

# CABINET



**MONDAY, 22 MARCH 2021 - 4.00 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor I Benney, Councillor S Clark, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor A Lynn, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C Seaton and Councillor S Tierney

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Amy Brown (Chief Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer), Peter Catchpole (Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer), Garry Edwards (Engineering Manager), Simon Machen (Interim Corporate Director), Paul Medd (Chief Executive), Carol Pilson (Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer), Gemma Wildman (Local Plan Manager) and Justin Wingfield (Head of Business & Economy)

## **CAB61/20 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2021 were approved.

## **CAB62/20 REPORT FROM THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH INDEPENDENT COMMISSION ON CLIMATE**

Members considered the Cambridgeshire and Independent Commission on Climate presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Boden stated that the report spans several hundred pages and he wanted to draw members attention to the recommendations made. In his opinion, the report missed a number of opportunities and focused heavily on the affluent, urban areas of the County compared to the rural areas, such as Fenland.

He feels that some of the proposals in the report would be difficult for the Council to implement whilst others would involve significant expenditure, which would have to be passed on to the taxpayer. He stated that a number of proposals would add to the cost of the planning process or impact the cost of building in the district, which would make a number of schemes unviable and impact the Council's housing target. He informed members that another proposal suggests diverting funds allocated to housing. This would directly impact economic growth in the area if infrastructure expenditure is cut further.

He stated that there is proposal that a Climate Cabinet, chaired by the Leader of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, is to be established and include Councils and key regional stakeholders. He asked for members agreement that the Council do not support that such a Climate Cabinet should be an executive function and should instead be a non-executive committee with no decision-making powers.

He informed members that he has strong concerns relating to a number of the recommendations in the report and believes members need to consider this in detail at a future meeting. He believed that some of the proposals relating to zero emissions in buildings and vehicles would be difficult to achieve without committing to a large amount of expenditure.

Councillor Boden highlighted that the estimated cost of implementing all recommendations made in the report totals £700 million per year for the next 10 years. This figure is higher than the amount spent by Local Government in total and in his opinion, unrealistic.

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

1. Councillor Hoy agreed that she too had a number of concerns with the report. She addressed the suggestion that all new dwellings should benefit from electric vehicle charging points and highlighted that the district already has issues surrounding viability and this could further impact this.
2. Councillor Hoy raised concerns surrounding the recommendation that 30% of taxis should be electric vehicles, moving to 100% in eight years' time. She added that this was not practical, especially in Fenland as a recent review of the Council's Taxi Licensing Policy had seen a number of drivers request an amendment to the policy to include the use of older vehicles, as they cannot afford to purchase new vehicles. The Licensing Committee had considered this however the requirement for electric vehicles would impact them once more.
3. Councillor Hoy referenced the recommendation that diesel trucks and vehicles should not be permitted in town centres. In an ideal world, she agreed with the sentiment surrounding this however the layout of the district's towns mean that vehicles often have no other option but to drive through town centres.
4. Councillor Hoy stated that in terms of her portfolio responsibilities she was concerned to see the recommendation that no properties are to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) lower than a 'C' rating. She said, in practical terms, many houses built within the last 10 years do not benefit from such a low EPC rating and a number of properties in the area would struggle to meet this target. Furthermore, this would reduce the number of homes available to rent in the area thus increasing the risk of homelessness which concerns her greatly.
5. Councillor Hoy agreed with Councillor Boden's comments surrounding the cost of this work and stated that it does not represent a good use of money given other improvements needed in the district.
6. Councillor Hoy stated that the recommendations would have a detrimental impact on residents with lower incomes as they will not be able to afford the properties and vehicles referenced in the report.
7. Councillor Hoy said she has severe concerns regarding the suggestion of 're-wetting the Fens' and highlighted that the district benefits from some of the best farms in the country which in turn supplies food to a great number of people. She stated that residents enjoy living in Fenland and would be strongly opposed to having their homes impacted by this suggestion. She said that whilst she supports protecting the environment, she does not agree that this should be at the harm of our residents.
8. Councillor Mrs Laws informed members that she had recently attended the Climate Change Independent Commissioners meeting and endorsed many of Councillor Hoy's comments including her concerns surrounding the proposed 're-wetting of the Fens'.
9. Councillor Mrs Laws explained that the amount of available building land in Fenland is limited due to the district's Flood Zones and many of the recommendations would make it near impossible to achieve the Council's build target.
10. Councillor Mrs Laws agreed that the cost in the report is extremely high and said the suggestion of reallocating infrastructure funding is preposterous, as Fenland desperately needs improved infrastructure to connect the district with other areas of the country.
11. Councillor Mrs Laws agreed that the report is steered towards the South of Cambridgeshire and would have a detrimental financial impact on Fenland residents.
12. Councillor Mrs Laws supported Councillor Boden's statement that the proposed Climate Cabinet should be a non-executive committee with no decision-making powers.
13. Councillor Tierney agreed and said he whilst he supports improving the environment, the report recommends extreme measures that are nigh on impossible to implement. He agreed that the report requires further discussion and consideration.
14. Councillor Tierney agreed that the report appears to 'split' the County and supports the proposal that the Climate Cabinet should be a non-executive committee.
15. Councillor Mrs French endorsed other members comments. She confirmed that herself and Councillor Benney had attended a meeting in early 2020 in relation to this matter. She

explained that a number of farmers had been present at the same meeting and whilst they support the sentiment, they strongly disagreed with a lot of the suggestions made.

16. Councillor Murphy stated that he too had attended meetings on this matter and said no consideration had been given to the cost of some of the recommendations. Councillor Boden clarified that the predicted cost to implement the report is £700 million per year for 10 years.
17. Councillor Lynn said he was disappointed to hear the suggestion that funding may be removed from improving infrastructure in Fenland as the area desperately needs this. He added that the report fails to address the issue of incineration too.
18. Councillor Benney concurred and said the suggestion to flood arable farmland is ludicrous as it would involve importing goods which in turn, would increase the carbon footprint making the recommendation counterproductive.
19. Councillor Benney expressed that the recommendations would severely harm residents and local businesses.
20. Councillor Boden noted members comments.

**Cabinet AGREED to note the verbal report.**

*(Councillor Benney joined the meeting at 4.08pm)*

### **CAB63/20 CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENTS UPDATE**

Members considered the Civil Parking Enforcement update report presented by Councillor Mrs French.

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

1. Councillor Mrs Laws praised Councillor Mrs French for her work on the report and endorsed the recommendations. Councillor Mrs French offered thanks to officers, in particular, Garry Edwards, Justin Wingfield and Peter Catchpole for their work on the report.

**Cabinet AGREED to note:**

- a) **the results of the phase one feasibility works**
- b) **the various modelling options being considered for the implementation of enforcement and administrative services associated with CPE**
- c) **the project set up costs, funding proposal and future financial basis of Civil Parking Enforcement implementation outlined in this report.**

**And AGREED**

1. **That the proposals for the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement as outlined in this report are approved.**
2. **That the Council approves the indicative CPE project timeline as detailed in Appendix A.**
3. **In partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, to authorise a signing and lining survey, review and the digital mapping of all existing Traffic Regulation Orders in support of the CPE application working collaboratively with CCC.**
4. **In collaboration with Cambridgeshire County Council, to develop parking enforcement policies that are consistent with and contribute to the Council's overall transport policy and strategy objectives with particular regard to CPE and the provisions of the Traffic Management Act 2004.**

5. To authorise FDC to prepare a CEA/SEA application for a designation order for the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement for submission by the County Council to the DfT on behalf of FDC.
6. To authorise Officers to seek an agency agreement with the Highways Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council, in line with the recommendations above in support of the required application to the DfT.
7. That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director for Finance to resolve any outstanding issues in consultation with the project team, Police and the Highway Authority highways and traffic teams to implement the scheme in accordance with the proposed project timeline.
8. To approve the appointment of a specialist CPE consultant to undertake the Civil Parking Enforcement implementation phase and guide the project team through the complex CPE process. It is estimated the cost of this appointment to be in the region of £30,000 which would be funded by the CPCA funding grant.

**CAB64/20 PROJECTS UPDATE - GROWING FENLAND & CCC CAPITAL COMMUNITY FUND**

Members considered the Projects Update – Growing Fenland and CCC Capital Community fund report presented by Councillor Mrs French.

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

1. Councillor Mrs Laws asked how the process would work for the business capital grants scheme as this had been raised by local businesses. Councillor Mrs French agreed to investigate this further.

**Cabinet AGREED to note the content of the report and projects due to be submitted to the next CPCA Board Meeting on 24.03.21 as set out in appendix E.**

**CCC Capital Communities Fund:**

- **No further action required**

**Growing Fenland:**

- **Cabinet members are asked to note confirmation of CPCA funding requested in the table below.**

TOWN	PROJECT	CPCA FUNDING REQUESTED	CAPITAL COST IMPLICATIONS FOR FDC	REVENUE COST IMPLICATIONS FOR FDC (PER YEAR)	PROJECT TO BE DELIVERED BY
Chatteris	Chatteris Skills Development	£36,178	£0	£0	Stainless Metalcraft
Wisbech	Wisbech Water Park	£147,500	Circa £125,000 (please note point 5.14 in main report)	£0 (please note point 5.14 in main report)	FDC & Wisbech Town Council

**CAB65/20 FUNDING FOR MARCH FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND FROM CPCA & MHCLG**

Members considered the Funding for March Future High Street Fund from CPCA & MHCLG report presented by Councillor Seaton.

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

1. Councillor Mrs French said she was delighted to see the progress made, as it has taken many years to get to this point. She stated that March has never had the opportunity to receive this level of funding before and was pleased to hear that flooding issues in the town will be considered. She thanked the officers for their work on this and the March Area Transport Strategy.

**Cabinet AGREED:**

1. **To accept the grant funding detailed below and authorises the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Social Mobility and Heritage to work with officers to enter into agreements with both CPCA and MHCLG for those grants.**
2. **To instruct officers to put in place appropriate governance arrangements to facilitate the draw down and appropriate management of grant expenditure, including the management of the project delivery with appropriate contractor and consultant procurement.**

**Funding Details:**

£900,000	CPCA Market Town Fund for March
£1,100,000	CPCA additional support grant
£6,447,129	MHCLG Future High Streets Fund grant
£8,447,129	Total project value

**CAB66/20 GRANT OF LEASE OF LAND AT MANEA**

Members considered the Grant of lease of land at Manea report presented by Councillor Seaton.

**Cabinet considered the report and AGREED:**

- **to approve the grant of a Lease for 25 years at an annual rent of £1 to Manea Parish Council upon the Terms herein proposed.**
- **that approval of the detailed terms of the Lease be delegated to the Corporate Director (Finance) and the Head of Economic Growth & Assets in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Social Mobility and Heritage, the Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance.**

**CAB67/20 REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members considered the Review of Outside Bodies report presented by Councillor Boden.

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

1. Councillor Lynn highlighted that the Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel were unaware that he had replaced Councillor Mrs Wallwork as a member. Councillor Boden asked officers to note this.
2. Councillor Boden asked officers to implement a procedure to ensure the Outside Bodies list is accurate and updated regularly.
3. Councillor Mrs Laws raised that she is a member of Middle Level Navigation committee however this is not included in the report. Councillor Boden asked Councillor Mrs Laws to clarify if she was appointed to this committee as a Fenland District Council representative. Councillor Mrs Laws stated that she believed she was appointed a committee member by both the Council and Middle Level. Councillor Boden confirmed that it is likely that Councillor Mrs Laws had been appointed to the committee by Middle Level.
4. Councillor Hoy confirmed that whilst the Fenland Tension Monitoring group had not met due

to Covid-19 restrictions, it is still running, and she has requested to be included in any information they circulate.

5. Councillor Hoy confirmed that she had spoken to Councillor Rackley, Fenland District Council representative of the Wash and North Norfolk Marine Partnership and he had confirmed that Fenland District Council representation is still required.

**Cabinet considered and AGREED:**

- **The list of Outside Body organisations requiring representation, that fulfil the representation criteria.**
- **The list of Outside Body Organisations that no longer fulfil the criteria for representation.**
- **To consider at the July meeting of Cabinet the appointment of elected members to the agreed list of Outside Body organisations.**
- **To delegate to the Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Group Leaders the addition or deletion of outside bodies as the need arises during the municipal year and appointment of Members to vacancies on outside bodies during the municipal year.**

**CAB68/20 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

Councillor Boden presented the Cabinet Forward Plan for information.

**CAB69/20 DRAFT LOCAL PLAN UPDATE**

Members considered the Draft Local Plan Update report presented by Councillor Mrs Laws.

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

1. Councillor Boden supported the proposal stating that the report is a 'declaration of growth' and the Council will do their utmost to ensure that housing needs are met.
2. Councillor Mrs Laws explained that over 500 sites had been submitted as part of the process and applauded officers for their hard work on this.

**Cabinet AGREED to note the update on the Local Plan and key policy changes proposed.**

*(Councillor Mrs Laws declared an Other Interest due to the fact that close family members/associates had submitted sites as part of the Local Plan site selection process)*

*(Councillor Clark declared a disclosable pecuniary interest by virtue of the fact that she had submitted a site as part of the Local Plan site selection process and took no part in this item)*

4.56 pm

Chairman