

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the SPECIAL MEETING of the COUNCIL held in the Burgess Hall, St Ivo Leisure Centre, Westwood Road, St Ives, PE27 6WU on Tuesday, 22 December 2009.

PRESENT: Councillor J W Davies – Chairman.

Councillors J D Ablewhite, M G Baker,  
I C Bates, P L E Bucknell, K J Churchill,  
W T Clough, Mrs K E Cooper, S J Criswell,  
Mrs J A Dew, D B Dew, P J Downes,  
J J Dutton, R S Farrer, J E Garner,  
P M D Godfrey, P Godley, J A Gray,  
A Hansard, D Harty, C R Hyams,  
L W McGuire, P G Mitchell, A Monk,  
M F Newman, P D Reeve, Mrs D C Reynolds,  
T V Rogers, J M Sadler, T D Sanderson,  
M F Shellens, Mrs P E Shrapnell,  
C J Stephens, G S E Thorpe, R G Tuplin,  
J S Watt and R J West.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors K M Baker, Mrs M Banerjee, J T Bell, Mrs B E Boddington, R W J Eaton, A N Gilbert, Mrs P A Jordan, D J Priestman, L M Simpson, P A Swales and P R Ward.

### 67. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### (a) Carol Service

The Chairman thanked all those who had attended the Carol Service at the Parish Church of All Saints in St. Ives earlier in the evening and extended his appreciation to Reverend J Pullen for his contribution to both the service and arrangements.

#### (b) Mr P H Dakers

The Council noted the resignation of former Councillor P H Dakers as Councillor for the Fenstanton Ward with effect from 18th December 2009.

### 68. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 2nd December 2009 were approved as a correct record subject to the inclusion of reference in Minute No. 64 to an answer to a question from Councillor P D Reeve to the Leader of the Council, Councillor I C Bates in which Councillor Bates indicated that he was unable to give any undertaking to hoist EU flags on public buildings across Huntingdonshire.

## **69. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillors I C Bates, K Churchill, S J Criswell, J J Dutton, R S Farrer, D Harty, L W McGuire and R J West declared a personal interest in Minute No. 70 post by virtue of their membership of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Councillor W T Clough declared a personal interest in Minute No. 70 post by virtue of his membership of Buckden Parish Council.

Councillor P J Downes declared a personal interest in Minute No. 70 post both as a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council and as the owner of property located on a road directly affected by the proposals.

Councillor C R Hyams declared a personal interest in Minute No. 70 post by virtue of his membership of Godmanchester Town Council.

Councillor M F Shellens declared a personal interest in Minute No. 70 post by virtue of his membership of Brampton Parish Council.

## **70. THE A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

The Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, Councillor D B Dew, presented the report of the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which invited the Council to consider its formal response to the draft Side Road Orders for the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement Scheme.

Councillor Dew reminded the Council that its strategic planning policies all supported and were predicated upon the continued sustainable growth and regeneration of Huntingdonshire and that the delivery of an improved A14 was vital to the future social and economic well-being of the District and the economic viability of communities located on the proposed route. To this end, the Council would be presenting its response and specific evidence to the Highways Agency, Cambridgeshire County Council and any subsequent public inquiry. Councillor Dew envisaged that the improvement scheme would address the problems experienced locally arising from congestion on the A14 in recent years and asked for the Council's support for the representations to be made.

Members' attention was drawn to Annex to the report now submitted which contained an overview of the content of the Environment Statement and a response to the pertinent points which would form the basis of further discussions with the joint venture consortium (JVC) appointed by the Highways Agency. However, Councillor Dew underlined that although the Council were being asked to endorse the conclusions contained in the document, discussions would continue in the new year to further clarify points made and to address others with a view to reaching an agreed position, as far as possible, prior to any formal public inquiry. Reference also was made to a précis of the issues requiring further discussion which had been circulated to Members after the despatch of the agenda (a copy of this document also is appended in the Minute Book). Before commencing the debate, the Transportation Team Leader, Mr S Bell, explained by reference to a power point presentation the existing and predicted

traffic flows at various locations in the Brampton, Godmanchester, Huntingdon and St. Ives areas if the A14 proposals were to proceed or otherwise.

The Chairman then reminded the Council that the A14 improvements scheme had been the subject of the headline debate at their meeting held on 28th October 2009 and that Members and Parish Council representatives had been given the opportunity to make their comments on the scheme at that meeting. It was therefore not his intention to waive Council Procedure Rules to allow Members to speak for longer than the five minutes permitted.

Councillor P J Downes moved and it was duly seconded that -

"the Council suspend Council Procedure Rule 11 (Rules of Debate) for the duration of discussion on Minute No. 70".

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be LOST.

Councillor C R Hyams moved and it was duly seconded that  
"the Council suspend Council Procedure Rule 11 (Rules of Debate) to enable Members to speak for seven minutes during discussion on Minute No. 70"

Upon being put to a vote, the Motion was declared to be LOST.

To open the debate, Councillor P J Downes expressed his concern that the overview of the Environmental Statement (Annex A) was not sufficiently detailed to present to the Highways Agency. He referred in particular to, in his view, the need to consider the provision of a direct and safe link for pedestrians and cyclists to Brampton Hut for those employed at or visiting facilities in that area and to provide access to Brampton Wood without the need to travel by car. He suggested that this could be achieved by adjustments to Footpath No. 15 and Bridleway No. 19. He also queried the impact on flood risk at Willow Road, Fenstanton.

Accordingly, Councillor Downes moved an amendment to the recommendation contained in the third bullet point of paragraph 8.1 of the report now submitted. The Motion was duly seconded by Councillor D B Dew as follows -

"that the Council, through the responsibility delegated to the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, continues to work with the JVC in order to address appropriately the outstanding issues and local mitigation measures mentioned specifically in Annex A" hereto.

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be CARRIED.

Whilst thanking those Members and Officers who had contributed to the work thus far to respond to the proposals, Councillor M F Shellens highlighted his concerns that the new A14 still would not be fit for purpose and that it was his intention not to support the Council's response for several reasons. These related to his wish to provide safe access to Brampton Hut, congenial access to Brampton Wood, his strong reservations at the accuracy of the traffic information

produced for Thrapston Road, Brampton, the Hinchingsbrooke Complex, Hinchingsbrooke Park Road, Ermine Street and the new link road. Lastly he stressed the importance in his view of funding a research project into the effect of road traffic on the respiratory health of those living in the vicinity of major road networks.

Councillor P D Reeve indicated his intention not to support the Motion and challenged the level of consultation which had taken place with local residents.

As County Councillor for The Hemingfords and Fenstanton, Councillor Bates expressed his concern at the visual impact and noise levels affecting his Ward and the mitigation measures required, in particular, to protect specific locations in Fenstanton and Hilton and around the proposed junction of the new A14 with Wood Green Animal Shelter. In terms of flooding issues, he questioned whether the Environment Agency had given any assurance about the adequacy of capacity to manage excess water at Hall Green Brook and West Brook in Hilton. Overall, Councillor Bates indicated his support for the principles of the proposal and was hopeful that it would curtail "rat running" and be delivered as programmed and within budget.

Councillor C R Hyams drew attention to the representations made by Godmanchester Town Council in respect of the predicted traffic flows on Offord Road and their support for the limited access junction on the A1198. However, he expressed his concern at the perceived lack of clarity regarding egress arrangements for HCVs at this junction and the potential for increased traffic flow because of proposed new development at Godmanchester.

Having expressed reservations at the effect on Brampton Road of the proposed scheme, Councillor J A Gray reiterated the Council's previously expressed concern at the dangers presented by the three central reserve crossings on the A14 west of Huntingdon. He mentioned in particular the difficulty regularly experienced by school buses unable to cross busy lanes of traffic and he urged Members to compare the scheme with that proposed for the A1 in North Yorkshire. Councillor R J West concurred with these views and together with Councillor Mrs J A Dew felt that there had been sufficient consultation and that it was imperative now that the scheme should proceed as soon as possible to avoid any further impact on local roads.

Councillor P L E Bucknell questioned whether the reinstatement of Views Common, Huntingdon would be addressed and Councillors T V Rogers and P M D Godfrey questioned the lack of a detailed explanation regarding the impact of HCVs on villages north of the A14 and on the A1123.

Further to earlier comments regarding the central reservations on the A14 west of Huntingdon, Councillor Bates also contended that the Highways Agency needed to be made aware in the strongest terms, that urgent action was required to resolve the dangers presented by these crossings.

In thanking the Council for their contribution to the debate and having responded to some of the comments made, Councillor Dew re-emphasised that whilst the Council's formal response needed to be

submitted to the Highways Agency by 6th January 2010, there would be opportunities thereafter to raise issues up to and during any public inquiry which might follow. He reiterated that Annex A was a working document upon which representations would be based and that he would write to the Highways Agency and Minister of State regarding the urgent need for improvements to the junctions on the A14 west of Huntingdon. He concluded by stating that the delivery of an enhanced A14 was crucial to the future of the District and accordingly it was moved by Councillor D B Dew and duly seconded that -

“the Council agrees to the following representations being made to the Highways Agency in respect of its formal response under the draft Orders for the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement Scheme -

- ◆ that the Council positively supports the A14 Improvement Scheme, as submitted, and states that it wants to see the delivery of the scheme as soon as practicably possible. The delivery of the proposed improvements are necessary to support the Council's strategic planning and economic development strategy; to improve journey times; and to enhance road safety for the travelling public;
- ◆ that the Council specifically supports the associated and related proposed improvements to the local road network in and around Huntingdon; and
- ◆ that the Council, through the responsibility delegated to the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, continues to work with the JVC in order to address appropriately the outstanding issues and local mitigation measures mentioned specifically in Annex A hereto.

Following a requisition that voting on the Motion be recorded in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.4, the following Members voted in favour of the Motion -

Councillors J D Ablewhite, M G Baker, I C Bates, P L Bucknell, K J Churchill, W T Clough, Mrs K E Cooper, S J Criswell, J W Davies, D B Dew, Mrs J A Dew, P J Downes, J J Dutton, R S Farrer, J E Garner, P M D Godfrey, P Godley, J A Gray, A Hansard, D Harty, C R Hyams, L W McGuire, P G Mitchell, A Monk, M F Newman, Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers, J M Sadler, T D Sanderson, Mrs P E Shrapnell, C J Stephens, G S E Thorpe, R G Tuplin, J S Watt and R J West.

The following Members voted against the Motion –

Councillors P D Reeve and M F Shellens.

Whereupon, the Motion was declared to be CARRIED by 35 votes to 2.

The meeting ended at 8.44pm.

Chairman