

COUNCIL

25 FEBRUARY 2016 - 4:00PM



PRESENT: Councillor S Bligh, Councillor C Boden, Councillor G G R Booth, Councillor T R Butcher, Councillor J F Clark, Councillor S Clark, Councillor D W Connor, Councillor S R Court, Councillor Mrs C R Cox, Councillor M Davis, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor S Garratt, Councillor D Green, Councillor A Hay, Councillor D Hodgson, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S J E King, Councillor D Laws, Councillor Mrs K F Mayor, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor Mrs F S Newell, Councillor D C Oliver, Councillor C C Owen, Councillor C J Seaton, Councillor R Skoulding, Councillor W Sutton, Councillor M Tanfield, Councillor G Tibbs, Councillor S Tierney.

APOLOGIES: Councillor M G Bucknor, Councillor Mrs V M Bucknor, Councillor M Buckton, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor S Count, Councillor M J Humphrey, Councillor D Mason, Councillor F H Yeulett

The Chairman announced with regret that Roger Heading, the third Chairman of Fenland District Council who held this office between 1976 -1977, passed away on 3 January 2016. A minute's silence was held as a mark of respect.

52/15 **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 17 DECEMBER 2015.**

The minutes of the 17 December 2016 were agreed and signed.

53/15 **CIVIC ENGAGEMENTS UPDATE - FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

Councillor Mrs Cox updated Members on the Civic Engagements undertaken by herself and the Vice-Chairman since the last Full Council with one of the highlights being the High Sheriff's Awards for young people which was very successful and very inspiring.

54/15 **TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE.**

Chairman's Afternoon Tea Event - Councillor Mrs Cox thanked all those who attended her Annual Tea Party Event, hosted jointly with the Chairman of the Fenland Twinning Association to celebrate and reflect upon the successful twinning relationships that the Council have with Nettetal in Germany and the Sunshine Coast in Australia.

Commonwealth Flag Raising Ceremony - Councillor Mrs Cox reminded Members that the Vice-Chairman would be holding a Commonwealth Flag Raising Ceremony followed by a Single Commemorative Act marking the Centenary of World War I at 10:00am on Monday 14 March 2016 at Fenland Hall, March to which all Members were invited to attend. Light refreshments will be available in the Council Chamber following the ceremony.

55/15

TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM, AND PROVIDE ANSWERS TO, COUNCILLORS IN RELATION TO MATTERS WHICH, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, ACCORD WITH THE PROVISIONS OF PROCEDURE RULES 8.4 AND 8.6.

Under Procedural Rule 8.4, the Leaders of the Main Opposition Groups put their questions to the Leader as follows:

Councillor Mrs Bucknor was absent from the meeting.

Councillor Booth asked if there had been any progress with regard to allowing parish councillors to fill the gaps on Outside Bodies, particularly on the drainage boards as previously discussed. Councillor Clark stated progress had been made as one representative from Whittlesey who had considerable experience has been appointed therefore if he had any recommendations then to forward them to Councillor Cornwell. Councillor Clark clarified that every Councillor from Fenland District Council has had first pick of all the outside bodies.

Councillor Booth stated that when Councillor Clark first became Leader he had promised to meet with Town and Parish Councils on a regular basis; he was aware Councillor Clark had initially attended meetings with regard to street lighting and concurrent functions grant and asked if he had any intention to engage with Parish and Town Councils to improve relations that he had aspired to back in May 2014. Councillor Clark stated he attended many meetings on a regular basis and reiterated he was happy to attend any parish or town Council meetings if invited with the Chief Executive. Councillor Booth asked that this commitment could be reiterated to parish and town councils.

Councillor Booth commented with regard to the County Council boundaries; he had seen the reports from the Boundary Commission and stated it was shocking they had ignored all representations and continued to go ahead with a plan which did not reflect local knowledge or connections. Did Councillor Clark have any intention of writing to the Boundary Commission to highlight this as he was aware that representations have been requested from local MPs regarding these changes. Councillor Clark stated he had not personally but was aware Councillor Boden had made representation and this had been extended to make further representations on behalf of March and Cambridgeshire. Councillor Booth stated Councillor Boden probably made representation on behalf of the Conservative party but he had meant as representation from Fenland District Council to show concern with what was being forced upon the local area. Councillor Clark stated he believed that a working party had been set up and the comments from this had been submitted.

56/15

TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM AND ASK QUESTIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS WITH PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULES 8.1 AND 8.2.

Under Procedure Rule 8.2, Members put questions to Portfolio Holders as follows:

- Councillor Booth stated the Council had now issued the informal guidance to developers on how community engagement should take place which was primarily for the rural parishes in line with the LP12; this information has not yet been passed to the Parish Councils and he thought it would be useful to send this to them as they were starting to receive representations from developers. Councillor Sutton stated there had been some work carried out on this recently and updated information would be sent out to agents, developers and parish councils.
- Councillor Mrs French informed Members that March Town Council now have the 99 year lease from Cambridgeshire County Council for Estover which was good news and she was glad to see the £100,000 was in the capital programme. Councillor Mrs French stated that the £10,000 for Wimblington street lights had disappeared and asked Councillor Clark about

this. Councillor Clark stated this offer had not been withdrawn.

- Councillor Mrs French commented with regard to the footbridge on March High Street stating she was thankful this was being carried out albeit not yet complete but it already looked fantastic and she hoped it would be open for St George's Fair. Councillor Clark stated he hoped it would be completed by the end of March but if not he did expect it to be completed by 24 April 2016.
- Councillor Tibbs stated that the Old Bell Pub in Walsoken was in a state of disrepair and an eyesore to the town and asked Councillor Oliver for an update on this issue. Councillor Oliver stated that officers had recently been in contact with the owners concerning the anti-social behaviour and although there had been isolated incidents, officers had not seen any; the owner has also been asked to remove the tyres and to cut back vegetation in that area; this would be monitored over the next few weeks.
- Councillor Miss Hoy stated that a planning application was due to go forward on Elm High Road which she personally thought had problems with regard to access; Meadowgate Lane had been looked at but due to the cost of upgrading the lane this was not an option and comments had been made to her that they had not been included in the broad concept plan or invited to any of the meetings; had they been invited they might then have been aware of other developers who could perhaps help with funding. Councillor Mrs Cox interrupted stating that planning applications should not be discussed at Council. Councillor Miss Hoy stated the general point she wanted to make was that could all developers be included as this would help tie together smaller applications in order to achieve larger plans for the area. Councillor Sutton stated he could not discuss specific plans but he was sure that the owner of that land had been involved with the East Wisbech Broad Concept Plans and therefore found it difficult to believe that he would not have been involved but it would be advisable to contact Nick Harding, Head of Planning and ask the question directly.
- Councillor Booth stated that with regard to the Fenland Waterways Link Projects started some years ago that Councillor Tanfield had been in contact with those who were interested in the project and therefore he asked for an update. Councillor Tanfield stated the Future Strategy and Development Plan for the Tourism Partnership was about to be approved and the Waterways was included in this; she had met with them and it was decided that a larger working group be formed to apply for larger bids in order to achieve more.
- Councillor Booth stated it was good to see that the weight had been increase with regard to the on-going projects around improving the recycling rates but what did this equate to in relation to percentages. Councillor Murphy stated these were increasing but at present firm figures were not yet available; this had been trialled within areas of the four major towns and an increase was seen from both the green and brown bins. This would be rolled out to other areas but also needed to be maintained in the current areas.
- Councillor Booth thanked Councillor King for attending the parish council meeting on 29 January with regard to the street lighting issue as this had been very productive and greatly appreciated; could Councillor King provide an update on the issues that he took away from the meeting. Councillor King stated he found the meeting very useful and was grateful to be invited; apart from questions of detail that he had previously circulated to the parishes, the overall question was if there was any other option with regard Balfour Beatty and after having had further discussions with his colleagues, the answer to this was yes and these were now being explored. He made it clear from the outset that whatever was done would need to be in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures with due diligence being followed otherwise the Council would be exposed to a great deal of risk. He had spoken with officers and it had been agreed that an option appraisal would be undertaken to see the available options for street lighting in the future and the pros and cons of each; this would include discussions with neighbouring authorities, consideration of any other procurement opportunities that could be identified together with cost comparisons. The level of detail would depend on the comparability specifications and other factors which could affect service providers as this was not just about money, it was also about service levels. If this exercise provides the Council with sufficient information then a firm proposal could be made or there may be a need to look at more detailed market testing by tender or

a service specific pricing exercise. Councillor King explained that the Council were at the early stage of the options appraisal but it would be completed by the end of March. Councillor Booth stated one of the points raised regarding this process was the involvement of parish councils as they also have views of the provided services to date and they would eventually be a key stakeholder therefore could Councillor King ensure that the parish councils were included throughout in order for them to feed into the process. Councillor King stated he fully agreed with this and gave that commitment on 29 January; there might be some information that he would be unable to share due to commercial confidentiality however he would share all other information with the parish councils and council colleagues.

- Councillor Booth stated that with regard to the inspection regime that was adopted by Balfour Beatty; a number of parishes have had some street lighting surveyed by Skansa who were able to provide more detailed information. They had stated that some of the street lights Balfour Beatty had stated needed replacing within three years, Skansa were more than happy to state that these still had at least another six years life and therefore did not need inspecting for six years which he thought highlighted the different regime that Balfour Beatty had taken and less in line with TR22 compared to Skansa which was more in line with the policy which is used by the lighting industry. He thought there were still discrepancies in the information that had been provided by Balfour Beatty and that appeared to be costing the parish council and district council additional monies because where Balfour Beatty had stated some lights were not suitable another reputable firm were stating they were suitable. Councillor King stated Councillor Booth had highlighted one of the concerns of Balfour Beatty and these were widely shared by parishes and council colleagues but he thought there was a need to be careful that like for like was being compared and part of the options appraisal was to be clear about this issue. One of the authorities Fenland would be speaking to was Peterborough and then East Cambs where feedback could be obtained about their experiences; the discrepancies that Councillor Booth referred to he thought were not laid down within the inspection regime and Balfour Beatty were perhaps interpreting it one way and Skansa in another; he did not think there was a hard and fast regime but the priority was to achieve the best deal possible.
- Councillor Mrs Hay commented that the report mentioned car parks in Wisbech, Whittlesey and March with no mention of Eastwood car park in Chatteris and asked Councillor Murphy if he had any further information on who was responsible for resurfacing and was there any indication of when this would take place. Councillor Murphy stated the car park has been used for the last four years by Cambridgeshire County Council for Building Schools for the Future and for the pitches and it had been left in a bad state of repair, the contract had stated that the County Council when they had finished with the car park then it should be put back but now stated there was no money to do this. Fenland were now in discussions about the contract as Fenland were not prepared to pick up the cost for a car park that was nothing to do with Fenland, this had been done in good faith and therefore discussions were taking place in order to achieve an agreement but he reiterated that Fenland would not pay for what the County were responsible for.
- Councillor Tierney stated that social media was constantly covered with pictures of the back of the rugby field in Wisbech and he was aware this was neither public land or Fenland's land but there was a very serious litter problem there; could he be provided with an update as to how this was being dealt with. Councillor Oliver stated he had received an email with regard to the situation and Fenland's Streetscene team were in discussions with the National Trust about removing the rubbish and awaiting approval to be able to clear it; it was hoped to be completed by the weekend.
- Councillor Mrs French stated she was pleased that the George Campbell centre was now complete and bringing in revenue and asked Councillor Tanfield to look at extending the centre to include a soft ball area as this was lacking in March. Councillor Tanfield stated she would look into this and come back to Councillor Mrs French.
- Councillor Owen asked why the repairs to the footbridge in March High Street were taking so long as it appeared that progress was slow. Councillor Butcher stated he would look

into this and get back to him. Councillor Clark stated there had been a hold up when it was stripped out as further unexpected corrosion work was found and therefore that could account for the delay; it had been a big job and he thought it would be very nice when completed as the railings had been painted and therefore he asked for everyone's patience for a little longer.

(Councillor Skoulding declared a disclosable pecuniary interest by virtue of his company owning the March Town Footbridge and mini-factories in March. He also declared a non-pecuniary interest through being involved with the Estover Road Playing Field.)

(Councillors Mrs French, Owen and Skoulding declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being Members of March Town Council.)

57/15 **FINAL BUSINESS PLAN 2016-17**

Councillor Clark presented the Final Business Plan 2016/17.

The item was proposed by Councillor Tanfield and seconded by Councillor Sutton

Councillor Tanfield asked for an amendment to be made under "Economy", "Promote Fenland as a tourism and visitor destination" heading to now read "Support the Cambridgeshire Fens Tourism Partnership to develop and deliver a comprehensive Tourism Strategy for Fenland including the 'Visit Cambridgeshire Fens' website." Councillor Sutton stated he was happy to support the amendment.

Councillor Booth asked for a change to be made relating to the Comprehensive Spending Review to read "Councillors completed this process in December 2015 and the Conservative Group confirmed their priorities at an All Member Workshop in January 2016. The amendment was not seconded and therefore failed.

Councillor Booth proposed a Point of Order to which he stated Councillor Court had raised his hand.

Councillor Mrs French proposed a Point of Order to which she stated that Councillor Court did not second the amendment until after the Chairman had stated that it was not adopted. The Chairman confirmed this was correct.

The item was put to a vote but Councillor Booth stated he had another question; the Chairman explained the item had already been aired fairly. Councillor Booth stated this concerned a different matter to which the Chairman allowed Councillor Booth to continue.

Councillor Booth asked for confirmation as to where the other four areas were with regard to the most deprived areas in Fenland as stated within the report. The Chairman stated this information would be circulated after the meeting.

It was AGREED that the Final Business Plan 2016/17 with Councillor Tanfield's amendment be APPROVED.

58/15 **GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2016/17 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016-19**

Councillor Mrs Cox stated this item was subject to a recorded vote as set out in the Constitution.

Councillor Seaton presented the General Fund Budget 2016/17 and Capital Programme 2016/19 Reports and thanked Rob Bridge, Mark Saunders, the rest of the team and all the managers and staff within Fenland District Council who have helped produced the savings.

Councillor Seaton stated he had a sad piece of news, Ernst & Young had recently taken over as Fenland's external auditors and the audit director Rob Murray sadly died suddenly on Sunday at a very young age, totally unexpected and he was sure all Members would join him in offering condolences to his family and friends on this sad occasion.

The item was proposed by Councillor Sutton and seconded by Councillor Connor.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- Councillor Booth commented that the report states 0% general inflation for the period of the Medium Term Forecast and asked why the Council were continuing with a 0% inflation figure when inflation was currently just above zero and would be increasing. Councillor Seaton stated the Council made an assumption and therefore that was what was presented in the report.
- Councillor Booth stated this was an important document as it sets out how Fenland would achieve the cuts required but at the Members Seminar Members were presented with what had been agreed at the Conservative Group Meeting and he was concerned with some areas such as the cutting of the Youth District Council and the exploration into looking at charging for a garden waste service which he was aware that neighbouring authorities had done but he did not think it would best serve the residents of Fenland. He did support other areas that had been chosen to be cut but his concern was that not everything had been looked at. He was aware comments had been made with regard to the provision of leisure services and how Fenland could make better savings and that it was a long term aspiration therefore it was always a net nil effect on the Council's financial position; he thought if this was looked into in detail then it would save the Council from making cuts in the other areas or charging residents for services especially as the bin service was the one service that every resident within the district does use. Councillor Booth stated he was concerned as this document sets out how Fenland would achieve the savings and how this would be taken forward therefore he could not support it, he recognised that there was a need to put Council Tax up because otherwise in the next resolution more savings would have to be found.
- Councillor Connor stated this was an excellent report and the budget in his opinion was "spot on" he therefore asked to move the recommendation.
- Councillor Boden stated he was very disappointed to hear the comments made by Councillor Booth as he shared Councillor Connor's opinion that this report was remarkable in what it achieved and that there were local authorities around the country who would give their eye teeth to be facing debates like today where the amount of work which has been completed. Part of that was a reflection of prudent policies which have been followed in previous years and partly due to the amount of hard work which has been carried out by Councillor Seaton, officers and by Members in trying to identify the challenges that were ahead and how they would be met therefore the achievement seen today is laudable. It was not a complete solution as there were further savings to be met and there were still uncertainties for the future, more work to be done but the amount of work gone into the report and where Fenland was is really commendable and he would encourage all Members to support this but listening to Councillor Booth it would have astonished him if Members had been presented with a fully worked up balanced budget with all of the decisions made about which savings would be made after a short period of time. Councillor Boden stated that if Councillor Seaton had put forward such a proposal then Councillor Booth would have been the first to state that there had not been enough time for consultation and consideration of the relevant matters. Members were making very significant changes over the course of the next three or four years and therefore it was appropriate to go through the process of looking at the business cases for these changes and to amend them based on the information received. This was a matter which would take time and the fact that it was not a complete exercise was not a reason why Councillor Booth should oppose it.
- Councillor Tierney stated he welcomed hearing other ideas and at the All Member Seminar

he asked if the opposition would present an alternative budget and he was therefore disappointed that all Members received was criticism of the difficult decisions made and no suggestion as to where those savings could otherwise be found apart from a vague reference about leisure services and personally he thought that was disappointing.

- Councillor Booth stated it became very apparent at the Member Seminar that Members were presented with a fait accompli and when other parties attempted to speak up on certain matter they were talked down therefore it became very apparent that whatever ideas they had would not be listened to; that was why towards the end of the meeting opposition councillors felt that there was no point adding anything further.

It was AGREED that the revised estimates for 2015/16 as set out in the report be APPROVED.

The General Fund revenue budget for 2016/17 as set out in the report be APPROVED;

1. **The Capital Programme and funding statement as set out in the report be APPROVED;**
2. **The Medium Term Financial Strategy as outlined in the report be ADOPTED;**
3. **The Treasury Management, Minimum Revenue Provision, Investment Strategy, Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2016/17 as set out in the report be APPROVED;**
4. **Delegation is given to the Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder, to finalise and submit an Efficiency Plan to the Department of Communities and Local Government to meet the requirements of the Four Year Settlement Agreement;**
5. **The expenses detailed in the report be treated as general expenses for 2016/17;**
6. **The Port Health Levy for 2016/17 be set as detailed in the report;**
7. **The Band D Council Tax level for Fenland District Council Services for 2016/17 be set at £250.47, an increase of £4.86 (1.98%) on the current year.**

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2014 impose an obligation on Local Authorities (after 25 February 2014) to record all votes on decisions on budget and council tax, with this in mind Members voted on this item as follows:

In Favour of the Proposal - Councillors Skoulding, Connor, Davis, Hodgson, Miss Clark, Miss Hoy, Tierney, Bligh, Tibbs, King, Oliver, Tanfield, Murphy, Mrs Newell, Green, Hay, Garratt, Boden, Laws, Miscandlon, Buckton, Mrs French, Owen, Clark, Sutton, Butcher and Seaton

Against the Proposal - Councillors Court and Booth

Abstentions - None

59/15 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2016/17

Councillor Mrs Cox informed Members that this item was subject to a recorded vote as set out in the Constitution.

Councillor Seaton presented the Council Tax Resolution 2016/17 and thanked Members for approving the Budget.

The item was proposed by Councillor Sutton and seconded by Councillor Owen.

Members AGREED unanimously to pass the Resolution as follows:

1. **It be noted that the Tax Base for the year 2016/17 has been calculated in accordance**

with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and associated regulations as follows:

- 27,935 being the amount calculated by the Council as its Council Tax Base for the year, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended).
 - (as detailed in Agenda Item 10 (1b)) being the amounts calculated by the Council as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations.
2. The Council calculates that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2016/17 (excluding Parish precepts) is £6,996,965.
3. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2016/17 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government & Finance Act 1992 (as amended):
- £56,415,050 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act [Gross Expenditure including benefits & Town/Parish Precepts]
 - £48,224,712 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act [Revenue Income including reimbursement of benefits, specific & general grants & use of reserves]
 - £8,190,338 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year [Net Expenditure, including Parish precepts]
 - £293.19 being the amount at 3(c) above divided by the Council Tax Base at 1(b) above, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, [basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, including Parish precepts]
 - £1,193,373 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 35(1) of the Act (Parish Precepts)
 - £250.47 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount at (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.
 - Part of the Council's area (as detailed in the table at Agenda Item 10 (g)), being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate
 - Part of the Council's area (as detailed in the table at Agenda Item 10 (h)) being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands [Council Tax relating to the District Council & Parish expenditure]

4. it be noted that the year 2016/17 the major precepting authorities have stated that the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in the table at Agenda Item 10 (4);
5. having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) & 4, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2016.17 for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in the table at Agenda Item 10 (5);
6. authorise the publication of the amounts
7. authorise the appropriate officer to demand the amounts in accordance with the Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992;
8. This Council hereby determines that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2016/17 is not excessive in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by section 5 of the Localism Act 2011.

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2014 impose an obligations on Local Authorities (after 25 February 2014) to record all votes on decisions on budget and council tax, with this in mind Members voted on this item as follows:

In Favour of the Proposal - Councillors Skoulding, Court, Booth, Connor, Davis, Hodgson, Miss Clark, Miss Hoy, Tierney, Bligh, Tibbs, King, Oliver, Tanfield, Murphy, Mrs Newell, Green, Hay, Garratt, Boden, Laws, Miscandlon, Buckton, Mrs French, Owen, Clark, Sutton, Butcher and Seaton.

Against the Proposal - None

Abstentions - None

60/15 UPDATE OF THE FENLAND INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN (IDP)

Councillor Sutton presented the Update of the Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan report and stated that officers had carried out a lot of work to complete the report and he would like to state his appreciation for their work. Councillor Sutton thanked Councillor Davis for pointing out some factual inaccuracies in the report which would be updated following the meeting.

The items was proposed by Councillor Connor and seconded by Councillor Mrs Davis.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- Councillor Mrs French stated this was a very comprehensive report but as a March Ward Member she wished to discuss 4.17 of the report whereby it stated that there had been a long term aspiration to achieve an eastern bypass incorporating an important third crossing of the river and the railway and as Members were aware that if anything were to happen to the river bridge then March would come to a standstill. Councillor Mrs French stated she hoped that where the report stated this would be investigated on a regular basis this would happen as there were 4,200 homes expected to be built in March over the next 20 years and also 600 in windfall; originally when the County Council carried out the Transport Study the bypass was included and it was very disappointing that it was then removed. Councillor Sutton stated this was a document that was updated on a regular basis and perhaps it was disappointing that March Town Council had not made these recommendations during the consultation period but he took on board her comments. Councillor Mrs French stated March Town Council had tried to do this some time ago and were told that County Council had no intention of looking at it with regard to the eastern bypass therefore there was no point. Councillor Sutton explained this did not stop the Town Council from making comments within the consultation which would then have been included in Fenland's

document.

- Councillor Miss Hoy stated with regard to where the Secondary schools were mentioned, the report stated the location was March or Wisbech but she informed Members that a decision had been taken two weeks ago that the secondary school would be in Wisbech and March would be looked into at a later date. Councillor Sutton stated he assumed this decision would come through in the County document. Councillor Owen stated that March had over 2,000 pupils and therefore March's needs were as great if not greater than Wisbech for different reasons and he did not want to see the plans for a March secondary school pushed down the plan. Councillor Sutton stated that depending on what happened in the future it could be either/or/both but that was a County Council document rather than a Fenland document. Councillor Owen asked if the report could continue to state both March and Wisbech. Councillor Miss Hoy stated she was not debating as to which town had more need, but explaining that the County Council had already taken a decision at the Children and Young People Committee which recognised that Wisbech does physically have a need by 2018 for another secondary school and therefore the decision was taken to buy land and investigate other locations. The County Council have stated that in a number of years' time they would then look at March and the point she was making was that the decision had already been made by County Council. Councillor Sutton stated that if County Council have made that decision then that would come forward in their IDP but Fenland needed to keep both in Fenland's document as both March and Wisbech see a need. Councillor Mrs French thanked Councillor Miss Hoy for the update but was very disappointed that the County Council had taken this decision and she hoped Councillor Miss Hoy would fight for March too as March schools were overflowing. Councillor Mrs Newell stated there was land allocated at Chatteris already for a primary school and there was no mention of Chatteris, just March and Wisbech, but there is a need for a primary school in Chatteris and has been for some time; there are 1,000 houses allocated in the area and the other side of Chatteris another 600 allocated. Councillor Mrs Hay stated she would like to back up Councillor Mrs Newell as she was aware that school numbers were up to the limit and young children have to be bussed out to other areas, there is a need for another school. Councillor Sutton stated to conclude on the debate, he took on board all the comments made and was aware that Neale Wade was at capacity but children were being bussed into March from Wisbech and other areas therefore if a new school built in Wisbech then that would relieve a large number of places within March.
- Councillor Booth reiterated Councillor Sutton's comments with regard to the report as when this was presented to Members last year there had been comments made with regard that Members could not see as to what consultation had taken place and officers have now done an excellent job by providing that information and therefore it was good to see that the comments made have been incorporated; he thought this should be a benchmark that should be used going forward to demonstrate how the consultation comments were taken and making changes as this had not been transparent in the past. He congratulated officers and Councillor Sutton.
- Councillor Booth stated that WSM1.7 contained a typo whereby the word "lay" instead of "play" had been used.
- Councillor Booth added that he had sent in a further representation regarding Wisbech St Mary footpaths on Station Road and Barton Road and this had been omitted from the report and therefore could these be included.

It was AGREED that:

- **the Update of the Fenland Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) be APPROVED with the corrections outlined at the beginning of the item;**
- **the document to support Policy LP13 'Supporting and Managing the Impact of a Growing District' of the Fenland Local Plan be ADOPTED**

61/15 WISBECH CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL & WISBECH CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

Councillor Oliver presented the Wisbech Conservation Area Appraisal and Wisbech Conservation Area Management Plan Report.

The item was proposed by Councillor Sutton and seconded by Councillor Tierney.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- Councillor Tierney stated he would like to commend all Cabinet Members and officers who had worked on this document as they often face criticism from those who have suggested that there were quick and easy answers to some of the problems and now we have seen tangible success and long may it continue.

It was AGREED that the Wisbech Conservation Area Appraisal and Wisbech Conservation Area Management Plan be ADOPTED.

62/15 REQUEST TO CHANGE THE NAME OF NEWTON PARISH

Councillor Clark presented the Request to Change the Name of Newton Parish Report.

This item was proposed by Councillor Sutton and seconded by Councillor Booth.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- Councillor Sutton stated he supported this 100% and informed Members that the parish council had carried out a survey which showed that 86% of the respondents wanted the name change.
- Councillor Tierney stated that local people already referred to Newton in the new name and it was great that the parish council had supported this.
- Councillor Booth stated Members should support this change.

It was AGREED that:

- **The receipt of the request from Newton Parish Council to change the name of the Parish and the Parish Council to Newton-in-the-isle be NOTED;**
- **The making and publication of an Order under Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1972 to change the name of the Parish and the Parish Council from Newton to Newton-in-the-isle be AGREED.**

63/15 APPOINTMENT OF ACTING MONITORING OFFICER AND NOTIFICATION OF ACTING DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER

Councillor Clark presented the Appointment of Acting Monitoring Officer and Notification of Acting Deputy Monitoring Officer Report.

The item was proposed by Councillor Murphy and seconded by Councillor Miss Hoy.

It was AGREED that:

- **The appointment of Tom Lewis, Senior Solicitor, as the Acting Monitoring Officer for the Council with effect from 11 March 2016 to cover a period of maternity leave be APPROVED. These arrangements will come into effect from 11 March 2016 unless**

the maternity leave date is required to commence before this point, which will require these arrangements to commence with immediate effect be APPROVED.

- The appointment of Anna Goodall, Head of Legal and Governance, as Acting Deputy Monitoring Officer for the Council with effect from 11 March 2016 (or earlier as outlined above) during the period in which Tom Lewis is Acting Monitoring Officer be NOTED.

(Tom Lewis left the room for this item including the voting thereon.)

64/15 SENIOR MANAGER PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Councillor Clark presented the Senior Manager Pay Policy Statement report.

The item was proposed by Councillor Mrs Davis and seconded by Councillor Seaton.

It was AGREED the Senior Managers Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17 as required by the Localism Act 2011 be ADOPTED.

5:35pm

Chairman