

**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

24 May 2018  
5.15 - 6.05 pm

**Present:** Councillors Barnett (Chair), Baigent (Vice-Chair), Bick, Dalzell, Sinnott and Sargeant

Executive Councillors: Herbert (Leader of the Council) and Robertson (Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources)

**Officers:**

Chief Executive: Antoinette Jackson

Head of Legal Practice: Tom Lewis

Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

<b>FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL</b>
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**18/31/SR Apologies for Absence**

None.

**18/32/SR Declarations of Interest**

Name	Item	Interest
Cllr Dalzell	18/35/SR	Personal: Governor of Abbey Meadow School which would be subject to any business rate increase.
Cllr Barnett	18/35/SR	Personal: Employer would be subject to any business rate increase.

**18/33/SR Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **18/34/SR Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

### **18/35/SR Constituent Council Consent for Business Rates Supplement Order, and Devolution of Adult Education Powers**

#### **Matter for Decision**

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) were required to acquire consent from constituent councils for various powers and duties. For the CPCA, the constituent councils are Cambridgeshire County Council and all the District Councils.

Consent was being sought in respect of the power to:

- i. Levy a Business Rates Supplement; and
- ii. Transfer the Adult Education Budget and associated powers for the delivery of adult education services

Both these powers were allowed by statute for an elected Mayor and the CPCA but there were strict controls around their implementation. It was noted that by the Council giving the aforementioned consent it does not in any way make the Council liable for any costs associated with these powers.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Strategy and External Partnerships**

- i. Gave consent on behalf of the Council to the making of regulations under the Local Government Act 2003 Part 1 contained in the two 'Draft' Statutory Instruments attached (Appendix 2 and Appendix 4 of the Officers report).
- ii. Asked the Combined Authority to provide detailed background reports to member Councils in support of such decision requests in future, including the option of a Combined Authority Officer to attend committee meetings to explain future proposals where requested.

#### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

#### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

## Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Head of Legal Practice.

The Head of Legal Practice said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. A speedy decision was needed on these matters due to parliamentary timetabling.
- ii. Any additional costs incurred in collecting any additional business rates would be reimbursed.

Councillor Bick tabled a copy of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough East Anglia Devolution Proposal of June 2016. He raised concerns that the way the Combined Authority was working was not in line with the original proposals.

The Committee discussed the need to maintain autonomy over local decisions while retaining a good working relationship with the Combined Authority. Members were unhappy that they were being asked to make quick decisions based on limited information.

Councillor Herbert stated that there was considerable cross party and cross authority agreement on the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership approaches to transport, congestion and housing. Discussions were on-going with the Mayor to align approaches on these complex matters. Rejecting the decisions under consideration would be unhelpful to the longer term partnership approach. There were some anomalies in the current delegations of power to the Mayor and to other bodies. However, clear delegations to the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership were in place and there was capacity to deliver a transport strategy.

Councillor Bick stated that the City needed to reinforce its position as a partner and not a subordinate. He proposed the following amendment to the recommendation (struck through words deleted and those in bold added):

To give consent on behalf of the Council to the making of regulations under the Local Government Act 2003 Part 1 contained in the ~~two~~ 'Draft' Statutory Instruments attached (~~Appendix 2 and Appendix 4 of the Officers report~~) in **Appendix 4.**

**To give consent on behalf of the Council to the making of regulations under the Local Government Act 2003 Part 1 contained in the Draft Statutory Instrument attached in Appendix 2, conditional upon his satisfaction that the Mayor's Transport Statement has been withdrawn or rejected.**

The amendment was lost by 2 votes 4.

The Committee agreed that Combined Authority should be asked to provide more information on any future decisions.

Councillor Herbert proposed an additional recommendation as follows:

**To ask the Combined Authority to provide detailed background reports to member Councils in support of such decision requests in future, including the option of a Combined Authority Officer to attend committee meetings to explain future proposals where requested.**

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the amended recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

The meeting ended at 6.05 pm

**CHAIR**