

Community Services Scrutiny Committee18 January 2007
2.30pm to 6.40pm

Present: Councillors Slatter (Chair), Blencowe, Boyce (Alt), Hughes, Hymans, James, Kightley, Lynn, Upstone

Non-voting co-optees: Stan Best, Tony Barnes, Jon Quinn (Tenant/Leaseholder Reps)

Also Present:

Cllr Smith (Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation), Cllr Smart (Executive Councillor for Housing), Cllr Stuart (Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health)

For the Information of the Council

07/CS/01 Minutes

With regards to 06/CS/59, Cllr Boyce conveyed a request from the Kelsey Kerridge board that they would like a meeting with relevant City Council officers to look at the longer-term possibilities for the Kelsey Kerridge, especially in the light of the Horizons proposals for a major sports facility in the Cambridge East development.

07/CS/02 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Ellis-Miller and Liddle.

07/CS/03 Declarations of Interest

The following members declared the personal interests indicated:

Councillor	Item	Interest
Smith	07/CS/08	Employee of Cambridge University
Smith	07/CS/08	Member of Kelsey Kerridge
Hymans	07/CS/08	Friend of Histon Road Cemetery

07/CS/04 Public Questions

Public Speakers spoke prior to members considering the items on which the public speakers had expressed an interest.

Review of Moorings Policy

Mr C Brown was satisfied that the concerns of the Conservators of the River Cam had been addressed in the revised version of the report tabled at the meeting for discussion under Item 6 of the agenda.

Mr B Key explained that there had been rowing on the Cam for 175 years, and the last 20 years had seen dramatic growth. The Cambridge Rowing Association was the largest group of rowers in the county, with 3,500 members – 2,500 from the university. Mooring on the river was free, but now it was very congested. Mr Key was rather disappointed that his group had not been invited to take part in the consultation earlier. He expressed concern at adding to the number of boats on the river.

Mr P Convey explained that the Cambridge University Combined Boat Clubs represented over 30 boat clubs. He expressed concern that the group had not been invited to take part in the consultation in a timely and balanced fashion and asked that in future all concerned

parties be invited to take part. He expressed gratitude that the revised report had taken his comments on board.

The Executive Councillor apologised for the unintentional lateness of invitation to the concerned parties and assured that this would not happen in future. She explained that proposals in the report were to curb the increase of boats on the river.

07/CS/05 Arts and Recreation Portfolio - Service Plans for 2007/08, Revenue and Capital Budgets 2006/07 (Revised), 2007/08 and 2008/09 (Forecast)

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/01)

The Principal Accountant (Services) introduced the report, tabling an amendment to Appendix B on page 23 with reference to 2 b), as follows:

- Abbey pool gym session
 - mid-term assessment fee free prescription – £2.00 (not £2.60)
 - mid-term assessment fee prescription – £4.00 (not £6.50)
 - end of course assessment fee free prescription – £2.00 (not £2.60)
 - end of course assessment fee prescription – £4.00 (not £6.50)

The officer also tabled an additional recommendation, as follows:

- k) Approve the use of additional S106 resources totaling £17,000 on capital scheme SC209 Christ's Pieces Play Area refurbishment, as noted in Appendix G, due to redefinition of the requirements of the project following consultation.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and other members replied (A):

- Scaling back of the Summer in the City Events seemed undesirable as these were well received. In addition to the Big Weekend there were Jazz and Children's Festivals.
A: savings were being drawn from all events, and not just Summer in the City, which the children's event was not part of.
- Would the jazz events cease without a sponsor?
A: A sponsor was being sought, but if one could not be found then it would be necessary to stage fewer events.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendation.

07/CS/06 Review of Moorings Policy

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/02)

The Green Space Manager introduced the revised report tabled at the meeting, along with an illustrative permitted moorings map. Three previous reports had been issued in November 2005, January 2006 and March 2006, which led to the introduction of the River Moorings Policy on 1st April 2006. Licenses were made available via an application process, and the policy was currently being reviewed. Following correspondence received from the Conservators of the River Cam on 17th January 2007, discussions were held with the River Manager and the original review report was redrafted with some changes to recommendations listed under 3.10 a). References to correspondence from the Conservators of the River Cam were underlined in red type. The amendments included changing the location and usage of areas that would be created for mooring (it was noted

that under 3.10 d), the last point to be deleted should read 'Area M to be increased by 150m').

Scrutiny Committee members made the following comments, and officers or the Executive Councillor replied (A):

- Is it a good use of officer time to continue to support Cambridgeshire County Council's work in relation to consideration on moorings issues on the Riverside Area?
A: It is good for officers to be available to offer support, though not sure how much time should be allocated to this.
- Under 3.13 where it says that several applicants were still waiting, was this above those that have been subsumed?
A: 6 have been subsumed, with 1 spare and 9 waiting. Expect to process 7 license applications this year, and a similar number next year; potentially 11 in the next twelve months.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendation.

07/CS/07 Review of Leisurecard

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/03)

The Recreation Services Manager introduced the report, which proposed the merger of the Leisurecard with the Local Secrets scheme, which currently offered discounts in eateries. Local Secrets would run marketing and promotional operations. SLM would no longer be doing the main administration but would still be responsible for delivery and their own income stream. Loyalty schemes could be created and tied in with healthy living. There would still be opportunities to work with Cambridgeshire County Council's card scheme. Current Leisurecard and Local Secrets members would be able to buy an upgrade to the new card. Leisurecard A (low income card holder) would cost £5.00; Leisurecard B (city resident card holder) would cost £9.50; and Leisurecard OS (older person or student card holder) would cost £7.00. The Non-City card holder's card would cost £30.00.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and the Executive Councillor replied (A):

- The card looked more like a Local Secrets card than a Cambridge City Council (CCC) card.
A: The image presented was just a mock-up, and would eventually include the CCC logo and text about the partnership.
- Would the card need to have a photograph of the individual for identification purposes?
A: No, the leisure centre would have web-cam photos of individuals on file.
- How would the imagery on the card be chosen?
A: The Recreation Services Manager would circulate proposed designs to members for consultation.
- Concern was raised regarding data sharing.
A: There would be an opt-out facility regarding third-party mailings.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendation.

07/CS/08 Arts and Recreation Portfolio Financial Support to Voluntary and Not-for-profit Organisations 2007/08

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/04)

The Grants Manager introduced the report, which contained the recommendations for community development grants. The Grants Manager also reported that appendix 2.2 contained the recommendations for economic policy grants, and that the Executive Councillor was recommended to approve these.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and other members replied (A):

- Community organisations were having to spend a lot of time working out budgets for next year rather than on delivering policies.
- It was necessary to encourage less dependency on grants; however smaller organisations could continue to get grants.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report and amended as above by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendation.

07/CS/09 The Junction Funding

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/05)

The Head of Arts & Entertainment introduced the report which was exempt from publication.

The Committee supported the recommendation set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendation.

07/CS/10 Community Development and Health Portfolio - Service Plans for 2007/08, Revenue and Capital Budgets 2006/07 (Revised), 2007/08 and 2008/09 (Forecast)

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/06)

The Principal Accountant (Services) introduced the report and explained that the Government would be providing additional grant for the part-time Enforcement Officer post detailed in UR1013.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and other members replied (A):

- Concern was raised at the restriction of new CHYYPS projects as mentioned in S1052, and also of school holiday schemes as in S1061.
 - A: The council had received £50,000-£60,000 from Cambridgeshire County Council and the Government to be spent on services for vulnerable young people. The provision needed at the beginning of the restructuring of services as mentioned in S1061 was no longer needed.
- Insufficient resources and facilities led to social problems for young people, and some areas of the city were quite lacking. The SureStart provision had made a positive difference to many young people's lives.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health approved the recommendation.

07/CS/11 Community Development and Health Portfolio - Financial support to voluntary and not-for-profit organisations 2007/08

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/07)

The Grants Manager explained that most of the organisations would receive what they had requested.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and other members replied (A):

- A member had received a phone call from a Cambridge Cruse volunteer concerning the distress caused by the forbidding of vases in the grounds of the crematorium.
A: The Executive Councillor had been liaising with officers with regards to this issue. The issue had not been discussed in committee previously as it had appeared as an Agenda B item rather than Agenda A in November 2006. Cruse would receive an invitation to join discussions. The wording in the leaflet was unfortunate and would be changed. There might be a possibility to purchase a small plot for placing personal items, but it was not appropriate to 'claim a space'. It was possible to borrow vases from the office for the placing of flowers.
- It was important that the growth areas of Cambridge should feature social enterprises such as shops, as opposed to something less genial.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health approved the recommendation.

07/CS/12 Revised Housing Capital Investment Strategy 2007 – 2017

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/08)

The Principal Strategy Officer introduced the report. An amendment was tabled, making changes to Recommendation 2.1.11 so that it read 'To approve setting aside £500,000 from the Council to support the creation of a Homelessness Assessment Centre in the City'. This change in recommendation clarified the Council's contribution to the project and removed the figure of £1m, which was incorrect. Also tabled was an amendment to Appendix 1, so that it reflected the full cost of the Assessment Centre and the Government grants which were anticipated to be received to support the project.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and other members replied (A):

- Concern was raised that money was not being spent on improvements promised to residents living at a sheltered housing complex.
- Corona House for homeless women could not cope with the demand for accommodation.
- Much of the housing land was mixed with other types of land and so money for general improvements should not come out of the housing fund.
A: The Council retained receipts. Housing land and assets remained in the housing capital account, which may or may not be used by social landlords.

- Paving methods were discussed and compared. Some thought that tarmac was a bad idea as it tended to wear out quicker and thus cost more, and also didn't allow rain to drain away properly; whilst others thought that it was a good idea as uneven paving stones could be a hazard.
A: Hard paving would also enable blocks of flats to have recycling facilities.
- It was disappointing for residents that there was no budget for repairs to St Matthew's garages.
A: A report had been commissioned to look at long-term options.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendation.

07/CS/13 Housing Portfolio - Service Plans for 2007/08, Revenue and Capital Budgets 2006/07 (Revised), 2007/08 and 2008/09 (Forecast)
(See Record of Decision 07/CS/09)

The Principal Accountant (Services) tabled a number of amendments to the recommendations so that they read as below:

- k) Approve a Housing Capital Allowance for 2007/08 of £17,992,000.
- l) To approve setting aside £500,000 from the Council to support the creation of a Homelessness Assessment Centre in the City, as detailed in the project appraisal at Appendix L.

An amended version of Appendix K was also tabled with accompanying amended notes. The changes did not affect the bottom line position.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0. The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendation.

07/CS/14 Cambridge Challenge - Criteria for Selecting a Strategic Delivery Partner
(See Record of Decision 07/CS/10)

The Director of Community Services reported that the Cambridge Challenge prospectus was no longer confidential as it was published on the Housing Corporation's website. The officer would be attending a stakeholder meeting on 22nd January; comments received today would be conveyed to the Housing Corporation.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and other members replied (A):

- It was worrying to see that schools were the only community generators planned for the sites. There were no churches for instance. It was also important not to create areas that one would simply commute from with entertainment concentrated only in the centre of the town.
- Bus routes would need to be planned.
- The Government's focus seemed to have shifted from improving disabled people's homes to having greener homes. 'Inclusiveness' should include the disabled.
- 'Specialist' housing did not seem to include disabled housing.
- The Method Statements section of the report did not ask for examples under Resident & Tenant Involvement. There should be high quality tenant involvement programmes.

- The report contained jargon which was difficult to understand. There needed to be a glossary of terms for the report. There was a distinction between social housing and affordable housing; only social housing was required to be a 'lifetime' house.
A: The officer would ask the Housing Corporation for clarification on the wording.
- Quangoes were an undemocratic forum for decision-making and selection. The selection process would need to be accountable, but there seemed to be very little public accountability for the big decision. How could members input into this decision?
A: The Housing Corporation were operating over a broad management; the officer was sitting on the stakeholder group, and would be happy to provide feedback to members at each stage and arrange meetings for this if necessary. However the decision was theirs and not the committee's.
- It seemed wrong to give this to only one strategic partner.
A: The strategic partner would be part of a bigger consortium.
- There were no references to the existing residents at the sites.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 6 votes to 0. The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendation.

07/CS/15 Additions to the Programme for new affordable housing 2006/08 - Galfrid Road: Redevelopment Of Former Garage Site For Additional Affordable Housing

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/11)

The Enabling & Development Manager explained that the site was currently subject to vandalism. Local people had been consulted and there were no other suggestions for the redevelopment of the site other than affordable housing. This would comprise of six 2-bed flats for social housing. The level of grant required for the scheme was more than average because the drains under the site needed moving.

Councillors raised the following to which officers and other members replied (A):

- In light of the need for 'lifetime' houses, could the proposed properties have lifts?
Research should be carried out into the cost of installing lifts and balanced against the cost of adapting homes for the elderly. Access to upper floors would also be difficult for young families with buggies.
A: 'Lifetime' homes did not require lifts as policy. Buildings over two storeys would have lifts but as the proposed properties were smaller, lifts had not been considered; however, research could be carried out into how much the installation of lifts would cost for future reference. Families with young children were not normally housed on upper floors.

The Committee approved the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0. The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendation.

07/CS/16 Housing General Fund Grants to Voluntary Organisations for 2007/8

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/12)

The Housing Needs Manager introduced the report. Councillors made comments as follows:

- The move to SLAs was welcomed.
- The inclusion of homelessness was also welcomed.

The Committee approved the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 4 votes to 0. The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendation.

07/CS/17 Vacant House/Compulsory Purchase Order Ref 07/01

(See Record of Decision 07/CS/13)

The Head of Environmental Services introduced the report and explained that Recommendation b) was no longer needed.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 5 votes to 0. The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendation.

07/CS/18 Forward Plan

The Committee noted that there were no non-key decisions listed on the most recently published Forward Plan for consideration at this stage.

07/CS/19 Records of Executive Decision

In accordance with the Constitution, the Committee noted the below Records of Decision which related to decisions made by the listed Executive Councillors without prior scrutiny.

- The Future of the Employment Foundation Service - Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health (for copies of the report referred to are available for inspection on the Internet or on request).

The meeting ended at 6.40pm

CHAIR