

**Community Services Scrutiny Committee**29 March 2007  
2.30pm to 5.45pm

**Present:** Councillors Slatter (Chair), Blencowe, Boyce (Alt), Ellis-Miller, Hughes, Hymans, Kightley, Lynn, Upstone

**Non-voting co-optees:** Stan Best (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)

<b>For the Information of the Council</b>
---

**07/CS/23 Minutes**

The minutes of 18 January 2007 stated that Cllr Upstone had attended when he had not. The minutes were amended accordingly and then agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**07/CS/24 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors James and Liddle, and also from Tony Barnes (Tenant Rep).

**07/CS/25 Declarations of Interest**

Members declared Code of Conduct prejudicial interests as follows. They did not speak or vote on the item indicated and withdrew from the Committee Room during discussion.

Councillor	Item	Interest
Boyce	07/CS/25	As an employee of a company involved in an item at Appendix C
Slatter	07/CS/28	As vice-president of one of the charities

**07/CS/26 Public Questions**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**07/CS/27 Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy 2007 – 2012**

*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/19)*

The Head of Housing & Community Services Strategy explained that the need for this strategy was identified in the Council's Housing Strategy 2004-2007. It was designed to assist the Council in ensuring that there was no discrimination in access to housing services, and to developing an understanding of the specific needs and aspirations of citizens from BME groups in Cambridge. The strategy would need a number of measurable objectives and a group to monitor and scrutinize the strategy and provided a forum for consultation for stakeholders and BME citizens.

Members made comments on the report as below:

- The strategy was welcomed but it was work in progress, and tenants and leaseholders would need to be consulted as to how they would want to be involved.

- It was important to be aware of the needs and aspirations of citizens who had arrived from the new EU countries since the 2001 census.
- Some residential areas of the city lacked recreation and leisure facilities, especially of a musical nature.
- That houses with more than two bedrooms were seemingly not being built in the city was an issue for all groups and not just for BME citizens.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 9 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendation.

**07/CS/28 Additions To The Programme For New Affordable Housing 2006/08 – Elmfield Close: Redevelopment Of Bungalow Site For Additional Affordable Housing**  
*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/20)*

The Head of Housing & Community Services Strategy introduced the report.

Members made comments and asked the following questions to which officers replied (A):

- It would be good to make the way through Inverness Close official.  
A: There was no formal right of way, but residents would be consulted. Scotland Close provided the nearest walking access to shops on Chesterton Road.
- What was the difference between housing for the over 55s and sheltered housing?  
A: sheltered housing included support for residents. The proposed development did not include this, but would be designed so that it could include support at a later stage if required. Floating support could be made available in housing for the over 55s. 55 was not considered old, but this age was used so that there would be a mix of ages across the residents.

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/29 Estimated Revenue And Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards And Significant Variances For 2006/07 (Housing Portfolio)**  
*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/21)*

The Principal Accountant (Services) introduced the report and explained that an underspend of £30,750 was forecast. There were three carry forward requests totaling £87,050. The Housing Capital Investment Plan was outlined at Appendix E of the report.

Members made comments and asked the following questions to which officers replied (A):

- Why was the Compulsory Purchase Order revenue budget included as a carry forward request?  
A: The purchase of properties may not all fall under the same calendar year. The Capital Budget 2006/07 was outlined at Appendix D.

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/30 Site for Co-Located Community Facilities in the Southern Fringe**

*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/22)*

The Head of Community Development explained that the two sites, CPDC and Clay Farm, had been compared and assessed. The assessment was carried out by 5<sup>th</sup> Studio, architects, who concluded that the Clay Farm site was the most appropriate choice. Clay Farm had scored more highly in 6 out of the 8 criteria leading to the conclusion that it was the better site, overall.

Members made comments and asked the following questions to which officers replied (A):

- Community facilities should be included from the start of any development.  
A: This had been established as a principal in the previously agreed Southern Fringe Community Facilities Strategy.
- The provision for parking did not seem adequate, why wasn't there more?  
A: Both sites had provision for parking. However, the provision of parking needed to be considered in line with the Council's sustainability objectives and in particular to discourage car use and to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- Access leading to the Fawcett County Primary School seems less satisfactory. How were access issues considered?  
A: Access to public transport was a key factor. Clay Farm has the better connections.
- Cllr Anne Kent, a County Councillor from the Trumpington ward, tabled her comments on the report. Cllr Kent sought reassurance from the Committee that there would be proper consultation with the community and other service users and providers before any decisions taken became firm; that the Committee would try to make sure that provision for the new, and old, communities was there from the start, from the arrival of the first resident; and that the Committee would make sure that provision is planned in conjunction with all the service providers.  
A: Residents had been consulted already but further meetings would take place.
- The term 'phasing' had been included in the recommendations in order to address interim arrangements.
- The centre of the Clay Farm site looked urban and did not seem to allow for outdoor activity.  
A: There would be provision for a garden and small play space but not a significant recreation space. A decision was expected to be made in April by the County Council on the provision of a secondary school which would be modeled on community college lines with access, for the community, to outdoor and indoor sports and recreation facilities. If the secondary school was not delivered, there would be a gap in terms of sports facilities and an alternative way of delivering them would need to be found.
- Phasing of delivery should mean that people arrive into a community with facilities and not just a lot of houses.
- It was good that the centre/commercial area, school and library would be in the same area.
- Would building start before community provisions had been specified and confirmed?  
A: The timing of the construction of community facilities would be negotiated through the s106 process but the principle was to deliver these facilities as early as possible in the development process.
- The site would need to be serviced by suitable public transport with bus routes that didn't just stick to main roads.

The Committee agreed to vote on the new wording of the recommendations as per the Second Circulation. The Executive Councillor explained that a meeting would be arranged in the Spring to update to the public on progress made so far and on the future process.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 6 votes to 0.

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

**07/CS/31 Estimated revenue and capital outturn, carry forwards and significant variances for 2006/07 (Community Development and Health Portfolio)**

*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/23)*

The Principal Accountant (Services) introduced the report and explained that an overspend of £60,000 after carry forwards was forecast, due to the cemeteries and crematorium as shown at Appendix A of the report. There had been a decrease in cremations and burials as the overall death rate in the City had continued to drop, and the interring of cremated remains had increased against the interring of bodies. There were two carry forward requests totaling £8,300.

Members made the following comments:

- The death rate may be used to adjust budget figures in the future.
- Officers were congratulated for keeping fairly close to budget.

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

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

**07/CS/32 Funding for voluntary organisations 2007-08: Community Development**

*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/24)*

For this item only, Cllr Ellis-Miller acted as Chair as Cllr Slatter had expressed a prejudicial interest.

The Grants Manager introduced the report. An email sent on behalf of the Chief Executive of Directions Plus was tabled, including accurate figures which were previously unavailable.

Members made comments and asked the following questions to which officers replied (A):

- The opportunity to provide an information service was very important. Awareness of what benefits were available to people needed to be raised.
- With the Older people's volunteering project, one seminar could go ahead and then it could be decided to go ahead with the others.
- What was the feasibility of the sums outlined in the Directions Plus document?  
A: The recommendations were for up to these sums.
- Could the bid for the 'home visits to advise on benefit appeals' be explained.  
A: West/Central and East had been given all they asked for. The North and South had the most budget pressures.
- It was good that a multi-ethnic disability forum had been mentioned.

The Executive Councillor commented that involvement in the group was late on in the process, and that work with the Grants Manager early on in the 2008/09 process should be encouraged.

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

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

### **07/CS/33 Future Ownership, Management and Delivery of Green Spaces on Growth Sites**

*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/25)*

The Green Space Manager introduced the report and tabled a diagram produced by CABE Space. The TLP report was included at Appendix A in the Third Circulation.

The Head of Active Communities explained that TLP had carried out a sophisticated costing on green space management. The costs would be reasonably robust. TLP also did costings of Area Development Framework.

Members made comments and asked the following questions to which officers replied (A):

- What was the difference between open space and green space?  
A: open space was a hardcovered area such as Market Square, and green space was an area such as Parkers Piece.
- Boundary changes were an issue, as well as ownership of green spaces. The releasing of any green space should be for the benefit of the community. Some green spaces were joint-owned by the City Council and South Cambs District Council, and so were not subject simply to a City Council decision.  
A: Accountability and local ownership were important, and long-term planning was needed.  
A: The rules now meant that trusts could obtain more funding than councils. Setting up a trust jointly between the City Council and South Cambs DC should be explored as an option.

Members felt that they needed more time to read the information and to discuss the item further. As the decision needed to be made before July, which was outside of the existing cycle, it was agreed that a Special Committee meeting would be held in the meantime and this would be noted in the recommendations. The date for this meeting was likely to be in May as Section 106 details were due in June.

The changes to the recommendations were as follows:

- 1) remains the same
- 2) remains the same
- 3) remains the same
- 4) to change the word 'open' to 'green', and to add a note about holding a Special meeting, so that the entire recommendation read: "In order to ensure the Council has a preferred option for the long term ownership and management of new green spaces within the southern fringe and north west Cambridge growth areas, agree to make a final decision in accordance with planning application timescales, at a Special Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in between existing Committee cycles if necessary".

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report and amended as above by 6 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation approved the recommendation.

**07/CS/34 Estimated Revenue And Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards And Significant Variances For 2006/07 (Arts and Recreation Portfolio)**

*(See Record of Decision 07/CS/26)*

The Principal Accountant (Services) introduced the report and highlighted that an underspend of £14,000 was forecast, after carry forwards. There was one carry forward request totaling £20,000.

The Committee supported the recommendations set out in the officers' report by 6 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation approved the recommendation.

**07/CS/35 Forward Plan**

There were no non-key decisions listed on the most recently published Forward Plan for consideration at this stage.

Attention was drawn to a letter from Mr Kirkham with questions regarding the Leisurecard (item3, Agenda B A&R). Councillors were encouraged to read the letter.

It was noted that Cllr Hughes and Cllr Hymans would be retiring. Members thanked them for their work and wished them well.

The meeting ended at 5.45pm

**CHAIR**