

Minutes of a meeting of the Community & Environment
Committee held in the City of Ely Council Chamber,
72 Market Street, Ely on Thursday, 8th May 2014 at 5.30pm

PRESENT

Councillor Richard Hobbs (Chairman)
Councillor Allen Alderson
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith
Councillor Sue Austen (Substitute for Councillor Harris)
Councillor Kevin Ellis
Councillor Sheila Friend-Smith (Substitute for Councillor Williams, MBE)
Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh (Substitute for Councillor Edwards)
Councillor Joshua Schumann
Councillor Pauline Wilson

OFFICERS

Allison Conder – Principal Community & Leisure Officer
Julie Cornwell – Partnerships Officer
Rachel Doyle – Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Officer
Liz Knox – Head of Environmental Services
Alistair Mckie – Sport & Health Development Officer
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer
Dave White – Waste Strategy Team Leader

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Gareth Wilson

81. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions submitted.

82. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lavinia Edwards, Lindsey Harris, Tom Kerby and Hazel Williams, MBE.

It was noted that Councillor Griffin-Singh would substitute for Councillor Edwards, Councillor Austen for Councillor Harris, and Councillor Friend-Smith for Councillor Williams for the duration of this meeting.

83. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

84. **MINUTES**

Further to Minute No 71 (Grants to Voluntary Organisations), Councillor Schumann thanked the Partnerships Officer for providing the information regarding queries he had raised in respect of the Citizens Advice Bureaux. He suggested, and it was agreed that this should be circulated to all Members.

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

85. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that the Ouse Washes Landscape Partnership had been awarded £905,000 of Heritage Lottery funding, to spend up to April 2017. It would be important to ensure that local Members were aware of this and how they could tap into the funding.

The Chairman wished to offer his congratulations and thanks to the team that had put on the Ely Eel Weekend. Eel Day was a great success, and the food festival (held on the Sunday and Monday) had brought in many people to the city. He thanked Tracey Harding, Team Leader Tourism & Town Centre, her team, and the staff at Oliver Cromwell's House for all their hard work in making the weekend so successful. The Chairman noted that family members of some of the staff had also helped out, and he felt that there needed to be more assistance given on the day.

The Chairman said that he and the Sport & Health Development Officer had met with Sport England earlier in the day to discuss a pilot scheme for Ely, which aimed to get the people of the District more active. The "Get Ely Active" initiative would be geared towards mums and babies, the over 50's and the over 60's. It was noted that a local supermarket wished to sponsor the scheme.

86. **RECAP: OVERVIEW AND PROGRESS TOWARDS A WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH.**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Nigel McCurdy, RECAP Partnership Manager, presented a report which sought to update Members on the progress being made by RECAP with the Whole Systems Approach and "single public purse" ethos, and to discuss current outcomes and identify the ongoing delivery of projects and efficiencies across the Partnership.

In summarising the key points of his report, Mr McCurdy made comment under the following headings:

- **Background** – the Whole Systems Approach (WSA) and Outline Business Case were agreed by the Cambridgeshire Together Public Service Board Leaders and Chief Executives in 2013, to be delivered by RECAP.

The RECAP Board had agreed the following objectives for a Whole Systems Approach:

- Reducing the overall expenditure against the public purse;
- Increasing the overall income to the public purse; whilst
- Improving services for the customer, which would include levelling up services across Cambridgeshire to achieve consistently high quality services across the Partnership area;
- Improving environmental performance.

The agreed Outline Business Case defined key elements of the WSA as:

- Developing a common “optimum” collection methodology across all councils;
- Operating cross border collections and fleet management;
- Increasing the value derived from recyclable materials.

- **Progress and Achievements** – paragraph 6 (a) – (f) set out the current outcomes and key elements of work successfully progressed.

It was expected that the contract for collective tonnages of dry recycle would be “live” from September 2014, initially with Peterborough and other Partners joining sequentially upon expiry of existing contracts.

The Joint Vehicle Procurement (Small Vehicles) project was completed in 2013. Whilst no large scale savings were identified, due to the efficiency of existing procurement routes and the small numbers/range of functionality of vehicles required, an improved common procurement route had been identified that offered scope for additional cost savings.

There was continuing dialogue between Cambridge City Council and South Cambs District Council regarding options for new collection systems in NW Cambridge developments, scope for wider joint round optimisation and increasing commitment to work on shared depot arrangements at the “Waste Hub” at Waterbeach.

The roll out of wheeled bins in East Cambridgeshire in the autumn of 2013 had been very successful with a resultant increase in recycling to in excess of 54%. The District was now one of the best RECAP performing authorities and this had helped to reduce disposal volumes/costs and bring in additional Recycling Payments income.

Mr McCurdy concluded by saying that the issue was all about working as a partnership. There would still be individual projects, but dialogue was needed about how services could be moved closer together.

Councillor Ellis remarked that it was good to have the full support of the Leaders and Chief Executives to contribute to the joint agenda. The Chairman concurred, saying that having Councillor Ellis as the Chairman of the RECAP Board had helped in achieving good results.

Councillor Schumann asked whether it was envisaged that a penalty system would be introduced for those residents who did not recycle their waste correctly; Councillor Ellis replied that it was not on the agenda at all.

In response to a question from Councillor Alderson, Mr McCurdy explained that some of the money from the County Council would be paid back to the District as Recycling Credits. The Head of Environmental Services added that the more waste recycled, the more the District would get back from the County. This would help to offset the costs of service delivery, so it would be important to ensure that the amount going to landfill was reduced.

Picking up on Councillor Schumann's query, Mr McCurdy reminded Members that the blue bin was the main bin for recycling waste and as little as possible should be going into the black bags.

The Waste Strategy Team Leader agreed, saying that items such as nappies, plastic bags and film, wood, and textiles should not go into the bins. It was noticeable that there was a decline in the amount of waste going to landfill because the collection crews were not going to the tip so often.

The Chairman concluded by thanking Mr McCurdy for his report and saying that he would look to see continued improvement through RECAP.

It was resolved:

That the report be noted.

87. **WHEELED BIN CHARGES FOR NEW PROPERTIES**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to consider the proposed introduction of charges for the provision of wheeled bin waste containers to newly constructed properties.

The Waste Strategy Team Leader reminded the Committee that the Council, as a Waste Collection Authority, was permitted to make a charge for the provision of waste collection receptacles and it was noted that every other local authority in Cambridgeshire already did so.

The proposed charge of £21.50 would be equivalent to the current lowest charge by another district and would cover the cost of bin purchase, plus a small fee for administration and delivery.

In most cases the charges would be levied on developers as part of the S106 contributions for new developments, but they could be applied to households, if necessary. The same levy was suggested for all property types, with larger communal bins being provided where considered appropriate.

Councillor Ambrose Smith asked what would happen in the case of a family house being divided into several units. The Waste Strategy Team Leader replied that this was something that would have to be debated.

Councillor Wilson was pleased to note that bins would be replaced free of charge where they became unserviceable due to damage.

It was resolved:

- 1) That the introduction of charges for the provision of wheeled bin waste containers to newly constructed properties be agreed;
- 2) That an initial fee of £21.50 per bin be agreed;
- 3) That charges are reviewed annually as part of the Fees & Charges Review process.

88. **HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT 1995 (HECA) – FURTHER REPORT YEAR 1 UPDATE.**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which sought to update Members on progress, and to seek Member approval for the changes made to the Action Plan within the East Cambridgeshire HECA further report, to reflect upcoming work.

Rachel Doyle, Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Officer reminded the Committee of the background to her report and said that the most notable progress against the Action Plan included:

- Action on Energy scheme set up across Cambridgeshire;
- Procurement of Climate Energy as our Green Deal and ECO provider partner;
- Setting up of the Cambridgeshire Community Energy Switching Service.

It was noted that the Plan had been updated to include the following targets:

- Using the Green Deal Communities (GDC) Grant of £7.8 million across Cambridgeshire;

- Consulting with landlords on the measures that would be most appropriate for them to fit within their properties with GDC funding to improve energy efficiency; and
- Smartlife, Cambridge regional College and Suffolk Local Authorities added as partners.

During the course of discussion, Councillor Wilson asked if the scheme was only available to people in receipt of benefits. The Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Officer replied that it was open to anyone in Cambridgeshire; if somebody wanted to do something, they should go through Action on Energy.

The Head of Environmental Services informed Members that it was thanks to various funding streams that the Council had been able to retain Mrs Doyle's very important post through the restructure. Councillor Schumann enquired whether the post might become self-funding in the future and Mrs Doyle replied that if the measures were installed, this should bring in £17,000 per year.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Doyle for her report and assured her of the Committee's support. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That the changes to the Action Plan within the HECA Further Report be approved.

89. **COMMUNITY FACILITIES (SECTION 106) GRANT SCHEMES**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to consider and make decisions on four applications, and to note one grant offered under officer delegated powers from the East Cambridgeshire S106 Community Facilities and Small Villages grant schemes.

At this point the Chairman said both he and Councillor Griffin-Singh should have declared an interest in this item, being City of Ely Councillors. He declared that he would not take any part in the discussion or voting on this item and he asked Councillor Ellis to take the Chair.

Councillor Ellis assumed the Chair. He asked and Members agreed that they were happy to take the applications en bloc. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

- (i) That Cheveley Parish Council be awarded a grant of £10,000 towards the B1063 Road Safety Project (a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph and traffic calming measures to slow vehicles down as they approach the village of Cheveley on the B1063);

- (ii) That the City of Ely Council be awarded a grant of £5,760 towards a fencing upgrade at the New Barns play area;
- (iii) That the City of Ely Council be awarded a grant of £8,527.36 towards the provision of a Zip Wire at the St John's Road play area;
- (iv) That the City of Ely Council be awarded a grant of £5,867.80 towards the installation of 70 solar light studs along Ely Riverside to link the Ely Country Park scheme and the riverside area together, providing an attractive route for walkers and cyclists;
- (v) That the following award of grant funding, made under Officer Delegated powers, be noted:
 - Littleport Leisure Community Centre - £500 towards the provision and erection of markers to establish a sign-posted, distance marked running/walking route around part of the village.

At this point, the Chairman resumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

90. **THE FUTURE OF GRANT FUNDING FOR SMALL VILLAGES**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to note the current levels of the "Small Villages" S106 funds and the implications for this moving forwards and to one of the two options proposed.

Julie Cornwell, Partnerships Officer, introduced her report by reminding the Committee of the background to the issue. Since 1st April 2008 the Council had spent the majority of its S106 allocations via a grant scheme, open to parish councils and other community based organisations that operated on a not-for-profit basis in East Cambridgeshire. There were two grant schemes: the 'Community Facilities Section 106 Grant', for parishes with their own allocation of S106 funding and the 'Small Villages Grant' for parishes without their own allocation of S106 monies, which historically had tended to be the smaller parishes in the District. 'Small Village' applicants could bid for a maximum of £10,000 per application.

It was noted that no further monies would be added to either of these grant pots.

As of February 2011 Section 106 agreements were worded to more closely align with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) process that was due imminently. Income linked to these agreements had to be spent in the

Parish/settlement detailed within the agreement. There was no grant application process for allocating the money: ECDC would decide what the monies would be spent on following dialogue with appropriate interested parties.

CIL came into force on 1st February 2013, with Parish/Town Councils receiving 'a meaningful proportion' of the CIL income for their area from that point onwards. The decision on how to spend the remaining balance of CIL income sat with the District Council and was being allocated to key strategic projects for the foreseeable future.

The Small Villages pot was the most cause for concern because there was only approximately £35,000 left and it was anticipated that funding would run out in January 2015.

Mrs Cornwell reminded the Committee that the Council did not have a statutory obligation to provide a capital grant for communities, and if Members were so minded, they could allow it to run out and not replace it with an alternative fund. However, if they wished, they could allocate £45,000 capital per annum from 2015/16 to provide a "Community Capital Grant Fund" for communities in East Cambridgeshire.

Paragraph 6.2 of the report set out the proposed main principles and criteria of the new fund, but the final criterion and guidelines would be agreed by the appropriate Committee in due course.

Mrs Cornwell concluded by reiterating that there was clear evidence of the need for grant funding to support the voluntary and community sector to provide valuable community and play facilities in the District. The social and health benefits of such provision were well documented and therefore the District Council should give consideration to providing a modest grant fund, especially as this could help communities to leverage in other grant funds.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Cornwell for her report, saying it was quite clear that the smaller communities needed help.

Councillor Wilson, having had an explanation of how the shaded column in Appendix A (Projected CIL Allocations) worked, agreed with the Chairman and duly proposed that the Council should support the option to set up a new grant fund.

Councillor Schumann proposed that the third bullet point in paragraph 6.2 be amended to require a minimum of 15% match funding to be provided by the applicant organisation or other grant provider, and that this should be reviewed annually. This was seconded by Councillor Ellis, and when put to the vote,

It was resolved:

- 1) To set up a new Capital Grant Fund from 2015/16, and to task the Corporate Governance & Finance Committee with identifying suitable funds;
- 2) That a minimum of 15% match funding must be provided by the applicant organisation or other grant provider, to be reviewed annually.

91. **SPORT AND HEALTH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES: YEAR TWO ACTION PLAN AND LEISURE CENTRE AND SPORT FACILITIES SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT GRANT FUNDING 2014/15.**

The Committee received a report from which Members were asked to consider maintaining the same level of Service Level Agreements (SLA) Grant Funding provided in 2013/14 to Leisure Centres and Sports Facilities in the District for 2014/15.

Alistair Mckie, Sport & Health Development Officer, summarised the main points of his report and drew Members' attention to paragraph 3.1 which set out the strategic vision and three key priorities for the Sport & Physical Activity Strategy for 2013 – 2017. He also asked Members to note paragraph 3.1.1 (key outcomes from the Year One Action Plan), and paragraph 3.3, which detailed the agreed grants provided to leisure centres and sports facilities in 2013/14.

Mr Mckie asked Members to note that delivery of the Year Two Action Plan and grant funding 2014/15 could be affected by the outcome of the Sports, Leisure & Health Services Review which was being undertaken over the coming 9 – 12 months.

If Members approved the grant funding, a service level agreement would be put in place along with the requirement for monitoring. This would be reported back to Committee post March 2015. Funding requirements could all be met from existing resources within the Council's Community & Leisure Services budget.

The Chairman expressed the hope that some monies would eventually come down to the district councils. The Head of Environmental Services said that as a local health partnership, they were looking to the partners to help fund the initiatives. There was not much money trickling down from the County Council, it was more a case of looking to work together better to improve health in the District. There had been work within the Health & Wellbeing Partnership to develop a business case for Falls Prevention, but to access

funding, the business case would need to be evidence-based to demonstrate cost savings.

Councillor Ellis said that two bids had been submitted to the Better Care Fund and Councillor Schumann, having noted that older people's procurement tied in with some of the Council's priorities, asked if the District had given or was expected to give a response to the consultation taking place. The Head of Environmental Services replied that she would put forward a response through the Chairman of the Committee.

It was resolved:

- 1) That the Year Two Action Plan 2014/15 be approved;
- 2) That the Leisure Centre and Sports Facilities SLA Grant Funding 2014/15 be approved.

92. **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S SPORTS AND HEALTH DEVELOPMENT FUNCTION.**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to agree the Terms of Reference and timetable for a review of the Council's Sports & Health Development function.

The Principal Community & Leisure Officer reminded Members of the background to the setting up of the review, and she drew their attention to the three appendices attached to her report. Appendix 1 detailed the Terms of Reference, Appendix 2 the timetable for undertaking the service review, and Appendix 3 the Stage 1 report and programme for consultation.

It was noted that the Stage 2 report would come to Committee in November 2014.

It was resolved:

- 1) To approve the Terms of Reference and timetable for a review of the Council's Sports and Health Development function, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report;
- 2) To note the Stage 1 Report, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

(Councillor Gareth Wilson joined the meeting at 6.47pm)

93. **GREEN DEAL COMMUNITIES FUNDING**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which gave details of the funding awarded to Cambridgeshire in order to deliver the Green Deal Communities Project.

Members were reminded that the Green Deal was the scheme officially launched by Government in 2012 to assist householders to install energy efficiency measures at no up-front cost. Grant funding was also available from the Energy Company Obligation for more expensive energy efficiency measures, such as solid wall insulation.

In 2013 the Government made available a Green Deal Communities Fund for local authorities to bid into with projects that would maximise delivery of Green Deal plans and energy efficiency measures.

The Cambridgeshire Green Deal Partnership submitted a joint bid to the Green Deal Communities Fund and was awarded £7.8 million. Paragraph 4.3 of the report set out how the funding was to be apportioned.

Councillor Friend-Smith enquired what would be the cost to households. Rachel Doyle, Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Officer, replied that applicants would be given a quote after the Green Deal assessment had been carried out. It was very complicated, because there were different elements to the funding depending on many things. However, applicants would be told what was available to them.

Councillor Schumann thought it sounded very positive, but he did not want to see the certification scheme abused, and therefore felt it should be monitored. The Chairman agreed, adding that he hoped there was enough of an incentive to encourage the landlords to pay £29 for the Green Deal Advice Report.

It was resolved:

That the details of the Green Deal Communities Project be noted.

94. **ACTION TAKEN BY THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY: SPORT ENGLAND STRATEGIC FACILITIES FUND.**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to note the action taken by the Deputy Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency, in connection with the Council's application to the Sport England Strategic Facilities Fund.

It was resolved:

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

95. **COMMUNITY FUND GRANT SCHEME**

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) from which Members were asked to note two grants offered under Officer delegated authority.

It was resolved:

That the following awards of grant funding, made under Officer Delegated powers, be noted:

- The Field Theatre Group - £900, in commemoration of the centenary of the outbreak of the First World war, to sponsor an art and poetry competition and compile the poems into a published anthology entitled "Perspectives";
- VCAEC - £800 to purchase a wood chipper that would enable the Helping Hands gardening team to recycle garden waste on clients' gardens.

96. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

It was resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no.17 because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Categories 1 - 4 Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as Amended)

97. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 4TH March 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman said that as this was the last meeting of the Community & Environment Committee, he wished to express his thanks to all Members of the Committee for their support, and to Officers for their guidance.

The meeting closed at 6.58pm.

Draft Minutes