition to electric vehicles, the Executive Councillor for Climate and Environment reiterated the importance of recognising the scope of the Council's role within the transition away from internal combustion. She explained that the Authority had an important role to play in enabling and encouraging this transition although the funding was likely to come from other levels of government. However, the Council would remain vigilant to opportunities that arise to fund EV charging and in encouraging local people and businesses to take up that funding. She went on to report on recent developments in this area including a recent behaviour survey of car park users which will be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Climate Working Group shortly. An update was also provided on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and Council were reminded that some of the rural fund within that would be considered for a scheme to support EV capacity building and infrastructure support for local community groups. Members were also advised that the Combined Authority had also recently completed their public survey on alternative fuels. The Combined Authority has also been awarded £88,000 from Central Government to create a rolling annual delivery plan for public Electric Vehicle Charging. Work had also been ongoing with partners across the county to create a local area energy plan for Cambridgeshire which will provide the necessary evidence to rationalise more investment in the Grid in the area.

Arising from concerns which has been expressed to him by residents, Councillor J Neish expressed concerns about the booking system for classes at One Leisure. Specifically, the situation where Members were booking classes and then not turning up which prevented others from attending. In response to which, the Executive Councillor for Leisure, Waste and Street Scene undertook to discuss this matter further with the Head of Leisure and Health.

In response to a question from Councillor J Neish as to when planning training was likely to be rolled out to towns and parishes, the Executive Councillor for Planning agreed that it was an appropriate time to offer training to Town and Parish Councils. He reported that training on Planning Enforcement had been held for Development Management Committee Members on Monday. This would be rolled out in future months to other Members and then wrapped up in a full training session for Town and Parish Councils later in the Summer.

With reference to news reports regarding the loss of trees planted alongside the new A14 and the recent announcement of Huntingdonshire's Climate Emergency, Councillor C A Lowe asked what the District Council was doing to put pressure on Highways to replant the trees in Huntingdonshire at their cost. In

response to which the Executive Councillor for Climate and Environment provided an update on the situation. Members were informed that a survey had been undertaken of all the trees that had not survived and replanting was expected to begin in October 2023, involving different types of tree guards. She undertook to provide information relating to the funding directly to Councillor Lowe outside of the meeting.

77 HUNTINGDONSHIRE PLACE STRATEGY

With the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation, the Executive Leader Councillor S J Conboy, presented the report by the Interim Managing Director (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached the proposed Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire – known as Huntingdonshire Futures.

As part of the presentation, the Executive Leader reported upon the work undertaken to date to develop the Strategy which would be owned by Huntingdonshire and its stakeholders and communities based upon the engagement that had been undertaken. The document would be a living and working one, driving forward the ambitions for Huntingdonshire over the next 20 to 30 years, working in conjunction with partners. The Strategy sought to influence, engage and empower Huntingdonshire via five outcomes; Price on Place; Environment Innovation, Inclusive Economy, Health Embedded and Travel Transformed.

In concluding her presentation, Councillor Conboy moved the recommendations which were duly seconded by the Deputy Executive Leader Councillor T D Sanderson.

In welcoming the Strategy as one which looks forward to the future, Councillor N Hunt indicated that he was aware of the challenges facing the District, with an over reliance on cars, a lack of local opportunities, the struggling high streets and emphasised that was refreshing to see these challenges acknowledged and a desire shown to tackle these issues. Councillor Hunt went on to thank all those involved in the creation of the Strategy and expressed specific thanks to the outreach work which had been undertaken with young people. Having urged Members to support this Strategy, Councillor Hunt also indicated his support and excitement of a Youth Climate Council.

In responding to the Executive Leader's presentation, Councillor J A Gray made several comments relating to the Strategy and its production. He referred to the comments made by the focus groups regarding the need to ensure that decision making, and funding was equitable and inclusive and driven by the people that it is meant to serve. In indicating his qualified support for the Strategy, Councillor Gray reiterated that he had been reassured that work to refine the Strategy would be an iterative process and it was his expectation that this would be clearly evidenced. He also referred to the importance of the importance of the availability of an Action Plan in Quarter 1 of 2023/24 to monitor the success of the Strategy.

Councillor Conboy in confirming that it would be an iterative process and that there would be an Action Plan forthcoming, indicated that there would be some capacity challenges to overcome. She also thanked the previous administration,

from whom the Joint Administration had inherited the preparation of this Strategy as a visionary piece of work and reiterated her hope that this set a new way collective working for the future.

It having been previously moved and seconded, upon being put to the vote it was

RESOLVED

that the Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire – Huntingdonshire Futures be adopted (as attached at Appendix 3 of the report now submitted).

78 CORPORATE PLAN 2023-28

The Executive Leader, Councillor S J Conboy, introduced a report by the Business Intelligence and Performance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached the proposed Corporate Plan for the period 2023-2028, which sets out the Council's proposed priorities, outcomes, actions and operational performance indicators for approval.

With the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Executive Leader presented the Council's proposed Plan for 2023-28 – 'Do, Enable and Influence' which had been prepared to reflect feedback from councillors, businesses and other stakeholders and align with the newly co-developed Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy.

Attention was then drawn to the three key priorities set out within the Plan and the Executive Leader spoke in detail about the activities which incorporated each priority. These included –

1. Improving quality of life for local people
2. Creating a better Huntingdonshire for future generations
3. Delivering good quality, high value-for-money-services with good control and compliance with statutory obligations.

With specific reference to the first of the two priorities and the Council's budgetary limitations, the Executive Leader reiterated that the District Council did not have an infinite budget and that some of the projects would be undertaken by enabling and influencing other organisations to take these forwards, following the direction which the Council has set.

The Council were reminded that much of the Council's 'Business as Usual' activities sat within Priority Three and it was in this area where 80% of the Council's resources continued to be aligned. The Executive Leader explained that this third priority focused on continuing to deliver good quality services and to set an excellent example to our communities. She explained that although 'Business as Usual' may not always grab the headlines, given the scale of these activities, it was important to seek to provide exceptional service in these areas - a reason it had been made a standalone priority in own right.

In concluding, Members were advised that there would be a new approach to performance reporting including plans to monitor and report on a range of contextual outcome measures which would show how outcomes for the District and its residents are changing.

Councillor Conboy then moved the recommendation and was duly seconded by Councillor T D Sanderson.

In addressing the meeting, Councillor B Pitt outlined his support for the preparation of this Corporate Plan. In doing so, he drew attention to the specific statement 'the desire to focus on the efforts of the Council and the priorities that matter to our residents' which was an important message to be carried out through in all councillor's work.

In response to the Executive Leader's presentation and on behalf of the Conservative Group, Councillor J A Gray indicated his support for the priorities contained within the Plan, although in doing so, suggested that there was some resemblance to those adopted by the previous administration. However, Councillor Gray expressed his concerns with regards to the absence of appropriate operational performance measures within the Plan – an issue which he had raised during the scrutiny process and one which would prevent him from supporting the approval of the Plan at this time.

In responding to Councillor Gray's comments, the Executive Leader explained that the development of these measures would form the next stage of the process and it was intended to undertake this in partnership with Overview and Scrutiny. She reiterated the importance of the Council having confidence in such measures, which would be iterative to ensure that the Council delivered the right services for Huntingdonshire. She also concurred that the document was probably not vastly different to that which had gone before and formed stage one of a 20-to-30-year vision for Huntingdonshire which had been set by residents and businesses as part of the Huntingdonshire Futures Strategy.

Councillor L Davenport-Ray then took the opportunity to indicate her support for the Corporate Plan and drew attention to performance metrics which had been incorporated into from page 18 onwards of the document which would form the basis of a skeleton upon which the Council could continue to develop.

Councillor J Neish and Councillor P Hodgson-Jones went on to express further concerns with regards to the proposed measures within the document. Councillor Neish indicated that many were lacking in detail, which made it difficult to challenge. This was supported by Councillor P Hodgson Jones who reiterated that whilst many of the targets were laudable, there were no specific measures attached and that the document was lacking in detail a mechanism for performance monitoring and the indicators and measurements system that this would involve. They reiterated that it was difficult to approve the document without this information.

In response to which the Executive Leader explained that this performance management information did exist, but it had been considered too substantial to include within Council Members documentation. She had followed the precedent in terms of presentation which had been set by the previous administration – the presentation of a relatively accessible Corporate Plan behind which there is significant detail. The Executive Leader explained that the Administration had significantly enhanced the measures that they had inherited and was willing to meet with Councillors outside of the meeting to understand if there were any further areas they considered to be lacking and which had not been picked up as

part of the Scrutiny process. She looked forward to discussing the development of Key Performance Indicators with them in due course.

Councillor S Ferguson, Executive Councillor for Customer Services outlined his support for the setting of robust achievable targets to drive Council performance and indicated that he was happy to work together with all Members to identify appropriate measures to ensure we are serving the residents of Huntingdonshire.

Finally, Councillor S Wakeford, Executive Councillor for Jobs, Economy and Housing indicated his support for the structure of the documentation that had been presented to the Council for approval and supported the future development of a performance measurement framework as outlined by his colleagues.

Whereupon and having previously been proposed and seconded, the Council

RESOLVED

that the Corporate Plan for 2023-28 be adopted (as attached at Appendix A of the report now submitted).

79 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

The Managing Director presented a report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager summarising the conclusions of the Independent Remuneration Panel following their recent review of Members Allowances. (Copies of which are appended in the Minute Book).

Having been invited to speak, Councillor S J Conboy, Executive Leader, indicated that she had misgivings in relation to some of the recommendations given that the proposed increase was beyond that of the 4% pay award made to Council Staff. With this in mind, she tabled an amendment (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). The amendment proposed –

‘The replacement of recommendations a), b) and j) and the addition of recommendation k) with: -

- a) that the level of basic allowance payable for all members of Huntingdonshire District Council be £4,918 per annum (an increase of 4% on the current rate).
- b) that the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances be set in accordance with the basic allowance specified in a) above and the calculations as previously applied by the Independent Remuneration Panel, now revised, as detailed in the attached Appendix.
- j) the indices to be used for indexation purposes to enable the Members' Allowances Scheme to be adjusted for a period from May 2024 of up to three years.
-
- k) that the proposed allowance for Assistant Deputy Executive Leader be not paid until this role has been formally established within the Council's Constitution’.

Councillor Conboy then moved the amendments, which were duly seconded by Councillor T D Sanderson.

Following debate and being put to the vote, the amendments were declared to be CARRIED.

Councillor D Keane then moved the following amendment to the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor T Alban –

‘In the light of the current financial pressures on both Huntingdonshire District Council and the general public, this Council resolves:

1. To note the report of the IRP
2. To freeze Members Allowances at current 2022/23 levels
3. To revisit this decision after the Annual Council meeting in 2024.’

In debating the matter, a number of Councillors spoke in support of the proposed amendment.

Councillor S J Corney and Councillor C Lowe emphasised the difficulties in voting for an increase in members allowances in the current economic climate and the cost-of-living crisis. Councillor J A Gray commented on the poor quality of the report and the idiosyncrasy of some of the recommendations which did not reflect the evolution of the workload which had taken place since the last review. Councillor P Hodgson-Jones commented on the need for Special Responsibility Allowances to reflect the respective and relative responsibilities of the postholders and not simply be a notional calculation.

Councillor R J West re-iterated that the situation should be reconsidered in a year’s time, with a new report which better met the Council’s requirements. This was supported by Councillor Keane who called upon the leadership to undertake a more thorough review.

Councillor T D Alban suggested that it was not the right time to be increasing allowances, less than a year after Members had fought for election to the District Council. He also reiterated that allowances were not a salary and therefore should not be subject to the same percentage increase considerations as members of staff. Given that the District Council had recognised the Cost of Living Crisis in motions at a previous Council meeting, it was in his opinion that the matter should be reconsidered in a years’ time when the economic climate might be in a different position

Councillor S Ferguson referred to the absence of any significant increases within the basic allowance during the previous 10 years under the previous administration and the negative impact which that had had on current figures. Councillor Davenport-Ray reflected upon the need to encourage members of the public from all walks of life to stand for election to public office and suggested that any proposal to freeze the allowance scheme would be insulting to those residents who wished to stand for election but could not afford to do so. Councillor Pitt reiterated that it was possible for him to undertake his roles on the Cabinet and as Mayor of St Neots because of the Allowance Scheme and that it was important to have an appropriate reasonable scheme with moderate increases built in.

In also speaking against the alternative amendment, Councillor S Wakeford reiterated that the review of Members Allowances had been undertaken by an Independent Panel and that the Joint Administration had simply sought to apply a principle to limit any increase in allowances to match any increase in allowances to those received by or staff. This was reiterated by the Deputy Executive Leader who reminded the Council that the amendment was proposing an increase lower than that recommended by the Independent Panel which was still substantially below the rate of inflation. He reminded Council, that the majority of the those who stand for election do so because they are committed to public service and that there need to be needed to be a realistic system in place to compensate individuals for this.

Following debate and being put to the vote, the amendment was declared to be LOST.

On the Motion as amended being put to the vote, it was

RESOLVED

1. That the Managing Director be authorised to prepare a new scheme of Members Allowances to come into effect on 1st April 2023 to include the following changes and to take any consequential action arising therefrom:-
 - a) a level of basic allowance payable for all members of Huntingdonshire District Council be £4,918 per annum (an increase of 4% on the current rate).
 - b) that the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances be set in accordance with the basic allowance specified in a) above and the calculations as previously applied by the Independent Remuneration Panel, now revised, as detailed in the attached Appendix;
 - c) the continuation of One Special Responsibility Allowance Rule with the exception to this rule being all councillor representatives on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Audit and Governance Committee, including Substitute Members and all Members of the Development and Management Committee, with the exception of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Cabinet Member nominations;
 - d) the continuation of payment of the Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person allowance of £1,051 and £525 respectively per annum;
 - e) the continuation of the terms and conditions and the rates payable for travel based on the mileage rates published by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs for reimbursement of mileage incurred in undertaking approved duties;

- f) the continuation of arrangements in that subsistence is not payable, with the exception of 'special circumstances' such as overnight stays;
 - g) the inclusion of a Child and Dependent Carer's Allowance based at cost upon the production of receipts and in the case of specialist care a requirement of medical evidence that this type of care be required, the allowance should have no monthly maximum claim when undertaking Approved duties;
 - h) the active promotion of the Child and Dependent Carer's Allowance to prospective and new councillors both before and following an election to assist in supporting greater diversity of councillor representation;
 - i) support for a policy of parental leave for councillors;
 - j) the indices to be used for indexation purposes to enable the Members' Allowances Scheme to be adjusted from May 2024 for a period of up to three years; and
 - k) that the proposed allowance for Assistant Deputy Executive Leader be not paid until this role has been formally established within the Council's Constitution.
- 2) that, upon the coming into effect of the revised Members Allowance Scheme with effect from 1st April 2023, the existing scheme be revoked.

80 GREAT GRANSDEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Having regard to a report by the Chief Planning Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the referendum of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan held on 9th March 2023, the Executive Councillor for Planning acquainted Members with the results of the referendum with 91.27% voting in favour of supporting the making of the Neighbourhood Plan. Members noted that the turnout was just over 28%. Councillor Sanderson expressed his appreciation to the Parish Council for their efforts in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

As the result exceeded the 50% threshold, the Council was required to make the Neighbourhood Plan part of the Statutory Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

In opening the item for debate, Councillor S Ferguson commented on the many hours of dedicated work that had gone into the production of the Great Gransden Plan and urged Members to support it. He also urged other Members to encourage their own Parish Councils to start constructing and consulting on their own neighbourhood plans as this would become increasingly important as the Council moves towards the development of a new Local Plan. In thanking Councillor Ferguson for his remarks, Councillor West also urged Members to support the vote on the Plan.

The Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Councillor for Planning also took the opportunity to encourage parishes to develop their own their neighbourhood

plan work. In doing so, he reiterated that they would receive an uplift of 25% in the Community Infrastructure Levy contributions.

With reference to a specific situation recently involving his own parishes and having paid specific tribute to Councillor I D Gardener, Councillor Alban reiterated the value that could be obtained from parishes working together and being enthused by other successful parishes. He emphasised the value in encouraging peer to peer training in this way.

Whereupon, it having been duly proposed and seconded it was

RESOLVED

that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan as attached at Appendix 1 to the report now submitted be adopted with immediate effect to become part of the Statutory Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

81 CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY - UPDATE

The Executive Leader, Councillor S J Conboy presented an update of the activities of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. The Council were advised of the availability of a new Monthly Highlights report which provided a general update on the key activities of the Combined Authority, copies of which could be provided to all Members.

Members noted that the Improvement Programme was making good progress, although there was still further work to be done around procurement and value for money. It was also reported that changes to the Combined Authority Governance Arrangements and Constitution had also been approved and details of the Oxford Pan-Regional Partnership were also starting to emerge.

The Executive Leader was pleased to report that a funding request under the Market Towns Programme for Huntingdon and St Ives Market Town had been successful so funding would be available for Broadway (St Ives) Cycle Link Scheme, St Ives Community Bandstand, Shop Front Grant Scheme, Cromwell Museum Expansion and Huntingdon Bid Visitor Information. Amendments to the St Neots Masterplan had also been agreed.

Council then received a brief update on the Greater Southeast Net Zero Hub Local Energy Advice Demonstrator Projects and noted that more retrofit schemes were in the pipeline. Members were also advised that Skills Committee had recommended more funding for Cambridgeshire Regional College including the Huntingdon site and an increase in multiple maths courses. It was also reported that Peterborough were developing a new electric bus depot and the Executive Leader reiterated that she was still lobbying for transport in the northwest and buses and was expecting further information shortly.

Finally details of the newly appointed Chief Executive of the Combined Authority were reported to the Council meeting. Arising from which and having welcomed the new appointment, Councillor Gray sought clarification as to what the Executive Leader considered to be his most pressing challenges.

In response to a question from Councillor R J West, Councillor Conboy reiterated that it was important to be clear about what Huntingdonshire gets from the Combined Authority. She indicated that there was an ongoing challenge to be addressed which hindered the ability for the planning of large-scale strategic projects. This point would continue to be made to Government at every opportunity.

Councillor Ferguson requested that the Executive Leader remind the new Chief Executive that after Peterborough, Huntingdonshire was the most populous District in the County.

With the assistance of a PowerPoint presentation (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), Councillors M A Hassall and J Neish provided an update on the activities of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In doing so, the Council's attention was drawn to the areas of focus incorporated within the reframed Improvement Plan. Improvement Framework which had been reframed. Work was ongoing to improve the effectiveness of the Committee and several improvement proposals were now in place to improve the situation. It was hoped to see an improvement by June 2023.

There was no update from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Audit and Governance Committee.

82 OUTCOMES FROM COMMITTEES AND PANELS

A copy of the list of meetings held since the last meeting of the Council held on 22nd February 2023 is appended in the Minute Book and Members were advised that any issues or questions could be raised in relation to these meetings.

There were no questions arising.

83 VARIATIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

There were no changes to report.

The meeting ended at 9.36pm.

Chair