

**CABINET MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN on 17 SEPTEMBER 2015 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillor Howard Rolfe – Leader
Councillor Susan Barker – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member
for Environmental Services
Councillor Simon Howell – Cabinet Member for Finance and
Administration
Councillor Julie Redfern – Cabinet Member for Housing and
Economic Development
Councillor Lesley Wells – Cabinet Member for Communities and
Partnerships

Also present: Councillors Geoffrey Sell and John Lodge.

Officers in attendance: John Mitchell (Chief Executive), Maggie Cox
(Democratic Services Officer), Roger Harborough (Director of
Public Services), Angela Knight (Assistant Director – Finance),
Michael Perry (Assistant Chief Executive – Legal) and Adrian
Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services).

CA26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Alan Dean.

CA27 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2015 were received and signed by
the Chairman as a correct record.

CA28 BUSINESS ARISING

i) Minute CA18 - Land clearance at Broxted

Councillor Howell reported that the land clearance had taken place and
thanked the Enforcement Team for their work in resolving this matter.

ii) Minute CA20 – Replacement Essex Waste Local Plan

Council Barker said that the Waste Local Plan had been discussed at the
recent Locality Board meeting, and members had put forward their concerns
about some of the proposed sites.

CA29

REPORTS FROM PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Councillor Sell said the recent Scrutiny Committee meeting had discussed its future work programme. It had decided to concentrate mainly on internal council services and would look at the Enforcement Service for its first area of review.

The Committee had also considered the PAS review of the Local Plan. A report would be submitted to the Cabinet meeting in October.

CA30

2015/16 BUDGET MONITORING

Councillor Howell presented a report on the financial performance for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme and Treasury Management for the first four months of 2015/16 and considered a forecast to the end of the financial year. He drew attention to a suggested amendment to the Capital Programme, that the allocation for the works to the Catons Lane car park, which were not now planned to go ahead, should be put back into the SIF reserve.

He reported that the council had now published its Statement of Accounts for 2014/15 and for the 7th consecutive year had received an unqualified Audit opinion. He thanked the Assistant Director – Finance and her team for their considerable efforts in completing this work.

The cabinet discussed the implications of the provisions in the Housing Bill and the significant affect this might have on the council's housing stock and HRA Business Plan. The council had been lobbying Government in respect of these changes and the Chief Executive was preparing a collective local authority response.

In answer to a question, it was confirmed that Essex Police had decided not to continue with the agreements with local councils to match – fund Police Community Support Officers (PCSO).

In relation to a question about revenue administration, the cabinet was advised of work that was currently taking place around fraud compliance. There would be a quarterly report on the effect on the council tax base.

The Leader explained plans for the future use of the London Road offices now that ECC had vacated the building. There would be vacant accommodation on the ground floor of the offices and it was the council's intention to use this to its best economic advantage.

In relation to discussion about the Audley End cycle path. it was explained that the council had put forward £200k to pump prime the scheme which was to be replenished with S106 monies. However, some shortfall was expected in the short term as some of the anticipated developments had not received planning permission.

The Leader asked for a report to the next meeting on allocations made from the Strategic Initiative Fund Reserve.

RESOLVED

- 1 To approve a report detailing financial performance of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme and Treasury Management.
- 2 To remove Catons Lane Car Park budget of £155,000 from the capital programme and put it back into the Strategic Initiatives Fund Reserve

CA31 CLAVERING PARISH PLAN

The Cabinet received the Clavering Parish Plan. This had been produced by the community and included the history of the parish, the survey responses and a comprehensive action plan.

An area identified in the plan was the shortage of accommodation suitable for the elderly. It was suggested that the council revisit its policy on the provision of this type accommodation. This would be informed by the new SHMA report and what it said about future housing mix.

RESOLVED to adopt the parish plan as council approved guidance in determining planning applications in the Parish and as background evidence in the preparation of the Local Plan.

CA32 QUENDON AND RICKLING VILLAGE PLAN

Members received the Quendon and Rickling Village Plan, which had been endorsed by the parish council. It included the findings of the residents' survey and an action plan.

RESOLVED to adopt the village plan as council approved guidance in determining planning applications in the Parish and as background evidence in the preparation of the Local Plan.

CA33 DESIGNATION OF STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council had submitted an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area. This had been advertised in accordance with the regulations for a period of 6 weeks and no responses had been received. The parish council had agreed an amendment to the original proposal, to amend the boundary to exclude airport operational land.

Councillor Sell reported that the parish council had set up a working group which would be chaired by local residents. He understood that a number of parish councils were currently going through the neighbourhood plan process and said it would be useful if there was a mechanism to enable these councils to share information and best practise. The Director of Public Services said he would facilitate this.

RESOLVED to designate an amended area as outlined on the map appended to this document as the Stansted Mountfitchet Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

CA34 **COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANT SCHEME 2015/16**

The Cabinet noted the list of grants, which had been awarded under the Community Grant Scheme. In future, it was suggested that the Cabinet should ratify this list.

The Cabinet requested a progress report on members' spending of the £3,000 allocation for projects in their ward. Councillor Sell said the members of the North and South Stansted Ward had wished to pool their funds for a project that would benefit the whole of the area, but had been advised that they could only fund projects within their ward area. The Assistant Chief Executive – Legal explained the legal position. Members were asked to provide details of the projects concerned and officers would see whether they could be progressed in an alternative way.

CA35 **CHRISTMAS CAR PARKING**

Councillor Barker presented a report on a proposal to waive parking charges within all District Council managed car parks over the Christmas and New Year period. Interested parties had been consulted on a number of different charges. Some additional/alternative proposals had been made by Great Dunmow Town Team, Saffron Walden Town Team and Saffron Walden Town Council. In coming to the recommendations these comments had been balanced against the objectives of the concession, which was to attract people to the town in quieter periods and support town centre shops and businesses..

RESOLVED that

- 1 To introduce "free after 3pm" on all council-managed car parks EXCEPT Fairycroft/Waitrose from Saturday 7 November 2015 to 23 December 2015 inclusive.
- 2 To introduce free parking on all council-managed car parks EXCEPT Fairycroft/Waitrose from 24 December 2015 to Sunday 4 January 2015 inclusive.

- 3 To introduce free parking all day on Saturday 5 December 2015 at Lower Street car park (to note that the Crafton Green car park will be closed to host the Fayre) due to the Frost Fayre.

CA36 TRANSFER OF PIECE OF LAND AT DUNMOW DEPOT

This item was withdrawn for further consideration.

CA37 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTION GUIDANCE

Councillor Barker reminded members that at its meeting in January 2015, the Cabinet had adopted revised Developer Contributions Guidance, which responded to the Government's change to the national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) to remove the requirement for affordable housing contributions on schemes of under 10 units.

Two councils, through Judicial Review had subsequently challenged the amended national guidance. The process by which the amended paragraphs had been inserted into the PPG had been found unsound and had been quashed.

As a result, the council was now able to collect financial contributions for affordable housing on schemes of under 10 units providing it had the evidence to support this. This would reinstate the council's position prior to January 2015 and the guidance would be amended accordingly.

Members welcomed the report as there was a genuine need for affordable housing in the district and the council had previously been successful in obtaining financial contributions from smaller housing schemes.

RESOLVED To adopt a revised Developer Contributions Guidance, which is in accordance with the updated National Planning Practice Guidance, as a material planning consideration.

CA38 STANSTED AIRPORT ADVISORY PANEL

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor John Lodge to the vacancy on the Stansted Airport Advisory Panel

CA39 CHAIRMAN'S URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman agreed to the consideration of the following items on the grounds of urgency.

i) **Refuge Working Group**

The Council meeting on 16 September 2015 had recommended establishing a working group to oversee the implementation of the Council's policies regarding support for refugees within the Uttlesford area.

RESOLVED

- 1 to establish a Refugee Working Group
 - i) Comprising 5 members (3 Con, 1 LD, 1 RFU).
 - ii) Membership – Councillors Julie Redfern (C), Graham Barker, Marie Felton, Elizabeth Parr and Sharon Morris,
 - iii) Terms of reference - as set out in the report to Council on 16 September 2015

- 2 A report from the working group to be received at each cabinet meeting as a standing item on its agenda for the duration of the emergency.

ii) **Cooperation for Sustainable Development Board**

As part of the Duty to Cooperate work for the Local Plan the Council held frequent meetings with neighbouring authorities, one of which was at Member level.

RESOLVED that Councillor Susan Barker, as the relevant portfolio holder be appointed as the Council's representative on the Cooperation for Sustainable Development Board.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm