

**CABINET MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN on 7 APRIL 2016 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe (Leader)
Councillor S Barker (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environmental Services)
Councillor S Howell (Cabinet Member for Finance and Administration)
Councillor J Redfern (Cabinet Member for Housing and Economic Development)
Councillor L Wells (Cabinet Member for Communities and Partnerships)

Also present: Councillor B Light (Residents for Uttlesford Deputy Group Leader) and Councillors H Asker and H Ryles.

Officers in attendance: D French (Chief Executive), R Harborough (Director of Public Services), C Oliva (Solicitor), M Cox (Democratic Services Officer) S Jackson (Economic Development Officer) and A Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services).

CA106 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Dean.

CA107 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to removing Councillor Redfern and adding Councillor Howell to the list of apologies for the meeting.

CA108 REFUGEE WORKING GROUP

Councillor Redfern said there was no further information to report.

CA109 LEADERS ANNOUNCEMENT –The COMMON CAR PARK SAFFRON WALDEN

The Leader reported details of an executive decision he had taken in relation to car parking charges at the Common car park, Saffron Walden.

In 2015, the council had commissioned consultants to conduct a review of car parking in the district. In relation to the Common car park, it was suggested that the length of stay permissible should be reduced from 4 to 2 hours. This was intended to ensure a frequent turnover of cars and lead to increased footfall in the town. This report had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 4 December and Cabinet on 10 December 2015 and the

recommendations were subsequently consulted on, approved and implemented.

A number of representations had since been received in relation to this change, particularly from the retail and business sector in Saffron Walden. They felt that the reduction in the maximum stay had been counterproductive, shoppers were not staying in the town so long and there had been a noticeable effect on trade.

The Leader considered that a 3 hour maximum stay should be introduced as an appropriate compromise to responded to local concerns, whilst still taking account of the consultants' advice. There were other options for longer stay parking at Fairycroft Road and Swan Meadow. This proposal would still need to go through the appropriate procedures, reprogramming the ticket machines and revising the signage within the car park.

Councillor Redfern declared a non- pecuniary interest as a business owner in SW town centre.

Councillor Light welcomed this announcement. She said that Saffron Walden was not a place for a quick shop and retailers had noticed a down turn in trade since the maximum stay had been introduced. She asked that the situation continue to be monitored to gauge whether the additional one hour stay was sufficient.

CA110

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2016 -18

Councillor Redfern presented the Economic Strategy for 2016-18. She explained it continued the focus of the previous two strategies to facilitate sustainable jobs and business. A number of initiatives had been delivered over the last 2 years and these were set out in the report.

Members commended the work undertaken on the strategy and raised the following issues.

Councillor Asker attended the meeting for this item and spoke about the negative effect of the 2 hour maximum stay at the Common Car park on retailers in the town.

In answer to a question, Members were advised about the current situation at Fairycroft, Saffron Walden. The Leader said the council was supportive of this enterprise and he was liaising with the County member regarding future support.

Councillor Howell was pleased at the focus on the provision of superfast broadband and hoped it would be provided in rural communities, where it was most needed. Councillor Ryles mentioned a current initiative with Buzz.com for the provision of fibrewifi. He said this could be a workable short- term solution for communities with poor Wi-Fi coverage, but the council was still pressing for the provision of superfast broadband throughout the district, and funds would allocated from the Strategic Initiatives Fund.

Councillor Baker stressed the importance of suitable Wi-Fi for people that worked at home in rural areas and had found from personal experience that fibrewifi worked well. She suggested the inclusion of a policy in the new Local Plan, which would require the conduit for fibre broadband to be included in every new development.

Councillor Light asked a number of questions about the content of the strategy. Her main concern was that the strategy failed to include a vision statement for the district, or a unique selling point that would attract businesses to the district. The Economic Development Officer said the district tended to be promoted around the recognised brands of London, Cambridge and Stansted Airport. Councillor Redfern said that the district currently had very low unemployment and there needed to be a balance between encouraging growth and maintaining the character of the district.

RESOLVED

- 1 To adopt the Uttlesford Economic Development Strategy 2016-18.
- 2 To approve the actions with associated expenditure for the period 2016-17 as follows:
 - Help for local people to start and stay in business -£19,000
 - Access to superfast broadband and mobile communications £115,000
 - Help for business to expand in or locate in Uttlesford -£94,000
 - Help for town centres with their viability and vitality - £70,000.

CA111

ADOPTION OF STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING POLICY

Councillor Barker presented a report on the council's Street Naming and Numbering Policy. The policy aimed to ensure that new street and building names were allocated logically, to assist with the effective delivery of mail and to ensure that emergency services were able to locate the address. The current policy had been reviewed, taking account of other council processes and good practice. A user guide had also been developed, which explained how the system operated and the expected service levels. The charge for renaming streets and roads had been omitted and would be included in the final policy.

Councillor Barker said the emergency services sometimes found it difficult to locate rural roads and houses, when there were name only properties and the road name was the same as the village. The current scheme specified that 100% of residents had to agree a change of road name, which meant that just one household could prevent this going ahead. She suggested changing this percentage to 90%. The Chairman said he would like to consider this further and asked for a report to be prepared for the next meeting.

Councillor Redfern said she would like to see a street naming and numbering review for the Shire Hill industrial estate, which had grown organically over the years and was very confusing for visitors.

Councillor Howell welcomed the new policy and was pleased that the local knowledge of town and parish councils was an important consideration in the final decision on an appropriate street name.

RESOLVED

- 1 To adopt the Street Naming and Numbering Policy March 2016.
- 2 To include in the document the following charges for renaming of streets or roads
 - £250 plus £25 per property.
- 3 To adopt the Street Naming and Numbering guide to the process.
- 4 To receive a report at the next meeting around the requirement for 100% of residents to agree to a change in road name in cases where an accurate address was required for the emergency services.

CA112 TRANSFER OF LAND FOR SPECIALIST HOUSING PROJECT

In 2013, the council had agreed to transfer land at Newton Grove, Great Dunmow to the domestic abuse charity, Safer Places for the provision of a domestic violence refuge. Safer Places had now informed the council that under its new model of working the site was no longer required. Members were assured that the council would continue to fund work around domestic violence, and there were sufficient refuge spaces available for high risk cases.

The site would now be considered for delivering affordable council housing funded by capital receipts.

RESOLVED that the land at Newton Grove Great Dunmow that had been proposed for the project should now be used to deliver affordable housing properties.

CA113 TRANSFER OF FLITCH GREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE AND BAYNARDS AVENUE PLAY AREA TO FLITCH GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed transfer of Flitch Green Community Centre and Baynards Avenue play area for nil value to Flitch Green Parish Council. These assets had been transferred to the council as part of a S106 agreement with the intention that in time they would be passed to the Parish Council, which was in line with the council's asset management strategy to devolve the responsibility for owning and maintaining assets to local people. The transfer would also include the balance of the S106 monies held for the two assets.

RESOLVED that the Flitch Green Community Centre and Baynards Avenue play area are transferred to Flitch Green Parish Council along

with the balance of S106 monies totalling £38,368.97 subject to no objections being received following the public notice on the proposed disposal of the assets

CA114

APPOINTMENT OF PORTFOLIO LEAD – ARMED FORCES

The Leader said he intended to formalise the role that Councillor Artus was currently undertaking as liaison with the armed forces at Carver Barracks.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Artus as portfolio lead for the Armed Services, which would sit under the communities portfolio.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm.