

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING24 April 2008
6.00pm – 10.50pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Bailey), Councillors Baker, Benstead, Blackhurst, Blair, Blencowe, Boyce, Bradnack, Dixon, Downham, Dryden, Durrant, Hart, Herbert, Holness, James, Kightley, Levy, Lynn, McPherson, Newbold, Nimmo-Smith, Pitt, Reid, Rosenstiel C, Rosenstiel J, Sadiq, Sanders, Shah, Slatter, Smart, Smith, Stuart, Taylor, Upstone, Walker, Ward and Zmura

For the Information of the Council**08/20 MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 21 FEBRUARY 2008**

The minutes of the meeting on 21 February 2008 were signed as a correct record.

08/21 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Armstrong, Cantrill, Ellis-Miller and Holland.

2. REACH FAIR

Members were reminded that the annual proclamation of Reach Fair would take place on Bank Holiday Monday, 5th May, 2008 and members had received notification of this. Any member intending to come along, who had not yet responded was asked to let Sue Edwards know as soon as possible.

George Spindles had newly minted pennies on sale during the coffee break at the meeting.

3. CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The Mayor said that she and Councillors Louise Downham, Marie-Louise Holland, Philippa Slatter and Joye Rosenstiel had decided not to stand in the forthcoming City Council elections. Together their service to the Council totalled 54 years. The Mayor thanked Councillor Downham for the five years she had very conscientiously worked on behalf of the people of King's Hedges; Councillor Holland for her representation of Castle Ward and her service to the City as Mayoress in 2005/06 and Councillor Slatter for her 13 years representing the people of Trumpington and her year of Mayoralty in 2002/03. The Mayor paid special tribute to Councillor Joye Rosenstiel for the 26 years she had worked as a city councillor and her year in office as Mayor in 1994/95.

Councillor Smart thanked the Mayor for her contribution to the work of the Council during her six years as a councillor.

4. TICKETS FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Members noted that they would shortly receive notification of the opportunity to apply for guest tickets to attend the Annual Meeting of the Council. Each councillor was entitled to bring one guest who would be allocated a seat around the perimeter of the Chamber. Members were asked to let Members' Services know as soon as possible so that seating arrangements might be organised.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Reid declared a personal interest in relation to the item on the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan as her husband worked part-time for the University. Councillors Pitt and Holness subsequently declared interests in the item on the North West Area Action Plan, as Councillor Pitt's wife and Councillor Holness work for the University. Councillors Reid and Durrant subsequently declared interests in Motion A, Plastic Bags. Councillor Reid was associated with a grant application to the Council to fund the provision on cotton bags as an alternative to plastic. Councillor Durrant had links with the Cambridge Reuse and Recycling Network and had links with supermarkets through his role as a Director of the Cambridge Food Bank.

Members were reminded that they could declare interests at anytime during the meeting if an issue occurred to them during the debates.

08/22 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr John Marais spoke on the concern expressed by residents of Colville Road and Augurs Road bungalows who had been sent a letter by the Council which led them to believe that the Council was proposing to demolish their homes. He referred to a petition with more than 900 signatures collected by the residents in support of their position.

Councillor Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing, acknowledged that a mistake had been made by staff. The letter did not reflect the Council's intentions and there were no proposals at any stage of preparation for the demolition of the dwellings. She reminded members that this issue had been discussed at the last Council meeting and at the Housing Management Board and the minutes of that meeting also referred to the Council's need to consult their tenants in the event of any similar proposal.

Mr Marais then presented the petition to Cllr Smart.

08/23 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE FOR ADOPTION:**General Fund - 2007/08 Estimated Revenue and Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards and Significant Variances Overview. (The Leader)**

(The following amended recommendation had been circulated prior to the meeting as there had been an error in the text.)

“Paragraph 3 on page 1 of 101 to read (changes highlighted in bold):

The latest approved capital budget for all portfolios totaled £28,238,000. Actual expenditure on capital schemes and programmes during 2007/08 was expected to be £20,866,000 (£11,491,000 plus £9,375,000 as per Appendix D of the report to Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee) giving an overall under-spend of £7,372,000. This underspend was mainly due to slippage and Council approval would be sought in June to rephrase the required capital resources from 2007/08 into 2008/09, when the final position was known.”

Resolved (by 23 votes to 0)

1. To note that the Leader agreed to the transfer of £23,000 from the Arts & Recreation portfolio to the Climate Change & Growth portfolio budgets in respect of the legal fees associated with the Quayside/Punting dispute. The funding for these costs was included as part of a £47,000 Revised Budget bid, approved at the 17 January committee meeting and reflected in the officers' report.
2. To note that the Leader approved the removal of Capital Scheme SC217 – Nuns Way – Safer Routes' as this has been completed with external funding and this scheme can therefore be cancelled and funding be made available for other capital projects.
3. To agree the provisional carry forward requests identified in the March committee cycle, totaling £506,120 as detailed in Appendix C of the report, subject to the final outturn position.
4. To delegate to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Leader, Chair and spokesperson of Strategy Scrutiny Committee, authority to approve variations to the provisional carry forward requests and approve any new carry forwards into 2008/09 which may be raised in the July cycle of Scrutiny meetings, having regard to the final outturn position.

North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth)

Resolved (unanimously) to agree the Draft North West Cambridge Area Action Plan and supporting documents for submission to the Secretary of State.

08/24 TO CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES FOR ADOPTION:

Civic Affairs (16 April)

08/CIV/08 Review of the Boundary between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council

Councillor Durrant proposed the following amendment seconded by Councillor Herbert

“Add an additional recommendation:

- 2.2 The Council requests officers to bring forward proposals for a wider boundary review to enable an authority based around Cambridge to achieve unitary status.”

On a show of hands the amendment was lost by 23 votes to 11.

Resolved (unanimously) 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/09 Members Allowances Scheme 2008/09

Resolved (by 28 votes to 0)

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.

08/25 ORAL QUESTIONS

1. From Councillor Herbert to the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation

Who took the decisions on 2008 folk festival ticket allocation for Cambridge residents and related security measures, where are these decisions recorded, and can all Councillors be sent a copy?

2. From Councillor Herbert to the Executive Councillor for Housing

After savings made to the Housing Budget to stop all Council owned footpaths from being annually inspected, could you please explain the recommendation to expect a Housing Officer to do a surveyors/technical officers job which is not in their Job description? As we are now a month overdue for the annual footpath Inspections how does the leading party intend to inspect these footpaths?

3. From Councillor Durrant to Leader, Councillor Nimmo-Smith on behalf of the Executive Councillor for Customer Services & Resources

When will the Council commit resources to the refurbishment of the Market Square?

4. From Councillor Bradnack to Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation, the Leader, Councillor Nimmo-Smith responded as the issue had been within more than one Executive Councillor's portfolio.

Does the Executive Councillor believe that the Council has fully and properly met its obligations in securing delivery of the Section 106 agreement to provide open space on Ravensworth Gardens?

5. From Councillor Newbold to the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation

Does Executive Councillor accept that queuing is the most-fair way of allocating tickets to genuine Festival-goers, especially those based in and around Cambridge? If so, why are this year's Box Office tickets (by queuing) for Cambridge Residents limited to 250 pairs only?

6. From Councillor James to the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

Does the Executive Councillor have any comments to make on the announcement by the Culture Secretary, Andy Burnham MP, that he is refusing to consider legislation against ticket touts? In particular, what implications does this have for plans to prevent the unacceptable touting of Folk Festival city resident discount tickets that has occurred in recent years?

7. From Councillor Herbert to the Leader

Can he provide details of the contractor's name and the approximate financial value for the largest contract in the last 5 years between the Council and any of the firms listed by the Office of Fair Trading as being involved in recent and prevalent contract rigging?

08/26 MOTION A: PLASTIC BAGS

Councillor Newbold moved and Councillor Lynn seconded the following motion:

More than 13 billion plastic bags are used in the UK every year, accounting for a fifth of all plastic packaging used. This equates to each individual in Britain using

on average 150 bags per year. All 33 authorities in the London Council Group have voted for legislation to be passed banning shops from handing out free plastic bags.

London councils have found overwhelming public support and a survey by the Market Research Bureau showed that if supermarkets stopped supplying free plastic bags, 14% of respondents said they would be prepared to pay £2 or more for a re-usable woven shopping bag that would last for up to a year, 64% said they would pay between 50p and £1, while 11% thought that 20p was a fair price.

Plastic bags are one of the most visible symbols of environmental waste.

The City Council supports moves by city retailers to only issue carrier bags that are designed to be reusable, and welcomes all initiatives that will end the free issue of plastic carrier bags in Cambridge. This could include an initiative to hand out reusable bags for life to Cambridge City Residents in a campaign to raise awareness and make a real impact on reducing the use of plastic bags in our city.

The Council asks the Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services to oversee the development of proposals for a citywide campaign to help retailers switch to reusable bags, including writing to and meeting with retailers, our major city shopping centres, local shopping centres, and local retail federation representatives.

Under paragraph 13.8 of the Council Procedure Rules it was agreed to deal with the motion at the meeting.

Councillor C Rosenstiel proposed and Councillor Ward seconded the amendment to read as follows:

Reword the last paragraph by inserting the words underlined:

The Council notes the Council's long standing campaigns to provide shoppers with long-lasting cloth bags and asks the Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services to oversee the development of proposals for a citywide campaign to help retailers switch to reuseable bags, including writing to and meeting with retailers, our major city shopping centres, local shopping centres, and local retail federation representatives. This work shall also extend to the LGA to help national chains to switch to reuseable bags and to the Government to reduce packaging in general.

On a show of hands the amendment was approved unanimously.

Resolved (unanimously) More than 13 billion plastic bags are used in the UK every year, accounting for a fifth of all plastic packaging used. This equates to

each individual in Britain using on average 150 bags per year. All 33 authorities in the London Council Group have voted for legislation to be passed banning shops from handing out free plastic bags.

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The Council notes the Council's long standing campaigns to provide shoppers with long-lasting cloth bags and asks the Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services to oversee the development of proposals for a citywide campaign to help retailers switch to reuseable bags, including writing to and meeting with retailers, our major city shopping centres, local shopping centres, and local retail federation representatives. This work shall also extend to the LGA to help national chains to switch to reuseable bags and to the Government to reduce packaging in general.

08/27 MOTION B: AFFORDABLE HOMES IN CAMBRIDGE

Councillor Herbert moved and Councillor Blencowe seconded the following motion:

This Council requests the Executive member for Housing to bring before it a strategy which sets out options for increasing the delivery of affordable homes in Cambridge, in a form which reflects the 'key priority' status which the Council gives to this issue, including specific proposals to:

- increase provision of affordable homes on land within the control of the public sector;
- identify additional sites for the development of affordable homes;
- retain at least existing levels of council homes;
- make better use of Right to Buy and other capital receipts, such as commuted sums from private development, to enable more

- affordable homes to be made available in the city of Cambridge;
- generate partnerships with developers and housing associations, but in which the Council retains a clear stake;
 - hear and respond to the housing needs and concerns of older people.

Under paragraph 13.8 of the Council Procedure Rules it was agreed to deal with the motion at the meeting

Councillor Smart proposed the following amendment seconded by Councillor James

“ This Council notes that the Executive Councillor for Housing, within the last committee cycle, accepted the Housing Strategy, as amended by the Community Services Committee, which renewed the commitment to increase the supply of affordable housing.

It further notes that (i) an audit of housing land was completed in 2005 (ii) a further audit of land held by other sections of the Council will be underway shortly and (iii) discussions are underway with the County Council about the disposal/use of land by them in the City.

It further notes that a survey of the housing needs of older people is already underway and is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

It further notes that the ground-breaking partnership with Cambridge Partnerships will bring 40% affordable housing on the urban extensions and that partnerships with Hundred Houses and with Cambridge Housing Society will bring greatly improved living conditions for older people on sites at Elmfield and Simon’s House.

However, it further notes that the entire housing capital programme has been thrown into doubt by the unexpected rise in the amount of negative subsidy to over £11.8million demanded by the government to be taken from the tenants of Cambridge to be spent elsewhere in the country and that a new capital strategy will come to the November committee cycle for scrutiny and decision by the Executive Councillor.

The Council calls on all members (i) to publicly condemn and campaign against the removal of money from Cambridge from right to buy receipts and through the negative subsidy system for use elsewhere and (ii) confirm the long-standing convention of this Council that money generated from housing or housing assets is used only in housing.

On a show of hands the amendment was approved in two parts as follows:

All to the last paragraph and then “The Council calls on all members (i) to

publicly condemn and campaign against the removal of money from Cambridge from right to buy receipts and through the negative subsidy system for use elsewhere (by 21 votes to 11).”

All to the last paragraph and then “The Council calls on all members to (ii) confirm the long-standing convention of this Council that money generated from housing or housing assets is used only in housing (unanimously).”

Resolved (by 21 votes to 0) This Council notes that the Executive Councillor for Housing, within the last committee cycle, accepted the Housing Strategy, as amended by the Community Services Committee, which renewed the commitment to increase the supply of affordable housing.

It further notes that (i) an audit of housing land was completed in 2005 (ii) a further audit of land held by other sections of the Council will be underway shortly and (iii) discussions are underway with the County Council about the disposal/use of land by them in the City.

It further notes that a survey of the housing needs of older people is already underway and is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

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The Council calls on all members (i) to publicly condemn and campaign against the removal of money from Cambridge from right to buy receipts and through the negative subsidy system for use elsewhere and (ii) confirm the long-standing convention of this Council that money generated from housing or housing assets is used only in housing.

08/28 MOTION C: HANLEY GRANGE

Councillor Nimmo-Smith moved and Councillor Reid seconded the following motion:

The Council resolves to brief MPs and parliamentary spokespersons for constituencies covering Cambridge on the current status of the Area Action

Plans for urban growth sites on the fringes of the city, including Cambridge East.

The Council recognises that, if successful, the Hanley Grange proposals would be intended by the Government to deliver yet further growth over and above (a) that agreed in the Cambridge East Area Action Plan, the Cambridge 2006 Local Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), and (b) the additional growth that Government is considering following its examination of the RSS. It recognises that this 'eco town' would not be a substitute for any of the growth already planned and agreed for the sub-region.

The Council therefore further resolves to advise MPs and parliamentary spokespersons for constituencies covering Cambridge of these and related facts, and to urge them to join the City Council in objecting to the 'Hanley Grange' proposals which fail sustainability criteria for reasons including negative transport impacts and lack of local employment opportunities.

Under paragraph 13.8 of the Council Procedure Rules it was agreed to deal with the motion at the meeting.

Councillor Bradnack proposed the following amendment seconded by Councillor Blencowe (changes in strikethrough and underlined):

The Council resolves to brief MPs and parliamentary spokespersons for constituencies covering Cambridge on the current status of the Area Action Plans for urban growth sites on the fringes of the city, including Cambridge East.

The Council recognises that, if successful, the Hanley Grange proposals ~~would be intended by the Government to deliver yet further growth over and above~~ (a) that agreed in the Cambridge East Area Action Plan, the Cambridge 2006 Local Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), and (b) the additional growth that Government is considering following its examination of the RSS. But it ~~It~~ also recognises that this or any other 'eco town' ~~would not~~ could be a substitute for any of the growth already planned and agreed for the sub-region. It also

The Council recognizes the need for the level of growth which the Local Plan and Regional Spatial Strategy propose and the affordable housing which Cambridge desperately needs, but that these may plans not deliver all of what they propose, as evidenced by the updated position in respect of proposed development in the north east of Cambridge. It further recognizes that proposed transport proposals for development on Marshall's airport would damage precious green and open spaces like Coldham's and Stourbridge Commons in ways which this council would find unacceptable.

It therefore resolves

~~therefore further resolves~~ to advise MPs and parliamentary spokespersons for constituencies covering Cambridge of these and related facts, and to urge them to join the City Council in objecting to the 'Hanley Grange' proposals which may fail sustainability criteria for reasons including negative transport impacts and lack of local employment opportunities or rail access to Cambridge, and to request them to support the Council's view that existing major growth proposals and any new proposals should be equally subject to mini-reviews as suggested in paras 6 and 7* of page 31 of the Housing Green paper, or to some other form of Public Inquiry which can test their relative sustainability and deliverability.

On a show of hands the amendment was lost by 19 votes to 10.

08/29 DURATION OF THE MEETING

Resolved at 10.30pm under Council Procedure Rule 10.1 that the meeting not be adjourned.

08/28 MOTION C CONTINUED

Resolved (by 19 votes to 10) That the Council brief MPs and parliamentary spokespersons for constituencies covering Cambridge on the current status of the Area Action Plans for urban growth sites on the fringes of the city, including Cambridge East.

The Council recognises that, if successful, the Hanley Grange proposals would be intended by the Government to deliver yet further growth over and above (a) that agreed in the Cambridge East Area Action Plan, the Cambridge 2006 Local Plan and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), and (b) the additional growth that Government is considering following its examination of the RSS. It recognises that this 'eco town' would not be a substitute for any of the growth already planned and agreed for the sub-region.

The Council therefore further resolves to advise MPs and parliamentary spokespersons for constituencies covering Cambridge of these and related facts, and to urge them to join the City Council in objecting to the 'Hanley Grange' proposals which fail sustainability criteria for reasons including negative transport impacts and lack of local employment opportunities.

08/29 RECORDS OF DECISIONS MADE BY MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

The Council received the records of decisions made by Executive Councillors as set out in the agenda and tabled at the meeting.

08/30 WRITTEN QUESTIONS/ INFORMATION MINUTES

Members noted the written questions and answers circulated around the Chamber and received the minutes of committees which were for information.

The Council concluded its business at 10.50pm

MAYOR