

## **CABINET: MINUTES**

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> July 2012

**Time:** 10.00am – 12.05pm

**Present:** Chairman: Councillor N Clarke

Councillors I Bates, D Brown, S Count, M Curtis, D Harty, L W McGuire, T Orgee and S Tierney

**Apologies:** Councillor M Shuter

**Present by invitation:** Councillors J Batchelor, K Bourke, B Brooks-Gordon, S Hoy, L Nethsingha, T Sadiq, T Stone, S van de Ven

### **594. MINUTES: 12<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2012**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **595. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **596. PETITIONS**

None.

### **597. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

Cabinet received a report on the findings and recommendations from a strategic review of Cambridgeshire's Domestic Abuse Services conducted by the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny. The Vice Chairman of that Committee, Councillor S Hoy, was invited to speak, and she raised the following, key points:

- the Committee welcomed the Council's commitment to this issue, particularly the additional resources that had been allocated, but was disappointed that Cabinet could not give a long term guarantee regarding the sustainability of any budget;
- the Committee was disappointed that its proposal that there should be a review on stricter regulation of level 3 incidents had been rejected;
- the Committee was concerned that the Partnership was not publically accountable.

The Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Councillor L W McGuire, welcomed Councillor Hoy's comments, and paid tribute to the significant work undertaken by Councillor Hoy and the other Members of the member-led review group evaluating the provision of domestic abuse services in the county. He presented the response to the Committee's report.

Addressing the resource issue, Cllr McGuire assured Cllr Hoy that the budget for future years was being worked on, but he was unable to give assurances on future funding at this stage.

In relation to the stricter regulation of Level 3 incidents by appropriately trained staff, Cllr McGuire emphasised that due to limited resources, only the more severe cases could be dealt with, and it was therefore unlikely that a review was appropriate at this time.

Councillor Tierney commended the very comprehensive Member Led Review, and was pleased that most of the Committee's recommendations had been accepted. He asked Councillor Hoy if there was any specific area causing concern. Councillor Hoy responded that the whole report and its recommendations was important, and whilst she welcomed Cabinet's support for the recommendations, she felt that this needed to be backed up with actions.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Clarke, commented that Cabinet accepted the recommendations, as outlined in the Cabinet response, and would be asking the Domestic Abuse Partnership to take these recommendations into account in its work programme, and this would be how the recommendations would be taken forward. He stressed the importance of the report being discussed at the Partnership, and all partners receiving a copy, and suggested that it could be circulated more widely, to influence thinking, e.g. to MPs, and added that as an organisation the County Council needed to be bolder in demonstrating the good work being carried out, especially multi agency work.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the findings and recommendations contained within the report (Appendix 1);
- b) thank the Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee for its report; and
- c) agree the responses to the recommendations, as outlined in the Cabinet Response report.

**598. ALLOCATION OF SECTION 106 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TO TRANSPORT SCHEMES AND PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA FILTERS FOR FUTURE FUNDING FROM SECTION 106 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Committee received a report proposing an approach for spending Section 106 contributions in Huntingdonshire and within the Southern, Northern and Eastern Area Corridor Plan areas of Cambridge. These processes had been agreed with the relevant partner authorities.

Councillor Bates drew attention to written comments received from Councillors Carter and Williamson, relating to issues in their Divisions. Councillor Williamson had stressed that the views and needs of the relevant areas of South Cambridgeshire needed to be put forward in the process.

Councillor Bates highlighted the inclusion of a feasibility study into a Chesterton Cycle Bridge, between Stourbridge Common and Fen Road, which would form a crucial part of the "Chisholm Trail". He also drew attention to schemes in St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey.

Councillor Brooks-Gordon spoke as the Local Member for Castle Division. She stressed that a safe cycle route from Orchard Park was essential, and it would help to reduce the number of cars using Histon Road and the surrounding roads, especially as a Guided Busway was promised for Histon Road, but never materialised.

Speaking as Labour Group Leader, Councillor Sadiq noted the process that had been agreed, but felt that there should be greater transparency when proposals were reviewed. He suggested that a route review was required for the routes between the city centre and Addenbrookes, especially given the number of developments around Addenbrookes. He felt it would be helpful if there was some indication of the total amount of funding that was under discussion. In relation to the Chesterton Cycle Bridge feasibility study, he stressed that this was a sensitive area, and it was vital that any consultation was as wide as possible, and that the ecological impact, not just the environmental impact, should be examined. He also queried whether Radial Routes were best funded through Section 106 funding.

The Leader of the Council commented that guidance on how communities engage in the process was vital, especially for Parish Councils. In response to the comment on the total amount of funding, this was very much a moveable feast, and he did not want to raise expectations, as the levels vary related to development.

Councillor van de Ven, speaking at Liberal Democrat Transport Spokesman, supported the schemes outlined in the report, particularly those which addressed serious problems, including the Tins Path, Chesterton Bridge and the Hills Road steps and ramps. With regard to the latter scheme, she urged consideration of Dutch style ramps. She also highlighted the importance of the Hills Road improvements and the lighting of the southern section of the Guided Busway, and echoed Cllr Williamson's comments on consulting with representatives from South Cambridgeshire on the relevant proposals.

Councillor Bourke spoke in support of the Tins Path as Local Member for a small part of this scheme, and he felt it was a very good route. He commented that it was difficult to get a grasp on developer contributions locally, although this had improved since the Joint Transport Forum had addressed this issue. He had no issue with the selection process, and welcomed the feasibility study into the Chesterton Cycle Bridge, but suggested that there needed to be a commitment to the completion of the whole 'Chisholm Trail', ideally from the coming year's budget round.

Cabinet Members made the following comments:

Councillor Curtis welcomed the Chisholm Trail, and was pleased to see that it was making progress. He felt that with some thought and consideration, some sections of

the Chisholm Trail could be delivered more economically than anticipated. He also welcomed the number of cycle projects being supported, and felt that a strategic view was needed, with a preference for segregated cycle routes where possible. He suggested that as part of the Olympic legacy, Cambridgeshire should emerge as the cycling county.

Councillor Harty welcomed the report, and was pleased to see the new cycle bridge in St Neots, and also the St Neots to Little Paxton cycle route.

Councillor Brown asked that the Quy roundabout to Cambridge airport route be considered as an addition to the route, as this was one of the most congested routes into the city. Councillor Clarke pointed out that there was already underpass suitable for cyclist under the A14, near the Quy Mill hotel.

Councillor McGuire welcomed the cycle projects, but also drew attention to other schemes, such as the Ramsey Real Time Passenger Information signs, which would enhance public confidence in bus services.

The Leader concluded by reiterating his request for more information on how Parish Councils were engaged. He also suggested that given Cambridge City Council's long experience in developing cycle schemes, their expertise should not be to the *detriment* of potentially more worthy bids from other areas of the county, which did not benefit from the same expertise, e.g. in the market towns. It was noted that the support of cycle lobbying groups around the county could be utilised in this regard.

It was resolved to:

- 1) approve the allocation of Section 106 contributions to the following schemes:
  - a) Newmarket Road Bus Priority – Part 1
  - b) Crossing Provision, Ditton Lane/Newmarket Road
  - c) The Tins Phase 2
  - d) Radial Route Signing (ECATP)
  - e) Radial Route Signing (SCATP)
  - f) Hills Road Bridge Steps
  - g) Mere Way/Carlton Way Traffic Calming Measures
  - h) Kings Hedges Road/Arbury Road Crossing
  - i) Feasibility Study for Chesterton Cycle Bridge
  - j) Radial Route Signing (NCATP)
  - k) Ramsey – Real Time Passenger Information Signs
  - l) St Neots - Installation of new pedestrian and cycle bridge
  - m) St Neots - Little Paxton to the Station Cycle Route
  - n) St Ives - High Leys & Green Leys Traffic Calming & Cycling
  - o) St Ives - Route 6 Cycle Route
- 2) approve the project selection criteria for allocating Section 106 contributions to future transport schemes.

**599. INSURANCE PROCUREMENT – DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO LET CONTRACT**

Cabinet considered a report seeking delegation of authority for the letting of insurance contracts, likely to be valued in excess of £900,000 per annum, and to run for a minimum of 36 months, to the LGSS Director of Legal Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance. It was noted that the existing contracts of insurance expired on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

It was resolved to approve delegation of authority to the LGSS Director of Legal Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Performance, to agree and let contracts for the provision of insurance to the Council commencing 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012.

**600. INTEGRATED RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2012**

Members received financial and performance information, to enable them to assess progress in delivering the Council's Integrated Plan.

Cabinet noted that the forecast year-end overspend of £3.3M, mainly due to the budget pressures in Adult Social Care. The Section 75 (S75) agreement with NHS Cambridgeshire was terminated on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, and a new S75 with Cambridge Community Services (CCS) was in the process of being agreed. This would enable more direct and tighter controls over the activity and financial reporting. Members were reminded that the budget predictions were set against additional savings of £42.2M, following an 11% reduction in core funding from central government, and the general economic downturn.

Three non-Cabinet members spoke on this item:

- Councillor Tim Stone raised a number of points. He asked if the increase in concessionary fare charges was being checked thoroughly by Council officers. He felt the situation with the Waste PFI required a more thorough explanation, in terms of the balance between the savings from the late commissioning of the plant and income foregone. With regard to references to the CorVu performance management system, he suggested that a training session to familiarise Members with CorVu would be useful. He also suggested that the information presented could be adjusted so that the Revised Budget column in the capital budget funding table included an explanatory section on how the revised figures had been arrived at, as it was difficult for Members to keep track of the reasons for the revisions.
- Councillor Nethsingha commented that it was irritating that £25,000 had been identified to fund the Olympic Torch Relay, but £24,000 could not be identified for protected road verges. She expressed concerns on how virements were made and recorded, and how budgets appeared to change. She had reservations about the additional Early Intervention Grant being put into corporate reserves, when there were such pressures on this service. She expressed strong concern regarding the external and contextual issues listed in the report, and the further impact this would have on services, given that there were already issues with staff

morale, as evidenced in a Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Review into communications, which found that staff were concerned with a lack of direction and lack of positive focus. Councillor Clarke responded that Cabinet were also very concerned and working very hard to address these issues. With regard to the Olympic Torch relay, he stressed that this was a once in a life time experience.

- Councillor Batchelor commented that the £3.3M overspend was really £3.3M underfunding, given that this money was being used to meet the authority's statutory requirements with regard to Adult Social Care. In response, Cabinet Members commented that the Liberal Democrat budget proposals included only an additional £100,000 for this service area, and welcomed the acknowledgement that the cause was demand led, not inefficiencies. Cabinet Members stressed that they continued to lobby government on this issue, but in the meantime continued to explore every possible avenue of reducing costs.

Cabinet Members:

- were pleased to note the number of capital schemes that were both on budget and on time, and asked for thanks to be passed on to staff on behalf of Members;
- with regard to the point about the additional Early Intervention Grant going directly to corporate reserves, it was clarified that the grant would be held in corporate reserves but would be transferred to the relevant budget if required;
- noted that the increase in concessionary bus fare costs was properly checked and scrutinised, and that some of the additional pressure was due to the Guided Busway. Cabinet Members commented that this in part reflected both the success of the Guided Busway and the increase in older people taking opportunities to be more mobile;
- with regard to verges, noted that a number of Parishes were addressing this issue themselves.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Clarke paid tribute to the continued efforts of staff in achieving a favourable budget position, given the challenges the Council faced.

It was resolved to:

- a) analyse resources and performance information and note the remedial action currently being taken and considers if any further remedial action is required.

#### Funding taken to/from Reserves:

In line with agreed practice, the default position is to account for all income as a general resource, with any additional pressures in grants taken to the Pressures & Developments Reserve. On occasions, funding that has been earmarked by Cabinet for specific use, or funding expected as per the Integrated Plan, is transferred to the appropriate Service.

- b) Department for Transport Capital Funding (£2.2m) – to approve the allocation of this funding in full to Economy, Transport and Environment Services (section 5.4).

- c) Early Intervention Grant (£666,515) – to approve the treatment of this funding as a general resource in the first instance and take it to corporate reserves (section 6.2).
- d) Community Transport Funding (£258,208) – to approve the allocation of this funding in full to Economy, Transport and Environment Services (section 6.2).

**601. BURWELL DAY CENTRE: LEASE RENEWAL AT LESS THAN BEST CONSIDERATION**

Item deferred to the September Cabinet meeting.

**602. BUSINESS RATES POOLING**

Cabinet received a report on an expression of interest, in association with the county's City and District Councils, to form a pool for business rates retention and to work up a proposal for a pool for determination at a later date.

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Performance outlined the proposals for business rates pooling. Local retention of a proportion of business rates was one of the features of the Local Government Finance Bill. Modelling undertaken demonstrated that, for the majority of scenarios, a pool that incorporated all six Cambridgeshire local authorities would see a greater total amount of business rates revenue retained than if no pool was formed.

Councillor Bourke, speaking as Liberal Democrat Group Leader, commented that whilst he had nothing against the proposal to pool Business Rates, he felt that the governance and distribution arrangements would be key. He suggested that all authorities may wish to consider discounting business rates to start-up businesses and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), if affordable, in their first year. The Cabinet Member commented that any such proposal would need to be agreed by the City and District authorities, who would receive the majority of the Business Rates. Whilst acknowledging some merit in Councillor Bourke's suggestion, it was suggested that the reality would be more complex, and authorities would need to determine the best ways to support businesses in the county.

It was resolved:

- a) to approve an expression of interest to Government, with the County's City and District Councils, in working up a proposal for a Cambridgeshire pool;
- b) to ask the Cambridgeshire Public Services Board to work up arrangements for a proposal for a Cambridgeshire pool, with a view to taking a decision on pooling in line with government timeframes;
- c) that Cambridgeshire County Council should signal to partner authorities that it would be willing to act as the lead authority if a pool were to be formed.

## **602. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER UPDATE**

Cabinet considered an updated Risk Management policy, and changes to the Corporate Risk Register. The proposed policy included a clearer separation between policy and process, the former being the responsibility of Members, whilst the latter was the responsibility of officers.

Councillor Nethsingha spoke on this item. She suggested that constitutionally, responsibility for the Corporate Risk Register policy lay with the Audit & Accounts Committee, and they would not have opportunity to debate the revised policy until their meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July. In terms of the distinction between policy and process, she suggested that the process should be managed by both the Strategic Management Team and Cabinet, as Cabinet Members took responsibility for their service areas. Commenting on Risk 16, Resourcing Provision for Children and Adults, she did not agree with the risk score of 3, and suggested that it should be much higher.

The Leader of the Council advised that in relation to the constitutional point, if the correct procedure had not been followed, this matter would be considered again at the next Cabinet meeting, following consideration by the Audit & Accounts Committee.

In terms of Cabinet Members having responsibility for their service areas, Members suggested that whilst they had an overview of their relevant service areas, and provided challenge to officers, it was not Councillors' role to be involved in process and operational issues.

It was resolved:

- a) to approve the updated Risk Management Policy; and
- b) to note changes to the Corporate Risk Register.

## **603. POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

Cabinet considered a report on the establishment of the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel. Councillor McGuire, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, stressed that the Police and Crime Panel would not replace the Police Authority, but would provide an important scrutiny role in relation to the commissioner. The Panel would comprise three Members each from the County Council and Peterborough City Council, and one Member each from the four Districts and Cambridge City Council. The County Council appointments were politically proportionate: the two Conservative nominees were the Chair of the Community Safety Board (currently Councillor M McGuire) and the Chairman of the Safer and Stronger Overview & Scrutiny Committee (currently Councillor West). It was noted that the County Council's Liberal Democrat Group would be agreeing their nomination at a party meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July.

The Leader of the Council thanked Councillor McGuire for his hard work on this matter.

It was resolved:



- 1) to agree to establish the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel as a joint committee of the local authorities as defined in Section 28 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011;
- 2) to agree the nomination and appointment of three members and three substitute members of the Council to the panel;
- 3) to agree the panel arrangements in accordance with schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

#### **604. INCREASE IN CHARGE FOR BLUE BADGE**

Cabinet considered a report on the charge made for a Blue Badge. The Blue Badge scheme provided a range of parking concessions nationally and across Europe for people with severe mobility problems. The scheme was designed to help severely disabled people to travel independently, as either a driver or passenger, by allowing them to park close to their destination.

The results of a statistically significant national survey, carried out by the Department for Transport and an Independent Research Company, was used in preference to carrying out a Community Impact Assessment within Cambridgeshire.

The report recommended an increase in charge to £9 for a three year period, which would contribute to the costs of the County Council in administering the scheme, which included a standard charge of £4.60 which local authorities were required to pay for production, postage and anti-fraud measures for the badge, including a national database.

Councillor van de Ven spoke as Liberal Democrat Transport Spokesman. She declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Blue Badge holder. She expressed concern on the increase in the charge, as this affected some of the most vulnerable groups in the community. She also recommended that a Community Impact Assessment be carried out within the county.

In response, Councillor McGuire advised that the annual cost to the County Council to administer the scheme was £311,000. This did not include the costs of providing advice to those who turned out to be ineligible for the scheme.

Labour Group leader Councillor Sadiq agreed with Councillor van de Ven that this was sending out the wrong signal at a time of economic hardship and benefit cuts. He also felt that given the problems encountered by other authorities in not carrying out Community Impact Assessments should be reflected upon.

Responding to the points raised, Councillor McGuire commented that whilst those entitled to Blue Badges were indeed a vulnerable group of people, not all people with severe mobility problems had limited financial means, and the cost of £3 per annum was still very low, and helped to maintain a valuable service. Other Cabinet Members supported the view that £9 for three years represented very good value, and that underfunding could potentially jeopardise the service, and charging less would lead to further pressures on the Adult Social Care budget, which was directed at supporting

vulnerable people. It was noted that this was the first increase in the charge for blue badges since 1983.

It was resolved to:

- a) approve an increase in the charge made for a new or renewal Blue Badge from £2 to £9 per badge. The badges are valid for 3 years; and
- b) approve an increase in the charge made for a replacement badge if lost, stolen or damaged from £2 to £5 per badge if required during the 3 year period.

## **605. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY**

Cabinet considered a report on the Assistive Technology Strategy developed with NHS partners. Assistive Technology was an umbrella term for any device or system that allowed individuals to perform tasks they would otherwise be unable to do, or increases the ease and safety with which tasks can be performed.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Councillor Curtis, commented that this was an important preventative service, and he paid tribute to the hard work of the Commissioning Manager for Adult Social Care and the work of the Nottingham Rehabilitation Service, the County Council's contractor, providing this service, for their hard work in providing an excellent service.

It was resolved to:

- a) approve the Assistive Technology Strategy
- b) delegate the monitoring of the action plan to the portfolio holder for Adult Services

## **606. COMMUNITY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS (CSV): VOLUNTEERS IN CHILD PROTECTION**

Cabinet received a report on the plan to pilot the Volunteers in Child Protection (ViCP) scheme in Cambridgeshire.

Introducing the report, Councillor D Brown explained that this was a groundbreaking project that matched volunteers to families with children who were at risk of significant harm. The volunteers provided support and encouragement to help these families address the many problems they face, and ultimately assist them in caring for their children safely and without the need for social care intervention. Community Service Volunteers (CSV) was a national charity, and the only organisation currently providing this service. As there was a lack of other potential providers of this service, a contract exemption was required.

Cabinet Members:

- stressed the importance of evaluating the pilot;
- noted the potential for huge social returns in terms of breaking long term cycles;

- noted that CSV had a proven track record;
- stressed the need to revisit the market at the end of the two year contract exemption.

It was resolved to approve a contract exemption for the appointment of Community Service Volunteers (CSV) to operate a Volunteers in Child Protection (ViCP) scheme.

#### **607. TRANSPORT PROCUREMENT – MAJOR SCHEMES FRAMEWORK AND EASTERN HIGHWAYS ALLIANCE**

Cabinet considered a report on an extension of the Major Schemes Framework (MSF) Contract, and commencing the Eastern Highways Alliance (EHA) Framework contract.

The Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, Councillor Bates, outlined the reasons for extending the MSF contract for a further two years to cover three schemes currently being progressed, and also to provide a further procurement route as the EHA beds down. However, the preference was to move swiftly towards the EHA.

It was resolved to:

- a) authorise extension the Major Schemes Framework Contract for transport and highway works for a final 2 years with both framework contractors; and
- b) commence the use of the Eastern Highways Alliance Framework Contract for major transport and highways works.

#### **608. DRAFT CABINET AGENDAS – 21<sup>st</sup> AUGUST AND 11<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012**

The Leader of the Council advised that the August meeting had been cancelled.

Members noted the draft agenda for the Cabinet meeting to be held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2012, including the addition of the following three items since the publication of the agenda for this meeting:

- Burwell Day Centre
- Cambridgeshire Guided Busway dispute
- Raising the Participation Age Strategy

Chairman 11<sup>th</sup> September 2012