

# COUNCIL



**THURSDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2018 - 4.00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs K Mayor (Chairman), Councillor Mrs M Davis (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Benney, Councillor Mrs S Bligh, Councillor C Boden, Councillor G Booth, Councillor M Buckton, Councillor R Butcher, Councillor J Clark, Councillor S Clark, Councillor M Cornwell, Councillor S Count, Councillor S Court, Councillor Mrs J French, Councillor A Hay, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor M Humphrey, Councillor S King, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor D Mason, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor D Oliver, Councillor K Owen, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor R Skoulding, Councillor W Sutton, Councillor G Tibbs, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor F Yeulett

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor M Bucknor, Councillor Mrs V Bucknor, Councillor D Connor, Councillor Mrs C Cox, Councillor D Hodgson, Councillor Mrs F Newell, Councillor A Pugh and Councillor M Tanfield

## **C45/18      PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of 15 November were confirmed and signed subject to the following comments;

1. Councillor Booth asked that it be noted that in relation to his declaration of interest (minute C42/18) he took no part in the discussions or voting for this item.
2. Councillor Boden said that minute C42/18 should read; 'latest figures given by the Office of National Statistics show growth rather than stagnation'. He informed members that the latest figures released by the Office of National Statistics show even further growth in UK employment.
3. Councillor Buckton said in relation to minute C43/18, the wording in the decision states that the Council are 'to appoint the most economically advantageous provider' in relation to Option 4. He clarified that this implies to all of the options approved.

## **C46/18      CIVIC ENGAGEMENTS UPDATE**

Councillor Mrs Mayor drew member's attention to the civic activities undertaken by herself and the Vice Chairman in the weeks preceding Full Council.

## **C47/18      TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AND/OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE.**

Councillor Mrs Mayor thanked members who attended the annual Carol Service on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2018 at the Parish Church of St Peter in Wimblington. The event was extremely well attended and got the season off to a good start.

Councillor Mrs Mayor also thanked staff who recently took part in the Chairman's Christmas visits to all Fenland District Council offices between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2018.

Councillor Mrs Mayor reminded members that she and the Chairman of the Fenland Twinning Association will be hosting a Twinning Tea Party on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 with the aims of;

- Raising the profile of the Council's twinning links with Germany and Australia.
- Seeking to increase involvement in the District's twinning activities.
- To increase the membership of the Fenland Twinning Association and help it raise funding for the work that it undertakes on behalf of the Council.

Members will receive their invitations for this event in the New Year.

**C48/18      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.**

No questions had been submitted under Procedure Rule 8.6 and Councillor Booth, as leader of the main opposition group, asked questions under Procedure Rule 8.4 as follows;

- Councillor Booth asked for an update on Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) skills and apprenticeship budget. Councillor Seaton explained that the CPCA is involved in a number of partnership programmes within the Fenland area which they have influenced and helped to shape. These include; £6 million Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) funding allocated for Fenland and East Cambs over 3 years. This is to support young people for progression to either further/higher education or apprenticeships. This has included the "Rate Card" initiative, which is an approved register of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to support schools with employability skills, mentoring and enterprise activities. Schools have an allocated amount of money as a 'virtual wallet' where they can choose which activities suit their students. In March 2018 the European Social Fund programme (ESF) funded the Wisbech Community Led Local Development Project (CLLD). The funding was £1.1 million over 7 years within the Wisbech area and is currently running successfully. This is designed to help people facing multiple disadvantages to move closer to work, into paid employment or into activities that may ultimately build their confidence and skills to help them find work. The Health and Social Care Pilot by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), provides a different solution to existing recruitment methods across the whole sector. It is training people from outside the sector to gain the skills required to enter employment in the sector for example, Care Certificate. The Pilot is aimed at people in low pay, low career progression jobs, which could include seasonal workers, or unemployed people working as unpaid carers for example, young carers or carers where circumstances have changed. At the same time people already in the sector receive training to increase their skills to enable them to progress and an employer receives the benefit of staff with increased skills. In addition to these programmes, Councillor Seaton explained that the CPCA has a focus on a post funded by the CEC within the Opportunity Area which is working predominantly within Fenland and East Cambs. Furthermore, the CPCA has funding set aside for apprenticeships in the form of the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) of 16 to 24 year olds. The AGE Grant 16 to 24 supports businesses that would not otherwise be able to do so, to recruit individuals aged 16 to 24 into employment through the apprenticeship programme. The amount paid to eligible employers is as follows; £2000 for each apprentice who is aged 16 to 18 at the time they start their Apprenticeship and £1500 for each apprentice who is aged 19 to 24 at the time they start their Apprenticeship. The CPCA are committed to working closely with the College of West Anglia and other providers within the area to increase apprenticeships uptake via this grant and have committed further funding for 2018/19. Councillor Seaton explained that Local devolution will put the CPCA in control of Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding delivery from the 2019/20 academic year. One of the AEB priorities will be to target people in priority communities such as Peterborough and Fenland. As such and as part of the procured element of the devolved AEB, the CPCA are splitting the procured element into four lots. One of these lots will focus on Peterborough and the Fenland Area with a sub lot prioritising English, Maths, Educational Services Overseas and

Other/Community Learning. This will make the most of the flexibilities offered by devolution to focus on local priorities such as certain cohorts or geographical areas that need more intensive support and provide an opportunity to pilot new delivery models and approaches. Councillor Seaton added that the development of a new Technical University of Peterborough will be unique in its delivery and curriculum offer. We have an opportunity to offer industry-led skills training and certifications awarded in the sectors identified in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) and aligned to the Local Industrial/Skills Strategy. The new Technical University for Peterborough will also address low higher education participation, poor aspirations and lack of employer confidence in higher education outside of Cambridge. The major impact for people and business in Fenland will be accessibility and more crucial qualifications that align to the local jobs market for local people to study locally. Each of these initiatives will enable the CPCA to continue its ambitions to improve the local skills system with the levers that they have locally. The CPCA is working hard to demonstrate to Government that they can manage and administer devolved funding, as this will make a strong case to obtain further future devolution. Councillor Seaton confirmed that all of this information has been circulated to members.

- Councillor Booth thanked Councillor Seaton for his response and said it was positive that focus is being placed on vocational skills. He said it would be interesting to see how the University of Peterborough progresses.

**C49/18**      **TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM AND ASK QUESTIONS OF CABINET MEMBERS WITH PORTFOLIO HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULES 8.1 AND 8.2.**

Standing orders were suspended to allow full discussion for this item.

Members asked questions of Portfolio Holders in accordance with Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 as follows;

- Councillor Mason asked Councillor Mrs Laws what actions had been taking in the Private Rented Sector under the Housing Improvement Plan. Councillor Mrs Laws explained that one of the actions in the plan approved by Cabinet identified the need for broader engagement opportunities and support for landlords. She explained that she had attended a Landlord Engagement event organised by the Council's Housing Team and Trailblazer Project on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at the Boathouse, Wisbech. The event helped inform landlords of current legal obligations and to support the supply of good quality, well managed and safe rental accommodation for tenants. The event included presentations from the National Landlord Association, advice in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) by the Council's Private Sector Housing team and advice in relation to taxation by MacIntyre Hudson. Also in attendance were the DWP who gave a presentation on Universal Credit specifically aimed at landlords. There was also a selection of stands from local businesses and services providing professional advice and information for attendees. Positive feedback was received from the National Landlord Association Representative. Councillor Mrs Laws said the information, guidance and advice was of great use and many attendees had travelled a long way to attend therefore showing the value of the information on offer. She thanked Sarah Gove, Jo Evans and the Private Sector Housing team for their hard work organising the event.
- Councillor Mrs French explained that there is a persistent issue with fly-tipping in Lambs Drove and asked Councillor Murphy if the Council had approached Cambridgeshire County Council and Landowners to explore the option of installing a barrier to prevent this from happening. She asked how many times the Council have removed fly-tipping from this location and what the associated cost has been. Councillor Murphy explained that a barrier

cannot be installed across the road, as residents have a right of way and access. He confirmed that it is an ongoing issue both on Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council land. He was unaware of the costs associated with the removal of this fly-tipping.

- Councillor Tibbs asked Councillor Oliver for an update on the Wisbech Vehicle Exchange. Councillor Oliver said he was not aware of any further update but agreed to inform Councillor Tibbs as soon as he had one.
- Councillor Booth asked Councillor Oliver for the default rate of enforcement action taken as part of the Wisbech Alcohol Project and how successful the Project has been in stopping street drinkers. Councillor Oliver explained that the Council are currently exploring other methods to prevent street drinking, as the current enforcement action is not as good a deterrent as hoped. The collection rate across all Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) is 67%, but data is not available to show the breakdown of offences. He said whilst the issuing of FPN's is part of the Council's toolkit, they are exploring other ways to deter street drinkers.
- Councillor Booth asked Councillor Oliver that an update on FACT is included in future Portfolio Holder reports. He explained that the Corporate Governance Committee had received a report at the meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018 and asked that this information is made public. Councillor Oliver agreed.
- Councillor Benney asked Councillor Mrs Laws for an update on the Rough Sleepers count that took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018. Councillor Mrs Laws explained that the Council is required to provide an annual estimate of rough sleepers within their area and this was carried out on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2018. She confirmed that she attended the count along with the Housing Options team, Ferry Project, the Police, an independent verifier and Councillor Hoy and Councillor Connor. They visited locations where the Council has seen or had reports of rough sleepers. Nationally the number of rough sleepers is increasing, with Fenland being no exception seeing an increase from 9 rough sleepers last year to 23 rough sleepers this year. Many of these individuals have complex issues, including issues with alcohol and mental health which means finding solutions can be challenging. Councillor Mrs Laws said that she was reassured by the work carried out by the Council in tackling this increase and explained that the Council have made a successful bid to government under the Controlling Migration Fund, for two years' worth of funding for a full-time Migrant Outreach officer. The focus is on engagement, guidance to support services, dealing with voluntary repatriation and getting people in to work and this funding comes to an end in March 2019. She highlighted that the Council work closely with partners and The Ferry Project made a successful bid for additional spaces at the night shelter as part of a range of solutions for rough sleepers. Along with this the Council made contact with Ministry's specialist advisor on rough sleeping. As a result, 3 bids were submitted in November 2018 relating to rough sleepers; Firstly a further bid to the Controlling Migration Fund for a Migrant Outreach Worker and complex needs worker as well as Department of Work and Pensions advocate to help unlock benefits for those who are entitled to receive it. Secondly, a Rapid Rehousing Pathway bid for a Day Centre facility within Ferry Project with Community Mental Health nurse support, a Migrant Outreach Worker and complex needs worker and Department of Work and Pensions advocate. Thirdly, a cold weather provision bid where the Council have been successful in securing an additional £10,000 to support emergency provision. This will be used to extend the emergency accommodation provision and temporary accommodation via the Ferry Project as well as fund private rented accommodation via our outreach worker. Councillor Mrs Laws thanked the Housing Options team for their hard work on this issue and said following feedback from the independent verifier, the Council are engaging with two other Local Authorities to take advice on how other Councils are tackling and reducing the number of rough sleepers.
- Councillor Owen stated that many rough sleepers are not willing to engage with the Council, which in turn creates a negative public perception of the Council's work supporting rough sleepers. Councillor Mrs Laws agreed with this and said not everybody wants assistance and all the Council can do is offer them support and advice on the services available to them.

- Councillor Mrs French asked Councillor Mrs Laws why housing inspections are only carried out in Wisbech. Councillor Mrs Laws explained that through the work of the Outreach team, the majority of rough sleepers were identified as being in Wisbech. There have been none identified in Chatteris, 2 identified in Whittlesey on Private Land who have refused help and 1 was recently reported in March; however this was after the count.
- Councillor Hoy highlighted that whilst there were a large number of people on the count who refused help, there were also a number of people that were not eligible for support from other services. She asked Councillor Mrs Laws to discuss this with the other Local Authorities. Councillor Mrs Laws agreed to engage with the other Councils in relation to this and agreed that there are areas that need improvement.
- Councillor Hoy thanked Councillor Mrs Laws for inviting her to the count and all the hard work she has put into this. She added thanks for the information Councillor Mrs Laws provided to her after the count.
- Councillor Booth asked Councillor Seaton to ensure the Council maintains contact with the Internal Drainage Boards in relation to the Wisbech Garden Town Project, as they have not had contact from the Council since July 2018. Councillor Seaton confirmed that he and the Chief Executive are aware of this.
- Councillor Tierney thanked members of Cabinet for their work this year and said he is aware of the difficult decisions they have to make. He asked members of Cabinet to provide information to members earlier in future to ensure members are kept fully informed. Councillor Seaton agreed that where possible, members will receive information earlier in the future.

#### **C50/18      COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (CTRS) - 2019/20**

Members considered the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) 2019/20, presented by Councillor Hay.

She proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider this report earlier in their work programme next year and suggested that it be included as part of their July meeting's agenda. She explained that this will allow members to consider any amendments they may wish to make and allow time for public consultation.

Members asked questions, made comments and received response as follows;

- Councillor Booth agreed that it is necessary for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider this earlier to allow time for any amendments or comments made to be considered.
- Councillor Boden thanked Councillor Hay for her responsiveness in proposing this item be considered earlier by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee next year.

**Proposed by Councillor Seaton, seconded by Councillor Booth and AGREED to approve the Council Tax Reduction Scheme effective from 1 April 2019 as set out in Section 2 and at Appendix A to the report contained within the Agenda Pack.**

#### **C51/18      POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW.**

Councillor Mrs Mayor advised members that there had been a proposed alteration to the report in relation to Bassenhally Ward, Whittlesey polling district DA3 and proposed that the wording contained within the brackets is removed (Page 308 of the Agenda Pack). This is on the basis that Whittlesey Town Council offices will be available and in any event, the remaining wording makes provision for this.

Members agreed to the proposed alteration.

Members considered the Polling Districts and Polling Places Review, presented by Councillor Hay and Councillor Boden.

Councillor Hay said Councillor Boden had been heavily involved in the Working Group and has made a great contribution to the formulation of the report and amendments.

Councillor Boden explained that every 5 years, it is necessary to review Polling District and Polling Places. He said officers had received 48 responses to the public consultation which is a good response rate and as a result, a number of changes were made to the original proposals. He drew member's attention to the further amendments to Appendix C of the report. Councillor Boden thanked the Elections team, Anna Goodall and Paul Medd for their work on this report.

**Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Skoulding and AGREED that the Council;**

- **note the outcome of the review and the consultation undertaken;**
- **agree the changes recommended to polling districts and polling places, as detailed in the report at Appendix C;**
- **note that a review of all polling districts will be undertaken at least every five years and delegates authority to the Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer to keep polling districts under review, in the intervening period between compulsory reviews, and propose any changes which appear necessary to Full Council for its consideration and determination.**

#### **C52/18      CLINICAL WASTE SOLUTION.**

Councillor Mrs Mayor advised members that there had been a proposed alteration to the report in relation to Recommendation 5. Councillor Mrs Mayor proposed that the amended recommendation reads; *to delegate to the Corporate Director (Environment and Leisure) in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Environment, all necessary authority to enter into the proposed agreement at Appendix Z with the relevant pharmacies and GP surgeries and to work with the relevant agencies and colleagues to publicise the services available.*

Members agreed to the proposed alteration.

Members considered the Clinical Waste Solution report, presented by Councillor Murphy.

Members asked questions, made comments and received response as follows;

- Councillor Booth highlighted that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are considering the Fees and Charges for 2019/20 at their meeting on 14 January 2019 and asked why approval is required before this meeting. Councillor Murphy clarified that as negotiations with the NHS are ongoing, the Council must have this approval in case it is implemented prior to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting takes place.
- Councillor Boden highlighted that whilst the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will not be able to amend this fee, they can still consider and comment on this.

**Proposed by Councillor Booth, seconded by Councillor Oliver and AGREED;**

1. **That with effect from 1st April 2019, the introduction of free sharps box drop-off points in local pharmacies at a forecast cost to FDC of £18,000 and incorporated in the 2019/20 budget estimates.**
2. **That with effect from 1st April 2019, the introduction of free collection points in dispensing GP Practices at a forecast cost to FDC of £2,000 and incorporated in the 2019/20 budget estimates.**

- 3. The Council to set the Fees and Charges for 2019/20 at an £8.00 fee for clinical waste collections ("Clinical and offensive waste from domestic households") to be reviewed thereafter annually as part of the usual Fees and Charges and Budget setting process.**
- 4. To approve the proposed update to the Waste Services Standard 2018 as set out at Appendix Y;**
- 5. To delegate to the Corporate Director (Environment and Leisure) in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Environment, all necessary authority to enter into the proposed agreement at Appendix Z with the relevant pharmacies and GP surgeries and to work with the relevant agencies and colleagues to publicise the services available.**

Councillor Mrs Mayor reminded members that there is an Extraordinary Council meeting scheduled to take place on Thursday 17 January 2019.

4.54 pm

Chairman