

## **Executive Councillor Records of Decision and Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Minutes**

**17:00 – 20:23**

### **PRESENT:**

#### **Executive Councillors:**

The Leader: Councillor Ian Nimmo-Smith

Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources: Rod Cantrill

#### **Scrutiny Committee:**

Councillors Bick, Blackhurst, Boyce, Dryden, Howell, Herbert, Shah and Ward

### **09/SR/51 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2009 were approved and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record of the meeting.

### **09/SR/52 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Taylor.

### **09/SR/53 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

### **09/SR/54 Public Questions**

Due to the number of registered speakers it was agreed to defer the public speakers until immediately before each relevant item.

### **09/SR/55 Petition**

A petition had been received containing 233 signatures requesting that that the City Council bans the purchase or provision of foie gras on Council owned premises and land, and that the Council discourages the

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sale and consumption of the product elsewhere in the City. The lead petitioner outlined the reasons for requesting the ban.

Members considered the petition and asked questions of the petitioner. Cllr Wright also spoke in support of the item.

The Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources responded to the petition welcoming its contents and explained that it was important to consider the issues raised in light of the outcome of the freedom foods item (09/SR/56).

**09/SR/56            Policy to support the switch to food production that respects animal welfare**  
*(Non-Key Decision - Agenda Item 7)*

**Matter for Decision:** Approval of the draft policy on switching to food production that respects animal welfare.

**Decision of Executive Councillor:**

- Approved the draft policy set out at Appendix 1 of the committee report for implementation on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010.
- Instructed officers to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment of the policy prior to such implementation.
- Instructed the Head of Legal Services to review DEFRA guidance on the legal powers of local authorities to specify food welfare standards against the proposed policy.

**Reason for the Decision:** As set out in the officer's report.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected:** N/A

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

In response to the issues and questions raised by members the Director of Finance confirmed that the initial work programme had been largely completed, and there was limited additional work required to complete the initial project.

Concerns were raised about the amount and value of the Senior Officer time dedicated to this project, and the potential further implications of widening the project to include other food stuffs.

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In response to the issues raised in the petition the Director of Finance agreed to check whether the City Council purchased “foie gras” for any purpose and report back to a future committee.

The Scrutiny Committee considered an amendment that the Executive Councillor is recommended to take no further action, and the motion was lost (2 votes for and 5 against)

The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 and approved them 5 votes to 1.

The Scrutiny Committee considered recommendation 2.4 and did not approve it by 1 vote to 7.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted):** None

**09/SR/57**            **Cambridge Matters Editorial Policy**  
*(Non-Key Decision - Agenda Item 8)*

Mr Paul Harvey addressed the committee outlining his concerns about the production of Cambridge Matters; its financial status; editorial and design policy and its effect on the wider local publishing market. The Leader of the Council responded to the points raised and agreed to investigate the points of dispute.

**Matter for Decision:** Approval of changes to the responsibility for, remit of and editorial policy of Cambridge Matters

**Decision of Executive Councillor:**

- Approved the transfer of responsibility for producing Cambridge Matters to the Leader’s portfolio from that of the Executive Councillor for Environmental Services and Recycling. It was further approved that the budgets and staffing resources would transfer to Corporate Marketing with immediate effect.
- Approved the new editorial policy, role and management arrangements.

**Reason for the Decision:** As set out in the officer’s report.

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**Any alternative options considered and rejected:** N/A

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

Cllr Howell declared a personal interest as an employee of a publishing company.

In response to a number of questions and a request for a deferral, the Head of Strategy and Partnerships outlined the aims and objectives of the wider communications and corporate marketing review. The importance of encouraging public engagement and improving aspects of the publication were noted.

The Scrutiny Committee considered an amendment to defer the item, this was lost by 5 votes to 2.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations by 5 votes to 0.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted):** None

**09/SR/58          CCTV Policy Statement**  
*(Non-Key Decision - Agenda Item 9)*

Mr Richard Taylor addressed the committee prior to the item and raised issues relating to complexity of policies; use of covert cameras; privacy issues associated with use in residential streets; role of operators and the value of the use of some of the cameras. The CCTV Manager and the Leader responded to the points made by the public speaker and agreed to resolve any outstanding issues outside of the meeting.

**Matter for Decision:** Approval of the CCTV policy statement.

**Decision of Executive Councillor:**

- Approved the CCTV policy statement as amended

**Reason for the Decision:** As set out in the officer's report.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected:** N/A

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

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Cllr Dryden declared a personal interest as a magistrate.

In response to the report it was requested that the provisions of 2.3 were enhanced to require formal approval from the Leader for “novel” or “non standard” use of cameras. The Leader accepted the amendment.

In response to a couple of questions on 3<sup>rd</sup> party access and access for other enforcement agencies, the CCTV Manager outlined the rationale behind the existing and proposed policy.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations by 7 votes to 0 subject to the inclusion of provision to require any “novel” or “non standard” use to require approval of the Leader.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted):** None

**09/SR/59 The Council’s Procurement Strategy**  
*(Key Decision - Agenda Item 6)*

Mr Richard Taylor addressed the committee prior to the item raising concerns regarding transparency of procurement activity undertaken by the City Council. The Director of Finance and the Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources responded to the issues raised.

**Matter for Decision:** Approval of the proposed new Procurement Strategy.

**Decision of Executive Councillor:**

- Approved the new Procurement Strategy for the Council for the period October 2009 to March 2012.

**Reason for the Decision:** As set out in the officer’s report.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected:** N/A

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

Cllr Ward declared a personal interest as member of the Folk Festival Inquiry.

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In response to issues that were raised about over specification, the Director of Finance outlined the methods currently being employed to minimise the costs associated with procurement. In response to a question about fraud and malpractice the Director of Finance gave an overview of the processes in place. The Director of Finance also agreed to provide specific feedback to Cllr Howell regarding the procurement of the Teversham House rebuild.

The Director of Finance confirmed that there were mechanisms in place to minimise the risks to the authority in the event of fluctuating inflation rates. The Committee noted that as part of any long-term contract an agreed mechanism for calculating inflation was factored into the process.

The Director of Finance confirmed that the objectives of the policy would be embedded into service plans and cascaded into individual performance management processes. The Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources explained that it was expected that all service areas will include within service plans for 2010/11 any contracts expected to be let.

Clarification was sought on the role of Legal Services. The Committee was advised that the relationship with Legal Services should be a client-customer relationship and that the responsibility for ensuring the correct processes had been followed sat with the service area or manager concerned.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations by 5 votes to 0.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted):** None

**09/SR/60      Annual Equalities Review 2009 and Comprehensive Equalities Programme**  
*(Non-Key Decision - Agenda Item 20)*

**Matter for Decision:** Approval of the Annual Equalities Review and Equalities Action Plan for publication.

**Decision of Executive Councillor:**

- Approved the Annual Equalities Review and Equalities Action Plan for publication subject to the following amendments;
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- The Annual Equalities Review and Equalities Action Plan to be filtered in future years by the Equalities Panel prior to submission to the Scrutiny Committee.
- Monitoring of career progression to be introduced

**Reason for the Decision:** As set out in the officer's report.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected:** N/A

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

Cllr Shah declared a personal interest as a member of the management committee for CINTRA and Cambridge Active Communities Forum.

The Head of Strategy and Partnerships in response to issues raised outlined the support offered to Equalities Champions/Networks; disability access issues and the difficulties of changing the balance of the workforce. The response noted specific difficulties in relation to disability access, however successes around the Customer Access Centre were highlighted. The current support arrangements for furthering equalities work were outlined. The Head of Human Resources also provided an update on the current composition of the workforce.

The importance of effectively working in partnership with other agencies including the County Council was agreed as important to deliver some of the improvements desired.

In response to a question regarding the extremism funding, the Head of Strategy and Partnerships confirmed the nature of the funding and provided a generic overview of the proposed activities.

In response to a question about the validity of using the 2001 census data, the Head of Strategy and Partnership advised that the 2001 data provided the most recent accurate data. The committee noted the limitations of this approach. In response to a related question on recruitment, the Head of Human Resources outlined the methods through which jobs were advertised.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations including the amendments by 5 votes to 0.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted):** None

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**09/SR/61**                    **Single Equalities Scheme 2009-2012** (*Key Decision - Agenda Item 11*)

**Matter for Decision:** Approval of the draft Single Equality Scheme 2009-10.

**Decision of Executive Councillor:**

- Approved the draft Single Equality Scheme 2009-12 for final editing and publication of the Councils website.

**Reason for the Decision:** As set out in the officer's report.

**Any alternative options considered and rejected:** N/A

**Scrutiny Considerations:**

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations by 5 votes to 0.

**Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted):** None

**09/SR/62**                    **DECISIONS BY EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS**

The Committee noted decisions made by the Leader and Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources since the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in June:

- Secure Mobile Virtual Private Network
- Sweeper Vehicle Replacement

The relevant part of the Constitution states:

***“Urgency Action***

*33. Each Chief Officer is authorised to act on behalf of the Executive or the Council (after consultation, if practicable with the relevant Executive Councillor or, in respect of non-executive functions, the relevant Chair or, in either case, the Chief Executive) in relation to matters within his/her area(s) of responsibility in cases of urgency or emergency. Any such*

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*action to be reported as soon as possible to the relevant Executive Councillor and Scrutiny Committee or, for non-executive functions, the relevant committee or sub-committee.”*

The Committee noted the decisions. The Labour Group representatives raised regarding the processes associated with urgent decisions.

**Chair**

**The meeting closed at 8:23pm**

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