

**Executive Councillor Records of Decision and
Environment Scrutiny Committee Minutes
6th October 2009 - 1 -**

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and Environment Scrutiny Committee Minutes**

6th October 2009 09.30 – 12.35

PRESENT:

Executive Councillors:

Executive Councillor Reid (Climate Change & Growth)
Executive Councillor Pitt (Environmental & Waste Services)

Scrutiny Committee:

Councillors Baker, Herbert, Kightley, Newbold, Shah, Upstone, Ward
(Chair), Wright and Zmura.

Also present for consideration of item 7 and 9: Alex Plant Chief
Executive of Cambridgeshire Horizons and Graham Hughes Director
of Growth and Infrastructure, Cambridgeshire County Council.

09/ENV/54 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 23 June 2009 were approved and
signed as a correct record.

09/ENV/55 **Apologies for Absence**

None

09/ENV/56 **Declarations of Interest**

None

09/ENV/57 **Public Questions**

Mr Taylor asked why blue bins were sorted at Peterborough, why this Committee had not consider the issue, and whether contract details (including clauses) would be available in the public domain.

Cllr Pitt answered that Cambridge City Council had entered into a joint procurement process with other local authorities. The end processing site (eg Peterborough) could not be specified without inhibiting the tendering process. Due to commercial sensitivity, not all contract details can be published in the public domain, but as much as possible will be made available in future. Cllr Pitt confirmed that Officers followed a robust process when selecting the contractor.

09/ENV/58 Change to Agenda

Under paragraph 4.2.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Chair used his discretion to alter the order of business. However, for ease of the reader, these minutes will follow the order of the agenda.

09/ENV/59 Revised Waste And Recycling Policies and Procedures for New Dry Recycling Scheme (Key Decision - Agenda Item 5)

Matter for Decision: Approval of the amended policy document: Household Waste and Recycling Policy Amended for Blue Bin Scheme - 2009 (Appendix 1 of the report). The new policy document will take effect from 1st November 2009, even though the change to blue bins does not take effect until 16th November 2009.

Decision of Exec Cllr for Environmental and Waste Services:

Agreed:

1. The amended policy document: Household Waste and Recycling Policy Amended for Blue Bin Scheme - 2009 (Appendix 1 of the report) subject to the additional clause discussed below.
2. The new policy document to take effect from 1st November 2009, even though the change to blue bins does not take effect until 16th November 2009.

Reason for the Decision:

1. On 5th July 2005 the Executive Councillor approved the Policies and Procedures for the move to Alternate Week Collections. This document now needs to be revised in order to include changes to the dry recycling services that will be taking place in November 2009.
2. On 13th January 2009 the Executive Councillor approved the move to a commingled collection of dry recycling with new blue bins being rolled out to the majority of residents across the city.
3. This system will enable all dry recycling to be placed in one bin, which will be put out for collection by residents on the same day as the green bin. Collection days will not change. The material will then be taken via a transfer station to a sorting facility to be sorted into the different recycling stream ready for onward transportation to reprocessors to be made into new products.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: Cllr Herbert asked for confirmation that residents would be offered a real choice about retaining the old box style collections if that is more convenient. Exec Cllr for Environmental and Waste Services responded that, initially this will be a real choice. However, if rounds become economically unviable at a future date this may have to be reviewed. Members discussed the incentive provided to thieves by charging for replacement bins. The Head of Waste and Fleet explained that the charge has to cover both the replacement bin and the deliver. It was agreed that the policy would be amended to insert the following at the end of paragraph 7.2: *The cost of a black 240 litre bin is £50.00. The cost of a black 140 litre bin is £ 25.00. On occasion residents may be able to receive a reconditioned 240 litre black bin for £25.00 but this is subject to availability.*

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

N/A

09/ENV/60 **Highway Verge Parking in Cambridge** (*Non Key Decision - Agenda Item 6*)

Matter for Decision: Many highway verges within the city suffer erosion caused by parked vehicles. The simple introduction of parking restrictions would address this issue, but in many areas this would cause problems with parking supply as verges have historically formed part of the parking supply. However, this puts added pressure on maintenance budgets for addressing rutted surfaces and leads to the general degradation of street scene quality.

A byelaw to prohibit verge parking was introduced on Mowbray Road and Fendon Road in 2006 to address the problem and, whilst this has led to a marked improvement in the quality of verge areas, it has not come without its own issues.

The County Council are currently carrying out a review of the major road network in the City, the results of which will be used to inform the future of verge parking from a Highway Authority perspective.

**Decision of Exec Cllr for Environmental and Waste Services:
Agreed**

1. To await the results of the County Council review of the major road network in the City and associated AJC report before proceeding with a preferred option for those roads.
2. To invite Area Committees submit proposals for selected streets for consideration from a City Council perspective.
3. To agree the criteria by which these streets are identified.
4. To invite Area Committees to take selected streets forward with the allocation of funds for any environmental improvements that may result.

Reason for the Decision: As detailed in the report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

As detailed in the report.

Scrutiny Considerations: Councillors discussed the impact of the County Council review of the major road network in the City, specifically if the City Council could undertake work before results of the County Council review are known.

Councillors acknowledged the difficulty in enforcing byelaws, but concluded that some actions should be undertaken to protect verges, such as implementing double yellow lines. It was felt that higher density housing occupancy and car ownership led to greater on-verge parking. Officers had suggested various remedial options to Councillors, but Councillors will have to engage the community in order to facilitate changes in behaviour. Area Committees could be an initial focus for action by identifying local priorities.

The Director of Environment and Planning observed the need to co-ordinate County and City Council activity in bite-sized chunks. Officers will respond to priorities identified by Area Committees. He is willing to facilitate a meeting between County and City Council representatives plus Area Committee Chairs.

Cllr Upstone suggested that Councillors could write to Stagecoach about Park&Ride facilities, particularly on football match days. It was acknowledged work was on-going in this area. Any correspondence would have to be co-ordinated with other City Council actions.

Members were concerned about the delays and inaction that would result from waiting for the County Council to complete their survey on arterial roads before any action could be taken on inner city road. Cllr Herbert was concerned that the report did not detail which street were being looked at.

Members felt that consideration of allocated on street parking spaces for car club vehicles should also be a feature of verge parking discussions.

Exec Cllr for Environmental and Waste Services thanks the committee for the quality of the debate and the suggestions made. He felt that Area Committees were the correct place to identify problem areas. He suggested that a workshop would be helpful. Residents would need to support the proposals and could be encouraged to adopt verges.

Cllr Kightley proposed the following amendment to the recommendations (delete words scored through and insert words in italics):

1. To await the results of the County Council review of the major road network in the City and associated AJC report before proceeding with a preferred option *for those road*.
2. ~~To commission initial investigations by Area Committees into the most appropriate~~ *To invite Area Committees submit proposals for selected* streets for consideration from a City Council perspective.
3. To agree the criteria by which these streets are identified.
4. To ~~request that~~ *invite* Area Committees *to* take selected streets forward with the allocation of funds for any environmental improvements that may result.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the amendment by 6 votes to 0.

Cllr Herbert tabled a further amendment:

That a citywide street survey is undertaken by the city and county councils to identify:

- a) severely damaged verges and junctions
- b) moderately damaged verges
- c) verges in good condition.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and rejected the amendment by 6 votes to 2.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the amended recommendations unanimously.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

N/A

09/ENV/61

Tax Increment Financing Proposal: “Project Cambridge, Connecting the Station to the City Centre”

(Non Key Decision - Agenda Item 7)

Matter for Decision:

1. The County Council, together with Cambridgeshire Horizons, has recently registered interest in the Tax Increment Financing Pilot as outlined by the Government in May 2009. The local project for which the pilot is seeking support deals with improvements to connect Cambridge Station to the city centre through various improvements to existing transport infrastructure and the public realm. The total value of the project, in the form of a loan to be repaid via increases in business rates, is £25 million.
2. The report briefly sets out the rationale for the project and provides the detailed proposals for “Project Cambridge, Connecting the Station to the City Centre” in a prospectus (attached) which, subject to endorsement, will be forwarded to the government in order to help support the current bid to become a Tax Increment Financing Pilot. Officers are also seeking the Executive Councillors’ authority to prepare a more detailed improvement scheme in the event the Tax Increment Finance bid is supported by government.

Decision of Exec Cllr for Climate Change & Growth:

Agreed:

1. To endorse the report and prospectus regarding the Tax Increment Financing proposal “Project Cambridge, Connecting the Station to the City Centre”.
2. To authorise officers to assist in preparing more detailed proposals in the event Cambridgeshire County Council’s bid to the Tax Increment Financing Pilot is successful.

Reason for the Decision: It is widely recognized that the link between the rail station, Hills Road and the city centre is sub-standard.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:
N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: The Committee were interested to know if the project met Government criteria and if it addressed the potential conflict of needs between traffic and pedestrians. The Director of Environment and Planning answered that Project Cambridge underpins the success of the sub-region and will improve the quality and economy of the Cambridge area. Project Cambridge is one of one hundred and twenty bids made to Government, and it will be known in November if the bid will be progressing to the next stage.

Alex Plant added that Project Cambridge had received positive messages from Government. It will lead to better connectivity and public realm in Cambridge. The project also has good green credentials as it addresses traffic issues. Alex Plant added that no other work will occur if the project does not go ahead. Project Cambridge will enable Cambridge to keep some revenues from business rates that would otherwise go to Government. This will benefit the City and surrounding area and possibly allow it to act as a role model for others.

Cllr Herbert asked if Project Cambridge would lead to a bridge directly between Cambridge Leisure and the Railway Station? This could occur in future, it had previously been discounted on health and safety grounds when Cambridge Leisure was built. Members also asked how shops would be services if Hills Road is narrowed for traffic Drop-off zones will be discussed with the County Council.

The Chair asked for more information on the finance arrangement and the potential risk to Cambridge City Council. Alex plant confirmed that the upfront borrowing requirements would be the responsibility of the County. Based on the America experience of similar finance

arrangements, projected increases business rate revenue would be conservative and would not result in a shortfall.

Councillors expressed interest in other projects coming forward. The Director of Environment and Planning answered these would be brought forward as appropriate as part of the bid process. Alex Plant added that a full list of projects Cambridgeshire Horizons is involved in is available on its website.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report unanimously.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

N/A

09/ENV/62

**Adoption of the North West Cambridge Area
Action Plan (AAP) (*Key Decision - Agenda Item 8*)**

Matter for Decision:

1. The North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (AAP) was subject to an independent public Examination between November 2008 and June 2009. The Inspectors' Report was received on the 24th August 2009. The AAP has been found to be 'sound' and the City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council should adopt it subject to a number of binding changes (as detailed below). The Inspectors' Report is included in Appendix 1 of this report. The AAP sets out policies and allocates land for development for predominantly Cambridge University-related uses. Any land not required for development by 2016 will be safeguarded for the period post-2016 to meet the longer term development needs of the University. The AAP for Adoption amended in line with the Inspectors' binding changes, is included in Appendix 2 of this report. On its adoption, the AAP will replace policies contained within the Cambridge Local Plan 2006. There are no corresponding policies in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.

2. It is necessary for both Councils to formally adopt the AAP. South Cambridgeshire District Council considered the matter at its Council meeting on 24th September. Subject to that meeting resolving to adopt the AAP, it will be for this Council to also decide to adopt the AAP, on the recommendation of the Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth. Council will be recommended to adopt the AAP on the 22nd October 2009.

Decision of Exec Cllr for Climate Change & Growth:

Agreed:

1. To recommend that Council adopt the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan.
2. To recommend that Council adopt the revised North West Cambridge Inset Proposals Map.

Reason for the Decision: The Inspectors have concluded that the University's need for the land to be released from the Green Belt for development is a very weighty consideration, and that in order to justify land release specific wording should be included in the Area Action Plan. The Inspectors have recognised that the need for affordable key worker housing for the University is both immediate and urgent, while the need for academic and research uses is longer term but of great significance in view of the University's educational and economic importance to both the Cambridge and UK economy.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

N/A

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee were mindful that the bid should bring benefits to the City as well as the University, such as affordable housing and reductions in CO2 emissions. The Cambridge Transport Strategy is currently under review. Councillors did not want to induce more traffic to the area, so additional Park&Ride facilities maybe an option. The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the amended recommendations in the report unanimously.

Cllr Kightley expressed disappointment that the larger footprint of the site had not produced the open spaces initially envisaged. Cllr Herbert asked for an assurance that the key worker housing allocation would be monitored. The Head of Policy and Projects confirmed that the key worker housing would only be available to staff who cannot meet their reasonable housing needs on the open market, be affordable to those staff, be available long term, and that its provision would be controlled by a legal s106 agreement.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

N/A

09/ENV/63 **LAA Performance Report 2009/09: Managing Growth Partnership (Cambridgeshire Horizons)**
(Non Key Decision - Agenda Item 9)

Matter for Decision:

1. To consider the 2008/09 year-end performance against the LAA indicators that have been assigned to the Managing Growth Partnership
2. To advise the Leader of the Council of any issues or suggestions for further action that the partnership should consider to improve future performance against the indicators.

**Decision of Exec Cllr for Environmental and Waste Services:
Agreed**

1. The 2008/09 year-end performance against the LAA indicators that have been assigned to the Managing Growth Partnership
2. To advise the Leader of the Council of any issues or suggestions for further action that the partnership should consider to improve future performance against the indicators.

Reason for the Decision:

1. The City Council is a key partner in Cambridgeshire Together that has overall responsibility for negotiating the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Cambridgeshire and making sure it is delivered.

2. Cambridgeshire Together has delegated responsibility for delivery of targets within the LAA to seven thematic strategic partnerships.
3. An Executive Councillor from the City Council sits on Cambridgeshire Together and each of the thematic strategic partnerships. They will present an annual report on performance against their partnership's LAA targets to the relevant City Council Scrutiny Committee.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: Cllr Newbold asked for an update from Horizons on what has been delivered. Alex plant outlined the project management and partnership facilitation role of the agency and successes that have been achieved in difficult economic times. We are currently a third of the way through the Regional Spatial Strategy target period. Housing delivery in Cambridge has slowed, but not completely stopped during the recession. Cambridgeshire Horizons is trying to bring together partners to deliver sustainable growth. They are looking at alternative modes of funding at present as S106 is affected by the downturn. Cambridgeshire Horizons will try to work with local/regional representatives of national agencies to join up agendas and resources.

Alex Plant thanked the committee for the opportunity to discuss this item in a public arena.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations. No vote was taken.

The Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

N/A

Comment:

Please note the following corrections to the text of the report:
Appendix P11 paragraph 10 "5,000 jobs" should read as "50,000 jobs".

Appendix P11 paragraph 10 "£3.7 million" should read as "£3.7 billion".

09/ENV/64 Customer Access Strategy – Tranche 5 Services Restructure *(Non Key Decision - Agenda Item 10)*

Matter for Decision: To seek member feedback on the principal issues around proposals for the restructuring of existing planning related services.

Decision of Exec Cllr for Climate Change & Growth: Agreed that the Director of Environment and Planning take forward and complete the restructure of planning services in line with the principles set out in the attached report following full consultation with staff and the unions and that the final arrangements for customer transactions in relation to development control are brought forward in consultation with the Chair of Environment Scrutiny Committee, the Chair of Planning Committee, the Executive Member and the Opposition Spokesperson.

Reason for the Decision: On 4 July 2006, the City Council approved a comprehensive Customer Access Strategy for the organisation to be implemented in six tranches over a three-year period at a total cost of over £3.8m. The objectives of the Strategy were set out as to:

- Encourage and facilitate access for all sections of the community;
- Ensure that at least 80% of customer transactions should be dealt with at first point of contact;
- Enable all services to be offered over the web and this method of delivery to be encouraged;
- Encourage face to face contact with customers only where the service is complex or best delivered in this way; and

- Exploit technology to streamline processes and generate efficiencies.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: Councillors were mindful the intention of restructuring was to improve efficiency. The Customer Service Centre would answer initial queries (generic and site specific), but these could be referred to the Duty Officer or a nominated Planning Officer if more detail is required.

The proposal to separate tree work from conservation work (ref paragraph 4.4 on page 246) on efficiency grounds was queried and alternative staffing structure were discussed. The Director of Environment and Planning will agree the details of this in consultation with Chair of Environment Scrutiny Committee, the Chair of Planning Committee, the Executive Member and the Opposition Spokesperson.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 7 votes to 0.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

N/A

09/ENV/65

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved: that the Public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of information defined as exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

09/ENV/66 **Tender of Out-of-Hours Security Services for
the City Centre Car Parks and Mill road Depot**
(Key Decision - Agenda Item 11)

Matter for Decision: as set out in the officer's confidential report.

Decision of Exec Cllr for Climate Change & Growth: Approved the recommendations as set out in the officer's confidential report.

Reason for the Decision: These are set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted):

N/A

09/ENV/67 **DECISIONS BY EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS**

The Committee noted decisions made by the Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth since the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in March:

- 1 Project appraisal for the procurement of blue bins for new dry recycling scheme. Decision Recorded on 18 June 2009
- 2 Project appraisal – Modified Ventilation Systems – Grand Arcade Annex (Underground) Car Park. Decision Recorded 7 July 2009

The meeting ended at 12:35.