

**ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**26 March 2002  
10.00am – 3.20pm

**Present:** Councillors Bradnack, Dixon, Douglas, Durrant, Harrison, Howarth, Slatter, Ward, White

**Also:** Cllr Blencowe during discussion on minutes 02/h/36 and 02/h/40

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL****02/h/23 MINUTES**

The minutes of the committee's meeting on 29 January 2002 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**02/h/24 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Johnston

**02/h/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Councillors declared Code of Conduct (non-financial) interests as follows:

Councillor Bradnack as a council representative on the Trustees of the Cam Conservators (Minute 02/h/42)

Councillor Douglas as having interests in a company operating mobile phone masts (Minute 02/h/27) and as a member of the Cambridge Wildlife Trust (Minute 02/h/35).

Councillor Howarth as a member of the Department of Land Economy at Cambridge University (Minute 02/h/40)

Councillor Ward as an employee of a company that has a client in the mobile phone industry (Minute 02/h/27)

**02/h/26 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**02/h/27 FINDINGS FROM PHONE MAST SEMINAR - DRAFT ACTION PLAN**

At City Board on 26 November 2001, officers had reported the recommendations of the Panel who heard evidence and questioned the experts during the seminar on mobile phone masts which was held at Corpus Christi College last October. City Board had agreed the recommendations of the Panel, in principle, and had instructed officers to draw up a draft Action Plan to show how the recommendations might be delivered, together with any cost implications for the Council.

Further, City Board had agreed that Panel recommendations 10 and 11 (relating specifically to mast installations on Council owned property) should be implemented straight away but reviewed as part of the Action Planning process. Officers had been instructed to report the draft Action Plan to relevant Committees for comment prior to its consideration by City Board on the 16 April 2002.

Members commented on the proposal to appoint a Liaison officer to deal with the issue, the funding of the post and the possibility of joint backing from neighbouring local authorities.

**Resolved** (by 7 votes to 0) that members comments on the draft Action Plan to be taken into account by City Board before it takes a decision at its meeting on 16 April 2002, specifically the suggestion that the County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council be approached to consider part funding of post of Liaison Officer.

02/h/28      **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS, CARRY FORWARDS AND SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES**

At its last meeting this committee had considered the revenue budget for the next financial year, 2002/03, together with revisions to the budget for the current year, 2001/02. These had been submitted to City Board on 11 February 2002 and then to Council on 21 February 2002. They were considered as part of the budget strategy following the provisional, revised and now final, Government Financing Settlement (announced on 4 December 2001, 28 December 2001 and 28 January 2002, respectively), which was less favourable for the City Council than had been anticipated in the July 2001 Medium Term Forecast.

City Board had approved a General Fund Projection which included items that were treated as specific funds for the purpose of the budget process. These had now been allocated to relevant spending committees and the report presented the latest position for this committee's 2001/02 Revised and 2002/03 Budgets. An overview was included which pulled together all the bids and savings.

The report also highlighted any new or changed circumstances requiring consideration including anticipated significant variances or requirements to carry forward budgets.

**Resolved** (by 7 votes to 2) that approval be sought from City Board to carry forward an estimated total of £223,900 budgets, set out in Appendix A of the report, from 2001/02 into 2002/03, subject to the final outturn position.

02/h/29      **BEST VALUE FUNDAMENTAL SERVICE REVIEW OF THE CEMETERIES & CREMATORIUM SERVICE**

The report and the accompanying documents described the outcomes of the Best Value Fundamental Service Reviews of The Crematorium and Cemeteries Service which also contained the Action Plan for continuous improvement of the quality of the service to users.

**Resolved** (by 6 votes to 1) that the Best Value Review for the Crematorium and Cemeteries Service and the Action Plan for continuous improvement be approved.

02/h/30      **BEST VALUE INSPECTION – STREETS AND OPEN SPACES**

The report informed members of the outcomes arising from the best value inspection of the Streets and Open Space BVFSR and suggested actions to address the recommendations of the inspectors.

The actions proposed in section 4 of the report were targeted specifically at the Streets and Open Space review although some of the actions had implications for all three reviews. The specific Parks Management and Play Area issues were being dealt with separately by Community Services.

**Resolved** (by 8 votes to 0) that the actions taken as detailed in section 4 of the report to address the recommendations in the Best Value Inspectors' report, subject to City Board approval of funding of £50,000 to meet cost of consultants to carry out a validation of area working and an options appraisal of alternative means of delivery and procurement to be funded from budget reserves be approved.

02/h/31      **BEST VALUE FUNDAMENTAL SERVICE REVIEW OF WASTE MANAGEMENT - BEST VALUE INSPECTION REPORT**

The Committee noted the comments of the Fundamental Service Review and Audit Working Party which had considered the report at its meeting on 7 March 2002.

The report summarised the findings of the Best Value Inspection Report on the Waste Management Service and set out a revised action plan for service improvement.

The Best Value Service Review of the Waste Management Service had been completed in November 2000 and reported to Environment Committee on 9 January 2001. The inspection took place between 17 – 20 September 2001 and the 'Interim Challenge' meeting the members and officers occurred on 8 October 2001. The final report had been published in December 2001 a copy of which had been forwarded to Environment Committee Spokespersons.

Councillor Bradnack's proposal that a further recommendation, as set out below, be added was lost by 8 votes to 0:

- a. The Council should seek to reach government recycling targets by the most cost-effective means.
- b. To achieve this, the Council should:
  - involve the public in an overall strategy to both enhance recycling and reduce waste;
  - before embarking on the third phase of dry recycling, subject that element of the waste management service to proper scrutiny, to include comparison of cost-efficiency and capacity to raise public participation, with other methods of recycling, such as green bins;

- seek additional government support for the most cost-effective extension of recycling.
- c. The budgetary implications of recycling proposals should be clearly identified, and placed before the electorate.

A further amendment by Councillor Howarth to add the amendment proposed by Councillor Bradnack omitting the paragraph beginning 'before embarking on the third phase..' was carried.

**Resolved** that:

- 1 The outcome of the Best Value Inspection Report on Waste Management be noted.
- 2 The response to the findings and to the recommendations of the Inspection Report set out in paragraph 4 of the report be agreed.
- 3 The implementation of the action plan be monitored on an annual basis.
- 4 The Council should seek to reach government recycling targets by the most cost-effective means. To achieve this, the Council should:
  - a. involve the public in an overall strategy to both enhance recycling and reduce waste;
  - b. seek additional government support for the most cost-effective extension of recycling.
- 5 The budgetary implications of recycling proposals should be clearly identified, and placed before the electorate.

#### 02/h/32 **WASTE MINIMISATION STRATEGY**

The report submitted for member consideration a draft Waste Minimisation Strategy for adoption by the Council.

The Best Value Fundamental Service Review for Waste Management recognised that the City Council has been active in various initiatives to encourage waste minimisation in Cambridge and recommended that the Council develop a Waste Minimisation Strategy. The implementation of this strategy would improve sustainability in the City and help reduce the cost of waste collection and disposal.

A key element of the strategy was to raise public awareness of the need to minimise waste produced in the home and to increase their participation in the various and increasing opportunities to recycle waste. It was proposed to discuss the draft strategy with our partners in the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy area and engage in some public consultation

**Resolved** that members comments be noted and the draft strategy set out in Appendix A to the report be approved for further consultation with stakeholders and development of an action plan for further consideration by the Committee.

#### 02/h/33 **THE ADOPTION OF SERVICE STANDARDS FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT**

The report sought committee approval for the development of service standards for waste management in Cambridge.

The BVFSR for Waste Management contained a recommendation that the City Council develops and consults service users about the adoption of Service Standards for Waste Management. The Waste Strategy Office had prepared the draft Service Standards contained in Appendix A having considered standards adopted by some other local authorities. It was proposed that service users be consulted on these standards by holding two focus groups later in 2002.

**Resolved** that members comments be noted and the draft Service Standards contained in Appendix A be approved for further public consultation, subject to final consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons.

02/h/34      **SOUTH AND EAST AREA TRANSPORT PLANS**

It was noted that a special meeting of the Committee would be held on 16 April 2002 at 10.00am to consider the Council's response to the County Council's Structure Plan proposals and the South and East Area Transport Plans.

02/h/35      **GUIDANCE FOR INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OPEN SPACE STANDARDS**

Guidance for Interpreting and Implementing the City Council's Open Space Standards had been adopted by Planning Sub-Committee in January 2000 and updated in January 2001. The report further updated the guidance following the experience of operating it over the last 12 months and taking into account the revised guidance published by the National Playing Fields Association in 2001.

**Resolved** (by 6 votes to 0) that the revised guidance set out as Appendix 1 of the report be adopted for development control purposes for all relevant applications received after 26 March 2002

02/h/36      **DRAFT PLANNING OBLIGATION STRATEGY FOR CAMBRIDGE**

The report introduced the draft Planning Obligation Strategy and provided an update on the annual monitoring report on planning obligations. The purpose of the strategy was three-fold:

- (i) to draw together existing practice on planning obligations;
- (ii) to provide a clear policy and practical basis for seeking contributions to community infrastructure;
- (iii) to provide a framework for the expenditure of financial contributions collected through planning obligations.

It was intended that in due course, that the Strategy would form Supplementary Planning Guidance and be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

**Resolved** (by 6 votes to 1) that:

1. the draft Planning Obligation Strategy be noted and endorsed for the purposes of consultation prior to considering its adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance, subject to the inclusion of a reference to street lighting under proposals for expenditure of contributions.
2. The update of the annual monitoring report on financial contributions received by the City Council through planning obligations be noted.

02/h/37      **SUSTAINABLE CITY REVIEW 2000- 2002 AND ENVIRONMENT PLAN (DRAFT)**

This report aimed to promote greater environmental sustainability in Cambridge by reviewing the current Sustainable City programme and proposing how this should be taken forward. The refocused initiative would play an important part in achieving the Key Corporate Objective of 'improving the environment'.

**Resolved** that the following be approved:

1. the allocations of grants to environmental organisations recommended in paragraph 4.6 of the report,
2. the refocusing of the Sustainable City initiative on environmental matters as set out in paragraph 4.8(a) - (b) of the report,
3. the projects identified in Appendix 4 of the report for delivery in 2002-03 as part of the Environment Plan;
4. the processes for delivering the service set out in paragraphs 4.8(d) - (e) of the report, in particular the revised procedure for dealing with grants;
5. regular reporting of action and the preparation of an annual statement, paragraph 4.8(f) of the report.

02/h/38      **STRUCTURE PLAN RESPONSE**

It was noted that a special meeting of the Committee would be held on 16 April 2002 at 10.00am to consider the Council's response to the County Council's Structure Plan proposals and the South and East Area Transport Plans.

02/h/39      **BUS PROVISION IN CAMBRIDGE**

The report outlined how more sustainable transport in Cambridge might be encouraged by promoting improvements to the operation of buses in the centre of the City. It reported on a detailed study of the Bus Station and the immediately surrounding streets.

**Resolved** to:

1. welcome the study by Steer Davies Gleave as a valuable contribution towards improving bus services in Cambridge;
2. oppose the construction of a new bus station on Christ's Pieces;

3. support in principle the short term options for change summarised in paragraphs 4.6 of the report;
4. in the longer term support: the optimum use of space in the Bus Station, Drummer Street and Emmanuel Street; major provision, especially for express buses, at the Railway Station; and the removal of buses from St Andrew's Street north of Emmanuel Street; and
5. request officers to report on a strategy to the Area Joint Committee at the earliest possible opportunity.
6. to state that the Council would not be averse to the provision of free public transport to service the link between the City Centre and the railway station.

02/h/40      **KEY WORKER HOUSING IN CAMBRIDGE**

The report, which had also been considered by the Housing and Health Committee on 20 March 2002, introduced the findings of a study into Key Worker Housing in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and provided an update on the Starter Home Initiative.

**Resolved that**

1. (by 8 votes to 1) the findings of the study be noted and endorsed for use to support new and revised policies towards housing in the Local Plan review.
2. (by 8 votes to 1) of the options available to the City Council to seek the provision of key worker housing through the planning system set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report, option 3 be selected and it was agreed that a series of liaison meetings be held with local employers and other stakeholders.
3. there was sufficient justification for reverting to the minimum site area and dwelling number thresholds set out in Local Plan policy HO7 as opposed to those contained in Circular 06/98.

02/h/41      **POST - RESTRUCTURING REVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

The Director of Planning and Environment was consulting staff and Members on a number of outstanding issues surrounding the structure of his Department following the restructuring in late 2000. This was likely to involve some changes at second tier level.

**Resolved** that the Committee delegate any second tier changes resulting from the post-restructuring review of the Environment and Planning Department to the Director of Environment and Planning in consultation with the Chairs and Spokes of Environment and Community Development and Leisure Committees (or post 23 May 2002, with the Chair and spokes of the Administration Committee which will have responsibility for staff terms and conditions as currently envisaged under the new Constitution).

02/h/42      **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES - CONSERVATORS OF  
THE RIVER CAM**

The Committee considered the appointment of a Council representative on the Conservators of the River Cam, following the resignation of Tarquin Ukarnis. Mr Craig Derbyshire and Mr Tony Clark had been put forward as a possible successor.

**Resolved** that Mr Tony Clarke be appointed as the replacement representative on the Conservators.

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