

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Record of Executive Decision

Investing in Affordable Housing

Decision of: Councillor Catherine Smart,
Executive Councillor for Housing & Health

Reference: 05/CS/01

Date of decision: 22 July 2005 **Recorded on:** 27 July 2005

Decision Type: Key Decision

Matter for Decision: Increasing the supply of affordable housing is a key priority for Cambridge City Council, and is included as a medium term objective under the overall aim of "Better Housing". In July 2003, the Executive Councillor established strategic priorities for housing, which approved in principle the policy of local investment in new housing, to meet identified needs.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):

During the stock options consultation, the question of Council priorities was raised, and it was made clear both by tenants and the Government office (Go), that council involvement in delivering more housing for local people is important. In achieving sign-off of the options appraisal, the Go required the Council to continue to work on its investment strategy for new housing and other non-stock related housing issues. It is proposed that the Council utilises housing capital receipts to increase the supply of affordable housing, and that the sums to be made available be decided in the ten year investment strategy in November 2005. Investment would usually be through grant to partner agencies (Housing Associations) for new affordable housing, but purchasing of market properties to meet specific needs may also be considered.

Other options, which could be considered instead include:

- 1) That the Council does not invest in affordable housing, and develops the ten-year investment plan explicitly to exclude investment in affordable housing. This option would reduce the partnership working and opportunities to lever in additional funding, and would lead to an investment plan that does not consider all areas of the housing market.
- 2) That the Council invests in affordable housing only on limited criteria, such as housing for specific groups, or particular areas or types of property. Given the rapidly changing national approach to funding affordable housing, and the fact that regional investment plans change every two years, this would be unduly inflexible, and could lead to duplicate funding available for some schemes. with no funding

available to meet gaps where it is needed.

- 3) That the Council invests in delivering new affordable housing itself to add to its own stock: this option is not good value in the current context, as it excludes developments from the possibility of grant funding. Unless the programme was very small indeed, it would rapidly necessitate borrowing by the Council. If the external financial climate changes again, this is an option that could be reconsidered.

The Executive Councillor's decision(s):

Agreed:

- To request officers to propose annual sums for investment in affordable housing in the housing investment strategy, to be considered in November 2005.
- To recommend to Council that resources be made available for both grant funding of approved development partners to develop new build housing, and for the direct purchase of properties to meet specific needs
- To request officers to prepare an annual development programme, for consideration by members in November with information on sites to be funded by the Housing Corporation's Approved Development programme or other sources, and homes to be delivered grant free, as well as sites where council investment is requested.
- To approve the policy that monies received as commuted sums in lieu of affordable housing will be allocated to schemes by the Executive Councillor when the annual development programme is considered. The annual programme will be included as part of the capital plan for consideration by Full Council.
- To recommend to Council approval of the use of £105,000 from commuted sums to complete development of 15 Units at Cambourne, which were due to be completed with LASHG, but were not allocated transitional LASHG by the Housing Corporation. This is necessary because no annual development programme is yet in place.

Reasons for the decision:

These are described in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations for the Executive Councillor set out in the report and approved them by 6 votes to 0.

Report:

Agenda item 6 of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, 22 July 2005

Conflicts of interest:

No conflicts of interest were declared.

Comments:

None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Private Sector Housing Strategy
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Decision of: Councillor Catherine Smart,
Executive Councillor for Housing & Health

Reference: 05/CS/02

Date of decision: 22 July 2005 **Recorded on:** 27 July 2005

Decision Type: Key Decision

Matter for Decision: To approve in principle the new Draft Private Sector Housing Strategy, prior to consultation with stakeholders.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options): The ongoing involvement of stakeholders in monitoring and reviewing the strategy is key to its success. A stakeholder consultation event will be carried out in September, and further proposals arising from consultation will be submitted for Scrutiny as appropriate. Any bids for funding will be included in the capital investment strategy for housing to be submitted for scrutiny in November 2005, and through the normal budget process.

The Executive Councillor's decision(s): Approved the draft Private Sector Housing Strategy 2006-2011, in particular the following changes and additions to the current approach:

1. To implement the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System, (HHSRS), and Mandatory HMO Licensing Scheme in line with government requirements.
2. To introduce an ongoing scheme in partnership with the fire and police services to install fire safety and home security equipment for elderly and disabled owner-occupiers.
3. To Renew the Safer Homes scheme in partnership with the Primary Care Trust for a further 3 years.
4. To introduce the proposed Landlord Accreditation Scheme.
5. To accept in principle the need to increase the ongoing capital funding allocated for mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants.
6. To discontinue offering improvement grants to landlords to bring unfit properties up to standard, due to low take-up, and to reallocate of the capital funding to other private sector housing priorities.
7. To continue to offer grants to landlords to bring empty homes back into use at a lower overall level of capital funding, on the basis that officers consider the use of the government's new Empty Dwelling

Management Orders and consult on other methods of achieving this aim. The unused capital should be reallocated to other private sector priorities.

8. To halt work on developing the proposed Do It Yourself Shared Ownership scheme, but to retain a proportion of the capital for one-off purchases of shared ownership properties for households with disabilities whose housing needs cannot be effectively met through other channels, and for buying back shared ownership properties previously provided by the Council. The unused capital should be reallocated.
9. To approve the development of a dedicated Home Energy Strategy.
10. To carry out further research on the needs, profiles and living conditions of private sector owners and residents to better assess needs.
11. To review customer care standards and targets across the service.

Reasons for the decision:

These are described in the officer report.

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations for the Executive Councillor set out in the report and approved them by 5 votes to 0.

Report:

Agenda item 7 of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, 22 July 2005

Conflicts of interest:

None.

Comments:

None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Housing Land Audit

Decision of:	Councillor Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing & Health		
Reference:	05/CS/03		
Date of decision:	22 July 2005	Recorded on:	27 July 2005
Decision Type:	Key Decision.		
Matter for Decision:	To endorse the findings of the land audit, and agree the policy for development of Council Housing land.		
Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):	<p>Provision of affordable housing is one of the top 3 priorities within the Council's housing strategy, and the shortage of such housing within Cambridge and the wider sub-region is well documented. The last Housing Needs study carried out by the Council in 2002 identified that Cambridge needs an additional 734 units of affordable housing per year over the next five years in order to meet local needs.</p> <p>There is also a growing demand for housing for people with disabilities, some of whose specific needs cannot be met within the existing social housing stock.</p> <p>In response to the increasing need for affordable housing, and the development of improved asset management strategies, the Council decided to audit the land held by the housing department, to identify the scale and nature of opportunities still available.</p> <p>The audit identified around 70 sites which may be suitable for development or redevelopment, although some would require decanting from existing properties, to replace them with more and better housing. Further work by officers will be required before decisions can be taken on individual sites.</p> <p>The information from the audit will be useful in delivering affordable housing on council owned land, and bringing forward sites at a faster rate than has hitherto been achieved.</p>		
The Executive Councillor's decision(s):	Agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To endorse the findings of the land audit, and agree the policy for development of Council Housing land (attached as Appendix 1 of the officer report).• To request officers to include sites identified by the land audit in an annual development programme, with information on site specific issues and possible investment requirements		
Reasons for the	These are described in the officer report.		

decision:

**Scrutiny
consideration:**

The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations for the Executive Councillor set out in the report and approved them by 6 votes to 0.

Report:

Agenda item 8 of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, 22 July 2005

Conflicts of interest: None.

Comments:

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Allocations Policy Review – Choice Based Lettings
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Decision of:	Councillor Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing & Health		
Reference:	05/CS/04		
Date of decision:	22 July 2005	Recorded on:	27 July 2005
Decision Type:	Key Decision		
Matter for Decision:	To move straight to a Choice Based Scheme which is seen as the best option.		
Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):	In April 2004, the Executive Councillor agreed to undertake a review of the Allocations Policy, which entailed adopting a banding system which represented a half way house position towards adopting a Choice Based Letting Scheme. Work on the review commenced in January 2005. It soon became apparent that given the requirements to adopt a Choice Based Letting Scheme by 2010, and the costs and work involved in moving towards a banding system (much of which would be duplicated in a further future move to a Choice Based Letting Scheme), that it was more appropriate to start the process to move towards a full Choice Based Lettings Policy straight away.		
The Executive Councillor's decision(s):	Agreed: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To support a move towards a Full Choice Based Lettings Policy.2. That a report be produced for November Committee, setting out the process for moving to Full Choice Based Lettings, to include where possible approximate costs of implementation for 2006/7 onwards.		
Reasons for the decision:	The Government is committed to taking forward the choice-based lettings (CBL) agenda. The following targets were set in spring 2003: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 25% of local authorities should have a CBL system by the end of 2005: and• 100% of local authorities should have a CBL system by the end of 2010.		
Scrutiny consideration:	The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations for the Executive Councillor set out in the report and approved them by 6 votes to 0.		
Report:	Agenda Item 9 for the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2005		
Conflicts of interest:	None.		
Comments:			

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Review of Housing Services Domestic Violence Policy
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Decision of:	Councillor Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing & Health
Reference:	05/CS/05
Date of decision:	22 July 2005 Recorded on: 27 July 2005
Decision Type:	Not a Key Decision
Matter for Decision:	This report recommends a revised and updated domestic violence policy, which takes account of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing good practice in relation to domestic violence• Developing joint and partnership working• A growing awareness of domestic violence issues• New performance indicators focusing on domestic violence• Priority given to domestic violence issues within the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership• Legislative changes
Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options):	The existing Housing Services Domestic Violence policy was agreed in 1999.
The Executive Councillor's decision(s):	Approved the revised and updated Housing Services Domestic Violence Policy (attached as Appendix 1 of the officer report).
Reasons for the decision:	As Above.
Scrutiny consideration:	The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations for the Executive Councillor set out in the report and approved them by 6 votes to 0.
Report:	Set out on the Agenda Item 10 for the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2005
Conflicts of interest:	None.
Comments:	

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Medium Term Strategy

Decision of: Councillor Joye Rosenstiel, Executive Councillor for Community Development and Leisure
Councillor Catherine Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing & Health

Reference: 05/CS/06

Date of decision: 22 July 2005 **Recorded on:** 27 July 2005

Decision Type: Not a Key Decision

Matter for Decision: The Council's Constitution, Part 4C (Budget and Policy Framework procedure Rules) includes the requirement to issue a Medium Term Strategy (MTS) document.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options): The MTS sets out the financial context in which the budget for the following year will be made, issues which are or will be facing the Council. It considers policy priorities and an indication of the approach which Executive Councillors are minded to take in respect of preparing budget proposals. The document also outlines proposals for consulting the public and the business community regarding budget matters.

The Executive Councillor's decision(s): **Agreed:** To refer to the Leader items for consideration in the construction of the September 2005 Medium Term Strategy; as detailed in Appendices C & D of the officer report.

Reasons for the decision: As above.

Scrutiny consideration: This item was referred to the Committee by the Labour members for scrutiny before the Executive Councillor made the decision.

Report: Agenda Item 11 for the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2005

Conflicts of interest: None.

Comments:

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Funding for the voluntary and not-for-profit sector 2006/07

Decision of: Councillor Joye Rosenstiel,
Executive Councillor for Community Development and Leisure

Reference: 05/CS/07

Date of decision: 22 July 2005 **Recorded on:** 27 July 2005

Decision Type: Key Decision

Matter for Decision: To adopt a revised corporate statement defining the Council's commitment to working with the voluntary sector and to approve various proposals relating to the community development and leisure grant funds.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options): In 2001 the Council adopted a corporate strategy which, in response to a Best Value review of grant aid, sought to develop a more strategic approach to the Council's annual expenditure of over £1.7million on grants for the voluntary and not-for-profit sector.
A Committee of Inquiry met in early 2005 to find out how the council scrutinises the work of organisations currently funded and consider how it should engage with the voluntary sector and the public to determine future priorities.

The Executive Councillor's decision(s): **Agreed**

1. To adopt a revised corporate statement defining the Council's commitment to working with the voluntary sector (Section 3.5 of the officer report)
2. To approve the continuation of existing cash limits to community development and leisure grant funds annually until 2008-09, subject to the overall financial position of the Council.
3. To approve proposals to re-invest, by 2008-09, up to 10% of community development and leisure funds in capacity building; long term efficiency measures and match funding for external partnerships and to meet future growth needs and financial pressures, subject to the overall financial position of the Council.
4. To approve 2006-07 community development and leisure funding strategies (as detailed in Section 3.9 of the officer report).

Reasons for the decision: The Inquiry's report (Appendix 1) calls for a corporate framework that will identify the strategies and funds needed to help the voluntary sector respond more effectively to the Council's medium term objectives and the demands of longer term local growth issues. It also proposes measures to improve the processing of applications and the scrutiny of outcomes which will be adopted, as appropriate, by officers.

(Appendix 1a of the officer report lists responses to the report's recommendations.)

This report has, as far as possible, informed the following revised voluntary sector strategy for 2006-07.

The revised **corporate statement** will be used by officers to develop co-ordinated responses to the adoption of different funding models and the voluntary sector's potential role as a contracted service provider; long term funding arrangements and other procedural issues, including the introduction of a scoring mechanism to the assessment process, which were raised by the Committee of Inquiry. (Changes and additions to the existing statement, which is given in Appendix 1b are italicised)

Scrutiny consideration:

The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations for the Executive Councillor set out in the report and approved them by 5 votes to 0.

Report:

Agenda Item 12 for the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2005

Conflicts of interest: None.

Comments:

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Redevelopment of The Romsey Mill Centre
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Decision of: Councillor Joye Rosenstiel, Executive Councillor for Community Development and Leisure

Reference: 05/CS/08

Date of decision: 22 July 2005 **Recorded on:** 27 July 2005

Decision Type: Non key

Matter for Decision: To continue to support the Romsey Mill Centre redevelopment project by making a contribution from Section 106 funds and instructing officers to negotiate with the Romsey Mill Trustees terms and conditions for the release of the Section 106 monies.

The Executive Councillor's decision(s):

Agreed

1. To continue to support the Romsey Mill Centre redevelopment project.
2. A contribution of £350,000 from Section 106 funds (£180,000 from the Community Development Fund and £170,000 from the Open Spaces and Recreation Fund) for the refurbishment of the Romsey Mill Centre to provide Sports and Recreational Facilities for young people and the local community. The contribution would be subject to the trustees raising a further £250,750 to meet the full estimated amount of £600,750 required to complete the project.
3. To instruct Officers to negotiate with the Romsey Mill trustees terms and conditions for the release of the Section 106 monies on the basis that the contribution will be subject to the inclusion of an allocation of hours for the Sportsteam (Citysport, Startup GP Referral, BME, Mental health, and Healthy living and active lifestyle projects) and access to facilities for children and young people.

Reasons for the decision:

The Romsey Mill centre and its outreach programmes are a valuable resource for community development in the immediate neighbourhood and elsewhere in the city. Its work with children and young people is highly regarded and is likely to grow under the new arrangements for implementing the Children Act and delivering integrated services in which the City Council is also a partner. Community Development staff are currently carrying out a review of community needs and facilities in Romsey, the early findings of which confirm the importance of the centre and its work in the area.

Scrutiniv

The Scrutiniv Committee considered the recommendations

consideration: for the Executive Councillor set out in the report and approved them by 6 votes to 0.

Report: Agenda Item 16 for the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2005

Conflicts of interest: No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Appointment to Outside Body (The Junction)

Decision of: Councillor Joye Rosenstiel,
Executive Councillor for Community Development and Leisure

Reference: 05/CS/09

Date of decision: 31 August 2005 **Recorded on:** 1 September 2005

Decision Type: Not a Key Decision

Matter for Decision: To make the annual appointment to the board of The Junction.

Why the decision had to be made (and any alternative options): The Council is required to be represented on various bodies by elected representatives.

The Executive Councillor's decision(s): Agreed to appoint Councillors Adey, Ellis-Miller, Herbert, Stafford and Stuart to the Board of The Junction.

Reasons for the decision: As above.

Scrutiny consideration: This item was referred to the Committee by the Labour members for scrutiny before the Executive Councillor made the decision.

Report: Agenda Item 17 of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 July 2005

Conflicts of interest: None.

Comments:

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
Record of Executive Decision

Contractual Arrangements for Sponsorship Support from Cambridge Printing (Cambridge University Press)
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Decision of: Councillor Joye Rosenstiel, Executive Councillor
Community Development and Leisure

Reference: 05/CS/10

Date of decision: 22 July 2005 **Recorded on:** 27 July 2005

Decision Type: Non key

Matter for Decision: Officers are seeking permission to formalise various sponsorship arrangements with Cambridge Printing for individual events into one contract. Over a period of eighteen months to two years the relationship with Cambridge Printing has developed to include a combination of in kind print support (Children's Festival and International Concert Series print), web design support (Cambridge Folk Festival) and financial support (World Music Sunday at The Big Weekend). Recently they have confirmed that they will support the production of an expanded Corn Exchange Events Guide by discounting the print costs by £3,000 + VAT per issue on an ongoing basis. These elements have been contracted and arranged separately. However, Cambridge Printing have requested that the partnership is formalised into one contract. The combined total of in kind value and actual cash support totals £25,300 + VAT.

The Executive Councillor's decision(s): Agreed to create a service level agreement and formalise various sponsorship arrangements with Cambridge Printing for individual events into one contract.

Reasons for the decision: See above.

Scrutiny consideration: The Scrutiny Committee considered the decision at its meeting on 22 July.

Report: Not applicable.

Conflicts of interest: No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

Comments: None.