

CIVIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE16 April 2008
(6.00pm-7.12pm)**PRESENT:** Councillors Blackhurst, Boyce (Chair), Bradnack, Hart, C Rosenstiel (Vice-chair), Ward.**FOR ADOPTION BY THE COUNCIL****08/CIV/13 REVIEW OF THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

The Chief Executive spoke to the report and said that the main thrust was to ensure that the Meadows Estate, Cherry Hinton and the new growth areas were brought within the city boundary. He acknowledged that the North West Cambridge site was a difficult one and that it was advisable to wait on the outcome of the planning process. The Director of Finance was undertaking a costing exercise to assess the financial implications of an application for review of the boundaries. It was important to agree the approach with South Cambridgeshire District Council to facilitate getting the review request to the Boundary Committee of the Electoral Commission as soon as possible.

Councillor Hart proposed an amendment from the Labour Group seconded by Councillor Bradnack:

“Add Recommendation 2.2

The Council requests officers to bring forward proposals for pursuing a further review which might enable an authority based around Cambridge with enlarged geographical boundaries to achieve unitary status.”

On a show of hands the amendment was lost by 4 votes to 2.

The recommendation to Council was approved unanimously.

Council is recommended –

To authorise the submission of a request for a review of the administrative boundary between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District on the basis of the proposals outlined in the report considered at Civic Affairs.

08/CIV/14 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2008/09 SCHEME AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR INDEPENDENT PANEL 2009/10 (Report of the Independent Panel included in the Council agenda)

The Democratic Services Manager introduced the report. Under recommendation 2.4, the Committee noted that there was now only one vacancy on the Panel to be replaced. With regard to the Preparation for the Panel, the Democratic Services Manager suggested that the Chair and Spokes agree subsequently what parts of the Panel's

meetings be held in public and what should be in private. Early discussions with members about the diary exercise were also desirable. The matter of how broadband provision was covered in allowances should also be addressed by the Panel. The Committee noted that a national scheme for allowances was under consideration by the Government.

The Chair said that a member had asked questions which could not be answered at Council in December. It was important that members had an opportunity to scrutinise the work of the Independent Panel to ensure that the evidence supporting the recommendations was transparent. He suggested that, in the coming year, the meetings of the Panel should be open except when they needed to discuss things in private.

Several members spoke about broadband provision about which there were different views on how this be funded.

The Director of Customer & Democratic Services said that this issue could be considered in the review of the services provided by Democratic Services to see if this could be addressed.

Council is recommended –

To agree

- 1) That the Basic Allowance calculation for the Municipal Year May 2008 to May 2009 remains as before: the equivalent of 10 hours per week (52 weeks per year) at the hourly rate set at the national minimum wage (£5.52 at October 2007), amounting to £2,870. The Panel recognises the budget constraints and recommends a figure of £2,782 be used for the year 2007-08.'
- 2) That the Allowances Scheme be adopted as set out in appendix 1 and that groups continue to provide evidence to produce a more accurate picture on which to base allowance allocation.
- 3) To note that the Panel had included a recommendation on the new Joint Development Control Committee at the same level as that for Planning Committee Chair and Members. It was noted that Members of the Joint Development Control Committee had been appointed in July in the current year and there was an expectation that the allowance was applicable pro rata during 2007/08.

The Panel also noted that the Council was in negotiation about a Joint Planning Policy Committee with the County and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, but as there was no indication as yet of its frequency of meetings and other details, had deferred consideration of the level of allowance.

- 4) That travel and subsistence rates should remain set at the rates set for officers and be up rated when officer rates are increased.
- 5) That the co-optees' allowance be set at the Minimum Wage and take into

account the increase in Minimum Wage in October 2008 or any other statutory increase.

- 6) That no annual adjustments of allowance levels by reference to an index. The Panel remains of the view that it should continue to meet at least annually to make recommendations to the Council.
- 7) That the Council should not agree to an entitlement to a pension for any member under its Allowances Scheme.
- 8) Childcare rates to remain at £7 per hour. Dependent Carer Allowance rates to remain unchanged. (Payable for instances also as in 8)
- 9) That childcare/dependent, travel and subsistence allowances are payable for invitations from all official bodies.