



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of East Cambridgeshire
District Council held in the Council Chamber,
The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Thursday
10 December 2012 at 6.30pm

P R E S E N T

Councillor Allen Alderson	Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor Michael Allan	Councillor Tom Hunt
Councillor Ian Allen	Councillor Tom Kerby
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith	Councillor Chris Morris
Councillor David Ambrose Smith	Councillor Neil Morrison
Councillor Anna Bailey	Councillor James Palmer
Councillor David Brown	Councillor John Palmer
Councillor Tony Cornell (Vice- Chairman)	Councillor Tony Parramint (Chairman)
Councillor Lavinia Edwards	Councillor Philip Read
Councillor Kevin Ellis	Councillor Charles Roberts
Councillor Colin Fordham	Councillor Mike Rouse
Councillor Jeremy Friend-Smith	Councillor Joshua Schumann
Councillor Sheila Friend-Smith MBE	Councillor Robert Stevens
Councillor Tony Goodge	Councillor Hazel Williams MBE
Councillor Lindsey Harris	Councillor Gareth Wilson
Councillor Richard Hobbs	Councillor Pauline Wilson
	Councillor Andy Wright

30. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions received.

31. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Austen, Burton, Beckett, Griffin-Singh, Moakes and Willows.

Cllr P Wilson apologised in advanced to the Chairman, as she would need to leave the Council meeting early.

32. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Both Cllrs B Hunt and Bailey declared an interest in Agenda Item 12.d – Schedule of Items Recommended from Committees and Other Member Bodies – Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, as they were both Directors of a company that owned property within the district and they therefore felt it was not appropriate to remain in the Council Chamber whilst the item was discussed.

At the commencement of Agenda Item 12.d - Schedule of Items Recommended from Committees and Other Member Bodies – Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, Cllr Roberts also declared an interest, as he was a Director of a development company.

33. **PRESENTATION BY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

The Chief Fire Officer, Graham Stagg, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Chris Strickland and Chairman of the Fire Authority, Cllr Fred Brown attended the Council meeting to give a presentation on consultation proposals for further collaboration up to a full merger between Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service.

The Chairman of the Fire Authority, Cllr Fred Brown explained that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service were required to achieve £4.2 million savings over the next four years. It was expected that these savings would be achieved and that £2.6 million savings had already been attained from reductions to support services. Cllr Fred Brown explained that both Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service had a history of collaborative working and were already successfully working together via the Combined Fire Control Centre in Huntingdon to take 999 calls and mobilise fire engines and officers.

The Chief Fire Officer, Graham Stagg, explained that to seriously consider a merger of the two Services was a rigorous process. Currently there was no requirement to consult with the public. However, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service wanted to gauge public opinion before a full business case was completed. It had been intended that a full business case would be submitted to Government for its approval in February 2013. However, it was unlikely that this date would now be achieved.

At this point of the meeting Cllr James Palmer, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Chief Executive left the Council Chamber.

The Chief Fire Officer, Graham Stagg, noted that in comparison to other Fire Authorities, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service was a low cost authority charging less per head of population than other fire services. Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Services continued to be two of the most cost effective fire services in the country and had been for many years. In the current financial year, a Band D property in Cambridgeshire contributed £59.31 a year through Council Tax, which was around £1.14 a week for the Fire and Rescue Service.

The £4.2 million savings that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service was required to find over the next four year would not negatively impact on front line service delivery, provided that the funding announcement by Government later in December was as expected. However, front line service delivery from 2015 was a concern, particularly as a result of any future Comprehensive Spending Review. Therefore, the best option was to continue to identify further savings via back office functions and via a merger between the two services.

The Chief Fire Officer appreciated that it was difficult to form an opinion on a merger without full details of any financial savings. A huge amount of work was involved in developing a business case. A merger would require the support of Members and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service wanted to know whether, in principle, Members would generally support a merger before proceeding with a business case. A legislative process was involved in merging the two services and the new combined fire authority could be in place by April 2014.

To date the consultation response return rate had been moderate. In total, 250 consultation responses had been received. The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the consultation questionnaire could be completed online via www.cambsfire.gov.uk. Alternatively, a number of paper copies were available at the meeting.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service was required to achieve over £4 million savings from its £30 million budget and 75% of its budget was attributable to staffing costs. It had been acknowledged by Central Government that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service were working towards achieving the required budget savings. The current budget savings would not impact on front line service delivery. However, it was anticipated that during the next Comprehensive Spending Review a further £2-3 million savings would be required. Once a total savings target of £5.5 million was required, this would inevitably impact on front line service delivery.

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service only had 5 appliances that could be crewed and available 24 hours per day and on average it had 8 appliances available during the day. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer noted that any merger would only be proposed if it made sense and protected front line service delivery.

The Chairman enquired whether the required budget savings would result in a reduction of fire appliances in Soham. The Chief Fire Officer explained that provided no further budget savings were required in addition to the £4.2 million, there would be no impact on front line service delivery. However, this did not mean that front line service delivery would not be affected in the future. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that if further savings were required both the second fire appliance at Soham and Ely could be at risk.

At this point of the meeting Cllr James Palmer, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Chief Executive returned to the Council Chamber.

The Chairman of the Fire Authority noted that a second fire appliance was rarely used, as there was an insufficient number of fire personnel to crew them and that any cuts would not be proposed unless it was essential. The Chairman of the Fire Authority noted that it was now more attractive to become a retained fire fighter, as it could be guaranteed that a retained fire fighter would be required to respond to an incident. The more people that applied to become a retained fire fighter the more beneficial it was for the future of the Fire Authority.

The Chairman enquired how Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service wanted the District Council to assist and of the long term future of the Service. The Chief Fire Officer requested that the District Council work in partnership with all tiers of Local Government in order to lobby Central Government for a fair division of Government funds; for more consideration as to the way cuts were made and that it be emphasised that Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service was a low cost and efficient service.

Cllr Fordham stated that he had previously been a retained fire fighter in Soham for 26 years. Soham had experienced a significant increase in the number of dwellings and therefore a reduction in fire appliances was not a sensible approach. Cllr Fordham noted that a number of retained fire fighters in Soham were approaching retirement age.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that provided no further budget savings were required in addition to the £4.2 million, then there was no intention to remove any fire appliances. However, if further savings were required then this would be an option. The removal of fire appliances would be determined by the use of a mapping system that would consider the strategic cover that a fire appliance provided as well as how the appliance contributed to the community as a whole.

Cllr Williams MBE noted that the residents of Burwell would be concerned that a merger with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service would result in the loss of Burwell fire station and provision instead primarily via Newmarket fire station.

Cllr Rouse expected that in the event of an incident people would not be concerned as to which station an appliance attended from, but that the service was efficient. Cllr Rouse stated that it was important to protect front line service delivery.

Cllr J Friend-Smith noted that savings had been achieved by Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service and Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service successfully working together via the Combined Fire Control Centre in Huntingdon. However, Bedfordshire was a small county in comparison and Cllr J Friend-Smith enquired as to the budget saving measures they were taking.

In response to Member comments, the Chief Fire Officer explained that it was a misconception that the geographical location of a control centre should be a concern. The main concerns regarding a control centre was to have good working and effective technology accompanied by competent operatives. For the past twelve months, the Combined Fire Control Centre in Huntingdon had been taking calls for both Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Services.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that there was some partnership working between Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Services although not via the Control Centre. It was noted that Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service charged a higher amount for its service via Council Tax. The recruitment and retention of retained fire fighters was difficult. However, the Chief Fire Officer stated that Burwell was a fire station that was available 24 hours a day.

The Chairman of the Fire Authority reported that there was strong support for the fire station in Burwell and he was pleased to announce that it had just been confirmed that land had been acquired from Cambridgeshire County Council for a new replacement fire station in Burwell. The Chairman of the Fire Authority explained that following improvements to the roster system, retained fire fighters now knew the shifts that they were required for and therefore had more certainty that they would be able to attend an incident.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that when considering the removal of an appliance a number of factors were taken into account, including response times, the number of times an appliance was called to attend an incident and how easy it was to crew an appliance. It was becoming increasingly difficult to crew the second appliance in Soham and therefore more retained fire fighters were required. Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service had 38 appliances and up to 18 appliances were not available each day due to insufficient personnel to crew them. It was noted that most calls for assistance were made during the day.

Cllr Alderson enquired as to the likely future of Swaffham Bulbeck fire station. The Chairman of the Fire Authority reported that Swaffham Bulbeck fire station was one where the appliance was not available during the day and that it was a vulnerable station, if further budget savings were required.

In response to a question from Cllr J Friend-Smith, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer explained that most fire stations consisted of single appliance. If a second appliance was required at an incident it might take longer for the second appliance to respond and would be requested from a neighbouring station, for example if a second appliance was requested to assist the appliance from St Ives, this would be requested from either Huntingdon or Ramsey depending on who was nearest to the vicinity. To crew a second appliance would require 14 personnel per year at a cost of £40,000 per year.

In conclusion, the Chairman hoped that whatever happened in the future that it would not be to the detriment of Cambridgeshire. On behalf of Members, the Chairman thanked the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Chairman of the Fire Authority for attending the meeting.

The Chairman of the Fire Authority agreed that irrespective of whether a business case was submitted, the residents of Cambridgeshire would have to benefit from any proposals and that if a merger did happen then it must not result in an inferior service.

34. **MINUTES**

Cllr P Wilson referred to Minute No. 21 – Vote of Thanks for Former Lay and Parish Council Members of Standards Committee - Page 4 of the minutes, and noted for the purposes of clarification that Cllr Stuart Smith was not currently the Vice-Chairman of Haddenham Parish Council.

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to clarification regarding Minute No. 21 – Vote of Thanks for Former Lay and Parish Council Members of Standards Committee - Page 4 of the minutes, that Cllr Stuart Smith was not currently the Vice-Chairman of Haddenham Parish Council.

At this point of the meeting Cllr P Wilson left the Council Chamber and did not return to the meeting.

35. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- **Weekly Collection Support Scheme**

With the agreement of the Chairman, Cllr Hobbs, as Chairman of Community and Environment Committee, announced that the Council had been awarded £5 million by the Government under its Weekly Collection Support Scheme. The grant will enable the Council to retain weekly rubbish collections and increase its recycling performance for the benefit of its residents. Cllr Hobbs requested that the Council record its

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appreciation to officers for their hard work and commitment, particularly to the Head of Environmental Services, Liz Knox, and the Waste Strategy Team Leader, Dave White, as well as to Cllr Ellis at having become the Chairman of Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP).

- 2012 Digital Impact Awards

It is always encouraging to hear when the District Council achieves great things, so I was delighted to hear about an award the District Council had won at the 2012 Digital Impact Awards. The award for the 'best use of digital in the public sector' was subject to tough competition.

Following shortlisting, the Council received an award for its project with Ferrier Pearce on the www.360ec.co.uk business website. Together we designed the online branding and build for the site, which matches businesses looking to relocate to commercial property in Cambridgeshire.

The award recognises the success of this project and the results it has delivered.

The Digital Impact Awards was established by Communicate magazine, the UK's leading magazine for corporate communications and stakeholder relations.

On behalf of all Members I should like to extend congratulations to the Council's Business Development Team.

- Chairman's Christmas Reception for Staff and Members

To express my appreciation for the hard work of Staff and Members during the year, the Chairman's Christmas Reception for Staff and Members will take place on Monday 17 December 2012 at 12.30pm in the Council Chamber.

If you have not already done so, please can you inform Lynne Smart as soon as possible as to whether or not you will be attending.

- Christmas Hamper Raffle in aid of Milton Hospice

It's that time of year again! For all newcomers, it's a tradition at the Council to hold a Christmas Raffle to raise funds for the East Anglia Children's Hospice (EACH) in Milton. So, please add another item to your shopping list and donate it towards the hampers. For a chance to win a hamper full of Christmas goodies, raffle tickets are available from the Personal Assistants a £1 per ticket. If you wish to make a donation instead of purchasing raffle tickets you are most welcome.

Please bring any donations towards the hampers to Room 101 by Friday 14 December. The draw will take place on the afternoon of Wednesday 19 December.

36. PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

37. **MOTIONS**

No motions were received.

38. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

Questions were received from Cllrs J Friend-Smith and Allen. The question and response to the question from Cllr J Friend-Smith was included in the agenda. The question received from Cllr Allen was tabled at the meeting.

At the invitation of the Chairman Cllr J Friend-Smith read out his question, as follows, and he reported that the Mayor of Ely was unable to attend the Council meeting as the date conflicted with a City of Ely Council meeting:

'How much consultation took place before tonight's meeting was arranged for a Monday? Were other dates considered before the departure from a normal Tuesday? Please can care be taken in the future before meetings are arranged on unusual days to avoid inconvenience to Members and Officers.'

Response from the Chief Executive:

In recent years Council meetings have been scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays to avoid clashes with Cambridgeshire County Council Council meetings at the request of dual Councillors. Furthermore, the Council meeting tonight is an additional meeting to those already scheduled in the calendar of meetings.

On 4 July 2012, Members received an email notifying them of the additional Council meeting that had been arranged on 10 December 2012 and of the main reason for the additional meeting - to enable Members to approve the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule and the Council's Gambling Act Statement of Principles. These both had implementation dates which did not fit with the existing Council dates.

In accordance with the Council's Constitution Part 4(5) paragraph 5 - Time and Place of Meetings, the date of the meeting was determined by the Chief Executive. In accordance with the normal practice, both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council were consulted.

Given the number of other meetings already scheduled in the calendar of meetings in December and the close proximity to the festive period, there was limited choice as to the date that this meeting could be held.

Members are reminded that a further additional meeting of Council has been arranged on Tuesday 8 January 2012 at 6.30pm.

At the invitation of the Chairman Cllr Allen presented his question as follows to Members. Cllr Allen noted that the question was not a criticism of Council officers, but of the short-sightedness of the Government and he stated that the Council had a moral responsibility to address the issue:

'As the Council is run by two Political Parties that are working in Coalition to reduce the living standards of the least well off, do those Parties accept moral responsibility for policies that have lead inevitably to greater homelessness.'

It is a fact that most people in receipt of benefits are the low waged working poor, is it still seen as our role to protect and encourage that demographic?

I was struck recently by the review titled 'Making our Assets Count'. Could this Council be better focused on the needs of our existing community by borrowing against assets to build Council houses as it is empowered to do, rather than spending £400 thousand per annum on emergency bed and breakfast bills which provide shelter but do nothing to strengthen family life?

Further is it morally acceptable to be establishing a surplus savings reserve fund, estimated at £175 thousand this year, while children are in B&B accommodation longer than the statutory guidelines and are unlikely to be allocated housing for at least eleven months?'

The Chief Executive stated that the question was wide ranging and he explained that a written response would be provided to Cllr Allen and circulated to all Members once he had been able to consult with the Leader of Council, who was the Chairman of both the Finance and Governance Committee and Development and Transport Committee. The Leader was absent from the meeting and it was hoped that a response would be circulated to Members prior to Christmas. A copy of the response to the question from Cllr Allen is appended to these minutes.

39. **SET UP AND APPROVAL OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A WASTE AND ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Council received a report (M182), which requested Members consider the establishment of a Waste and Environment Sub-Committee and approval of its Terms of Reference.

The Chairman referred Members to the yellow paper table at the meeting, which proposed the following amendment to recommendation 2.1 (i) of the officer's report:

'The Terms of Reference for the proposed Waste and Environment Sub-Committee attached as Appendix 1 be approved subject to an amendment to para 5.1(a) specifically to read:-

(a) the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Sub-Committee is consulted and approves of any decisions made;'

The amendment was proposed by Cllr Hobbs and seconded by Cllr James Palmer.

It was reported that the following 5 Members had been nominated to sit on the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee:

- Cllr Hobbs;
- Cllr Kerby;
- Cllr Ellis;
- Cllr Williams MBE;
- Cllr Fordham

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that the proposed amendment was not lawful. As the Council operated a committee-based system, decisions could only be made by Council, a Committee, a Sub-Committee or by

officers in accordance with delegated authority. Within the Council's Constitution there was a system in place for officer's to consult specified Members should an officer need to act on the grounds of urgency.

Cllr Hobbs stated that a Chairman of a Committee/Sub-Committee was the person responsible to Council and it should not be for an officer to ultimately make the decision.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that by operating a committee-based system a single Member could not make a decision. The wording contained with the officer's report was legally compliant with the provisions of the 1972 Local Government Act. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services suggested that Members could alter and add the following wording to the amendment '*...the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Sub-Committee is consulted and ~~approves~~ agrees prior to of any decisions made*'. However, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services emphasised that the Chief Executive or relevant Head of Service would continue to have delegated authority to make the ultimate decision.

Cllr Hobbs stated that a Member should be consulted before an officer took a decision, not after the event. The Chief Executive reassured Members that there was no intention for officers not to consult with Members before an officer took a decision.

Cllr Hobbs stated that the amendment was proposed in order to protect Members, as it was Members that were answerable to their parishioners.

Cllr Allan enquired of the procedure should a Member not agree, once consulted, on the action that an officer was proposing to take. The Chairman hoped that, in such an event, the Member would be willing to seek a compromise.

In response to a question by Cllr B Hunt, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that the quorum for the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee was 3.

Cllr J Friend Smith suggested that the words 'has been' be included in the amendment. Cllr Hobbs rejected this suggestion on the basis that a Member should be consulted before a decision has been taken, and not after.

The Chief Executive explained that the main reason for establishing the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee was that decisions would be required in order to meet the required timescales and respond to the monitoring regime of the grant. As the Waste and Environment Sub-committee was likely to meet more frequently than its parent Committee, it would be less likely that urgent decisions would be required.

In response to a question by Cllr G Wilson, the Chief Executive confirmed that the proposed amendment referred to Appendix 1, paragraph 5.1(a) of the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee Terms of Reference, as attached to the officer's report.

Cllr Wright could understand the issue with the proposed amendment as this was taking decision-making beyond the permissions of Members and that the officer's report provided a lawful option.

Cllr Roberts enquired whether the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman of the Sub-Committee could veto a decision. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services explained that the wording within the Terms of Reference was the same procedure included in the Terms of Reference for all other Committees. If Members wanted to make single Member decisions, then Members would need to change the way the Council operated to a Cabinet system. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services was not aware of any incidents where a Member had disagreed with the delegated decision of an officer. Therefore, Cllr Roberts suggested that the proposed amendment finish after the word 'consulted'.

The Head of Environmental Services explained that the £5 million awarded to the Council by the Government via the Weekly Collection Support Scheme would enable the Council to:

- Retain weekly rubbish collections;
- Improve recycling rates;
- Compliance with EU Waste Framework Directive to recycle plastics from kerbside by 2015;
- Increase customer satisfaction with services.

The Head of Environmental Services explained that the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee would be required to implement the improved service within the planned timescales and respond to the monitoring regime of the grant. The Waste and Environment Sub-Committee would have responsibility to safeguard both the financial risk and reputation of the Council.

Cllr Cornell noted that if the Chairman was not satisfied with a proposed urgent action by an officer that the Chairman could refer the decision to the parent Sub-Committee/Committee for determination.

Cllr Read stated that the recommendations should be as proposed within the officer's report as this was lawful and was the standard practice used by all other Committees/Sub-Committees. This was proposed by Cllr Read and seconded by Cllr Roberts. Following which the Chief Executive confirmed with Cllr Hobbs that he was prepared to withdraw the proposed amendment.

Cllr B Hunt urged the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee to use commonsense when considering improvements to the waste service and in particular consider all service users, such as those living in flats, the elderly and those with mobility issues.

It was resolved:

- i. That the Terms of Reference for the proposed Waste and Environment Sub-Committee attached at Appendix 1 of the officer's report be approved (and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be delegated authority to make any appropriate amendments to the Community and Environment Committee Terms of Reference);
- ii. That the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee comprise of 5 Members (based on current proportionality) as follows:

3 Conservative – Cllrs Hobbs, Kerby and Ellis;
1 Liberal Democrat – Cllr Williams MBE;

1 Independent – Cllr Fordham

- iii. That appointment of Members to the Waste and Environment Sub-Committee be made by full Council and thereafter by Community and Environment Committee.

At the conclusion of the above agenda item, at 7.32pm, the Chairman announced that he would adjourn the meeting for a short comfort break.

At 7.38pm the meeting was resumed.

40. **ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON GROUNDS OF URGENCY – UNDER COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE 5.1, 3(5)**

The Council received a report (M183), for Members to note the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency - to make an order under Section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972 to temporarily appoint Parish Councillors to Snailwell Parish Council so that the Parish Council was quorate and able to act, until vacancies were filled under the provisions of section 91 of the Act.

Snailwell Parish Council had a membership of 7 Parish Councillors. However, it had recently had received 4 resignations, which, in addition to an existing vacancy, resulted in the Parish Council becoming inquorate. The action taken by the Chief Executive on grounds of urgency was required to resolved the matter.

It was resolved:

That the action taken by the Chief Executive on grounds of urgency be noted.

41. **SCHEDULE OF ITEMS RECOMMENDED FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES**

Council considered a report, M184, previously circulated, detailing four recommendations from the following Committees; Development and Transport Committee; Licensing Committee and Finance and Governance Committee.

The first recommendation was from the Development and Transport Committee meeting of 6 September 2012 regarding adoption of the timetable for Production of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

The Head of Planning and Sustainable Development explained that tabled at the meeting was a revised recommendation as, since the Development and Transport Committee meeting on 6 September 2012, further changes had been made to the timetable for Production of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan. It was noted that the initial recommendation should have been presented to the meeting of Council scheduled for 11 October 2012, which had been cancelled. The revised recommendation reflected the latest timetable referred to at the Development and Transport Committee meeting on 3 December 2012 and as quoted on the Council's website.

It was resolved:

Development and Transport Committee – 6 September 2012

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Timetable for Production of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

That the following revised timetable (including any associated cross reference and date changes) be included in an updated 'Local Development Scheme', which is adopted by this Council and takes effect from 10 December 2012:

Publish draft Local Plan for consultation (incorporating draft Village/Town Visions)	Jan/Feb 2013
Submission of Local Plan to Government	June 2013
Public Examination on Local Plan	Autumn 2013
Adoption of Local Plan by East Cambs District Council	Late 2013

The second recommendation to be considered was from the Finance and Governance Committee meeting on 27 September 2012 regarding the Council's Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review.

It was resolved:

Finance and Governance Committee – 27 September 2012

Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review

That the report on the Council's Treasury operations during 2011/12 including the actual Prudential and Treasury indicators, as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted.

The third recommendation to be considered was from the Licensing Committee meeting on 21 November 2012 regarding adoption of the Council's Gambling Act 2005 Licensing Authority Statement of Principles.

It was resolved:

Licensing Committee – 21 November 2012

Approval Of The Licensing Authority Gambling Act 2005 Statement Of Principles – 3 Year Revision

That Council adopt the proposed Gambling Act 2005 Licensing Authority Statement of Principles, amended in line with consultation responses, to come into effect as of 31 January 2013, subject to the following amendment:

'19.1 Entry to an adult gaming centre is age restricted to persons aged 18 years and over.'

At the conclusion of agenda item 12.c, having already declared an interest in agenda item 12.d, Cllrs B Hunt and Bailey left the Council Chamber for that item.

Cllr Roberts also declared an interest, as he was a Director of a development company and subsequently left the Council Chamber for that item.

Council considered the fourth and final recommendation from the Development and Transport Committee meeting of 3 December 2012 regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy.

As explained within the agenda, the minute relating to Agenda Item 12.d was unable to be circulated until after the agenda had been dispatched, as the Development and Transport Committee was not due to meet to discuss the matter until after the agenda dispatch date. The minute was circulated to Members prior to the meeting via email and was also tabled at the meeting.

Cllr Wright referred to a recent Local Government Circular regarding social housing that stated that last year there was a £1.4 billion surplus, which was an increase of 40% from the previous year. Cllr Wright stated that this surplus should be invested in more housing, particularly in the current climate when the building industry needed work and people needed housing. In hindsight, Cllr Wright stated that the Council should not have sold its housing stock. Cllr Wright felt that Sanctuary Hereward Housing was now too large and too remote and in the future the Council should be more selective as to the housing associations it was involved with.

Cllr Wright referred to paragraph 5.2 of the officer's report, which indicated that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule could generate £34 million between now and 2031. Cllr Wright also referred to Appendix 2, page 4 of the officer's report, which stated that CIL would generate something in the region of £17.5 million. Cllr Wright noted that there was a huge difference between these two figures. The Head of Planning and Sustainable Development explained that the figure quoted in the Examiner's report (Appendix 2) was based on the Council's existing Core Strategy and that the figure quoted in paragraph 5.2 of the officer's report was based on the level of growth predicted in the proposed Local Plan.

Cllr James Palmer agreed that there was a social housing problem both nationally and within the district and that Sanctuary Hereward Housing was not effectively delivering what the district needed. Cllr James Palmer believed that community led development, via a Community Land Trust, as per the scheme about to commence in Stretham, was the way forward.

Cllr Allen stated that he was also becoming increasingly concerned about the social housing issue and entirely agreed with the comments made by Cllr Wright. Cllr Allen could see no reason as to why the Council could not develop and manage its own social housing properties on a points based system. Cllr Allen felt that it was important that employed people should not be given housing priority over the unemployed. Cllr Allen believed that people should be encouraged to seek employment, but noted that in the event of someone being made redundant the operation of such a system would result in them being less likely to be offered housing.

Cllr Read referred to a recent Planning Committee meeting where the majority of the Planning Committee had rejected a development of 24 affordable houses in Haddenham.

Cllr Williams MBE supported Community Land Trusts. However, Members must not underestimate the work involved – on average it could take 5 years to establish a Community Land Trust.

Cllr James Palmer noted that Community Land Trusts needed to be locally run schemes with limited involvement by the District Council.

Cllr G Wilson hoped that if the currently closed hostel in Littleport was re-opened that it could address some of the social housing issues in the district and he shared Cllr Read's disappointment that the 24 affordable house development in Haddenham had not been approved.

It was resolved:

Development and Transport Committee – 3 December 2012

Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

- i. That the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (attached as Appendix 1 of the submitted report) be adopted.
- ii. That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to amend the Terms of Reference for the Development and Transport Committee to delegate elements of the CIL – related decision making to the Committee/Head of Service.

Having left the Council Chamber, at the conclusion of agenda item 12.d, Cllrs B Hunt, Bailey and Roberts returned to the Council meeting.

42. **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Council received a report, M185, previously circulated, that provided a summary of the items considered by the Scrutiny Committee at its meetings on 4 September 2012, 15 October 2012 and 12 November 2012.

It was resolved:

That the report be noted.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Chairman reminded Members that the next meeting of Council would be held on Tuesday 8 January 2012 at 6.30pm.

The Chairman wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The meeting concluded at 7.58pm.



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Councillor Ian Allen
Address Redacted

My Ref: CllrPM/Is/letts/Council-Allen

20th December 2012

Dear Ian

COUNCIL – 10TH DECEMBER 2012 – QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Thank you for your question to Council on 10th December 2012. I am now able to reply to the points raised in your question.

I wish to focus my reply on the issues related to homelessness and the actions taken by the Council in responding to the external pressures evident on the service.

Whilst recognising that Government policy impacts on this issue such as welfare reforms, the underlying driver remains the state of the international and domestic economy, particularly the slowdown in house building and availability of loan finance for potential homeowners.

As Leader of Council, I must focus my endeavours on the situation as it affects our residents and take the necessary actions, specifically:

- the recommendation for the Council to apply for transitional grant to minimise the impact of the localisation of Council Tax benefit on working families (ref: Finance and Governance Committee – 20 December 2012 Agenda Item No. 9);
- the provision of additional senior management support to the Housing Service from Improvement East funded by the 'Change Management Reserve';
- the implementation of the Homelessness Improvement Plan proposed by Improvement East including temporary accommodation to reduce the demand for Bed and Breakfast;
- the Council's support for the roll out of Community Land Trusts to bring forward affordable housing in our local communities in the East Cambridgeshire Draft Local Plan.

Subject to the Local Government Grant settlement, I hope to be able to identify additional funding to achieve the above. The Council are able to make these investments because we continue to implement the Medium Term Financial Strategy effectively and the surplus savings reserve plays an important role in delivering a long term sustainable budget in these difficult times.

I have copied this response to all Members.

Thank you again for your question.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Peter Moakes
Leader of the Council

cc: Council Members
Chief Executive