

**COUNCIL**

15 February 2024  
6.00 pm – 11.15pm

**Present:** Councillors Ashton, Baigent, Bennett, Bick, Bird, Blackburn-Horgan, Carling, Davey, Divkovic, Flaubert, Gawthrop Wood, Gilderdale, Griffin, Hauk, Healy, Holloway, Hossain, Howard, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Nethsingha, Payne, Porrer, Pounds, Robertson, Smart, A. Smith, S. Smith, Swift, Thittala Varkey, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Tong, Wade and Young

Also present (virtually) Councillors: Lee and Sheil

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

**24/1/CNL Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Dryden, Glasberg, Levien and Martinelli. Councillor Flaubert provided apologies for lateness.

Councillors Lee and Sheil attended the meeting virtually.

**24/2/CNL Declarations of Interest**

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Baigent	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign.
Councillor Simon Smith	24/6/CNLa and 24/7/CNLa	Personal: Director of Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP).
Councillor Bird	24/6/CNLa and 24/7/CNLa	Personal: Director of Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP).
Councillor Ashton	24/7/CNLa	Personal: Chair of Cherry Hinton Residents Association.

**24/3/CNL Minutes**

The minutes of the 30 November 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

**24/4/CNL Mayor's announcements**

The mayor extended sympathy to all people suffering from terrorism and war.

The mayor noted it was 3 months since they had made their statement at the October Council meeting about the situation in Israel and Palestine and reiterated their call for an immediate ceasefire and return of the hostages. Noted that more Heads of State, Government, and councils around the world now echoed that call.

The mayor thanked those who had supported the Chevin Service on 21 January 2024 and noted that a charity event would be held at the Guildhall to support Parkinson's UK and a separate event may be held for the Red Hen charity. The Mayor's Quiz would be taking place on the 13 March and the Mayor's Reception on 15 March.

The mayor also advised that they would be exercising their discretion to move agenda item 6d – Hartree Proposed Early Stage Development and Possible Acceleration (Subject to Permission) – to the last item on the agenda as it contained confidential information. This item was then deferred to the Council meeting's reconvened date of 29 February 2024.

## **24/5/CNL Public questions time**

Public Questions

To watch the recording of public question time: [Budget Meeting, Council - Thursday, 15th February, 2024 6.00 pm \(youtube.com\)](#)

### **Question 1 - Cambridge Young Greens**

Following the barbaric Hamas-led attack that took the lives of over 350 children and young people in October of last year, we have seen an eruption of violence in the middle east. Recent events, including the International Court of Justice's ruling last week, have brought the Israeli government's continued attempts to commit genocide against the Palestinian people to the forefront of the national conversation. Residents of Cambridge, many of whom have family and friends who reside in either Palestine or Israel, have been shocked by the needless waste of nearly thirty-thousand lives - both Palestinian and Israeli - that has taken place over the last four months alone.

These events have been particularly distressing for young people in Cambridge. It is estimated that half of the occupants of the Gaza strip are

children, and a further 20% are under the age of 30. Tragically, over a third of the recent casualties have been children.

Last year, HC Bill 325 was put forward in an attempt to sabotage the peaceful and democratic efforts of Palestinian rights activists, who have sought change by calling for boycotts, divestments, and sanctions (BDS) against the state of Israel. While the local authority has already been severely limited in its freedom to procure its goods and services as it pleases, what implications might this mandate have for Cambridge City Council?

The Leader responded:

- i. Like the Cambridge Young Greens was horrified by the events taking place in Palestine and Israel.
- ii. The Council issued a statement by the Mayor on the 19 October calling for all communities to respect one another.
- iii. Cambridge was a diverse city and a City of Sanctuary.
- iv. Commented that although relatively few incidences of hate crimes had been reported to the Police this may mask the true situation. Noted that students from different communities had expressed fears around what had been taking place and the impact this had on their daily life. The Council acknowledged this impact and noted that the Community Safety Team had been working with communities to try and allay those fears.
- v. Noted the HC Bill 325 was still going through Parliament.

Supplementary Public Question:

- i. In the past the City Council had worked hard to acknowledge genocides which had taken place around the world and had supported affected residents.
- ii. Noted the Council held an event to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day. The same could not be said for events in the Middle East, which had been referred to merely as a conflict by council representatives. These comments upset many young people in Cambridge many of whom have friends or relatives residing in Palestine.
- iii. Considering the International Court of Justice's ruling believed the council should have a clear stance on recent events. Asked if the Council considered the Israeli Government's actions to be an attempt at genocide.
- iv. Historically the Council had put effort into promoting services which supported victims of military violence and noted a series of webpages had been set up to advise local people how they could assist Ukrainian people. Palestinians had not received the same treatment. Asked if the Council could set up webpages to advise local people how they could support humanitarian aid to reach people suffering in the Middle East.

The Leader responded:

- i. Asked to be provided with further details about who had made comments using the term conflict and would follow this up.
- ii. The Labour Group had issued a statement in December calling for an immediate ceasefire. This had been sent to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition.
- iii. Would investigate the request for a website regarding how local people could support humanitarian aid.

## Question 2

With reference to motion 10a - If this motion is passed, how will Care Experienced people be involved in the implementation of the treatment of Care Experience as a Protected Characteristic and how will the Council involve Care Experienced people in their policy-making?

The Executive Councillor for Communities responded:

- i. Care experienced people faced many barriers; in particular not being seen or heard.
- ii. Having the State appointed as corporate parent lead to many hurdles for care experienced people to be overcome including direct and indirect discrimination and not having the support network other people had.
- iii. If the Care Experience as Protected Characteristic motion was passed (minute reference 24/15/CNL) all new policies would need to reflect and consider the impact of care experience as a protected characteristic.
- iv. Officers and staff would need training, HR would need to reflect this policies and equality impact assessments would need to consider care experience as a protected characteristic.

Supplementary Public Question:

- i. In September 1998 the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care wrote to all councillors about their role as corporate parents of looked after children and care leavers asking them to look at the lives of those in care and ask themselves if they thought it was good enough for their own children.
- ii. Spoke about their care experience; had been told by professionals their experience in the children's home constituted torture and that they had experienced physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.
- iii. As a Care Leaver had not received the support they needed.
- iv. Didn't feel like they had a friend until they were 19 years and did not feel they had a home until 22 years.

The Executive Councillor for Communities responded:

- i. Thanked the public speaker for sharing their care experience and believed it would help people to understand how care experienced people are affected by their experiences.

### **Question 3 – County Councillor Goodliffe**

Anyone who has experienced being in Care has experienced loss or trauma or more often both. Their adverse childhood experiences follow them into adulthood. They also often have less support than their peers in terms of supportive family, adults who can assist with the usual tasks we help our own adult children with – applications, forms, preparation for life in the form of job interviews, daily tasks and other needs. Just this week I have assisted my own adult children in their work, university projects, how to fix a household appliance and ordering things on the internet.

Similarly our duty as a corporate parent does not end when a Child reaches the magic 18 years. Whilst County may hold the Corporate parenting role for Children’s Services, we always need to work with our City and districts to manage housing, planning and open spaces to name but a few areas. As such according to the McAllistair Review:

“First, the ‘corporate parenting’ responsibility that applies to local authorities needs to be extended to all public bodies for children in care and care experienced adults, to reflect the shared responsibility they have to these children and adults. Second, to tackle the stigma and discrimination many care leavers face in their day to day lives, the UK should be the first country in the world to recognise the care experience as a legally protected characteristic in equalities legislation.”

Many care experienced people face discrimination, stigma, and prejudice in their day to day lives. Public perceptions of care experience centre on the idea that children are irredeemably damaged and that can lead to discrimination and assumptions being made.

This stigma and discrimination can be explicit, and often comes with assumptions about the likely characteristics of children and adults that have care experience. They can also be implicit and are evidenced in the way care experience is discussed in schools, workplaces, and the media.

At its worst this can lead to care experienced people being refused employment, failing to succeed in education or facing unfair judgements about their ability to parent when they have children and families of their own. Care Experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing,

health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system, and as corporate parents, councillors have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who have been looked after by any authority.

Therefore, I am delighted to see this on the agenda for Cambridge City today. I am pleased on behalf of a group of people who need to be seen, heard and embraced by all local Authorities. Care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives, and despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account.

Care experienced young people are often hidden and this we need to make sure they are seen. I look forward to working with Cambridge City Council to ensure that in Cambridge and Cambridgeshire we value Care Experienced people and work together to ensure that their best possible future is achieved.

The Executive Councillor for Communities responded:

- i. Thanked County Councillor Goodliffe for their hard work and thanked Cambridgeshire County Council for passing the motion.

Supplementary Public Question:

- i. Noted a Housing Association had advertised a property stating 'no care leavers', which showed why making care experience a protected characteristic was so important.
- ii. If the City Council passed the motion, it would be the 80<sup>th</sup> council to do so.
- iii. Terry Galloway had been campaigning on this issue nationally and was present at the meeting.

The Executive Councillor for communities responded:

- i. Approval of the Care Experience as Protected Characteristic motion (minute reference 24/15/CNL) would raise the profile of care experience and ensure voices were heard.

#### **Question 4 - Secretary of Cambridge Stop the War Coalition**

Since 2014, I have personally organised public meetings, vigils and protests for our Cambridge community to demonstrate our solidarity in Cambridge for the struggle of the Palestinian people against Occupation. Even in the social distancing era of 2021 we gathered in our hundreds to protest the attacks on Gaza by Israeli Occupation forces. Now, since October 2023 to the present day, the people of Cambridge continue to come out in large numbers here and

to support the national protests in London. We have residents from Palestine living in our community and students from Gaza studying in our Universities. In acknowledgment of the depth and breadth of support from the Cambridge community for the struggling people of Gaza under Occupation, and in solidarity with our many Palestinian residents, would the city council consider a show of solidarity for the people of Palestine now by flying the flag of Palestine at Guildhalls?

Some information for context:

Our petition on change.org asking the City Council to Fly the Flag of Palestine at Guildhalls got 2763 signatories.

203 of these are Cambridge residents. I have attached the spreadsheet of the Cambridge signatories.

The petition can be viewed [Petition · Fly Palestine Flag at Guildhalls · Change.org](#)

We are living in an unprecedented era of militarisation after a bloody history of the last 100 years of war.

Some areas of the world do not know peace.

Since South Africa's case at the International Court of Justice it has become apparent that the world is witness to an ongoing genocide in Palestine.

We urge you all to demonstrate a simple, but powerful act of solidarity with those suffering and to show the world that the City of Sanctuary stands with the people of Palestine.

The Leader responded:

- i. The City Council had a reputation for demonstrating solidarity with people across the world who faced oppression.
- ii. Cambridge was a City of Sanctuary.
- iii. The Council represented all people in the city.
- iv. The Council would not fly the Palestinian flag despite recognition of the enormous loss of life in Gaza.

Supplementary Public Question:

- i. The Council needed to meet with residents and the people of Gaza who lived in Cambridge. They needed to understand the depth of feeling by them and the wider Cambridge community.
- ii. The Council should take a lead from South Africa.

- iii. A show of solidarity was powerful. Cambridge should lead the world in this act. It was a simple thing to fly the Palestinian flag.

The Leader responded:

- i. An immediate ceasefire had been called for.
- ii. Weekly informal meetings were taking place with different communities.

Supplementary Public Statement:

- i. Had asked for a simple thing; for the Palestinian flag to be flown at the Guildhall to show solidarity and they had been told this wouldn't be done.
- ii. Also felt a microaggression had been made against them implying that the problems being talked about, the people of Gaza suffering was because of arguments between people of particular faith groups, which was incorrect. Reference had been made to Israel and Occupied Palestinian territories as if Palestine did not exist; it was an occupied territory by Israel.
- iii. Asked for South Africa and Nelson Mandela's lead to be followed.
- iv. Asked for support for Palestine.
- v. Asked for an apology for the statement that it was a faith issue.
- vi. Was calling on the whole Council to speak out, did not want statements from political groups. Terrible crimes were taking place. The Council had a moral duty to speak out.
- vii. Other actions the Council could take, to observe the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions. Call on Government to observe export rules on arms licences.

Councillor Bick responded:

- i. Noted the Leader had responded to public speakers and had advised the Labour Group's position. The Liberal Democrat Group had not been asked for their view about a ceasefire and would support a ceasefire.

Councillor Bennett responded:

- i. Noted the Cambridge Young Greens had spoken earlier during public speaking time at the meeting.
- ii. The Green Party had a united stance nationally and stood for a ceasefire.

## Question 5

The attacks by Hamas on October 7th 2023, and the scale of the subsequent continual Israeli bombing of Gaza have sent shock waves around the world. Already by November the UN Secretary General was saying that we are



witnessing a killing of civilians, especially children, that is unparalleled and unprecedented in any conflict since he took office.

Since that date, and as at the beginning of this week, the recorded deaths from Israeli military action were over 28,000 people, including more than 12,000 children, and among whom there are at least 340 medical workers and 120 journalists. Around 7,000 people are still missing, 70% of whom are women and children. 68,000 people have been wounded, in many cases with life-changing injuries. There has been devastation of the entire civic infrastructure. This after 17 years of siege on Gaza. Aid trucks still do not have adequate access. Widespread hunger and disease are the inevitable corollaries, everyone is at risk.

Collective punishment is a war crime, as is hostage-taking (as well as the initial Israeli hostages, thousands of Palestinians, including children, have been abducted and imprisoned). The principles of international law and conventions on human rights must be central to the responses of our political leaders to this crisis, no matter who perpetrates them.

South Africa, as a signatory to the 1948 Genocide Convention, brought a case to the International Court of Justice last month, which concluded that a 'Plausible Case' for Genocide could be made against Israel, also a signatory. Its role is to make legal rulings, not to enforce them, so it did not call for a ceasefire, but the Provisional Orders, if implemented, would have very much the same effect. There are immediate implications for public figures in the UK, as since 2001 there is personal liability in law for complicity in Genocide.

This situation did not start on October 7th, and it will not end solely with a ceasefire. The underlying causes must finally be acknowledged and tackled. Gaza is an occupied territory and part of Palestine, which has been subjected to expulsions, military occupation, apartheid, siege and severe human rights violations over a period of 75 years. Israel has enjoyed decades of impunity while regularly flouting international law and committing war crimes. People living under such regimes look to international institutions to stand up for justice, without which there cannot be peace. Failing that, as re-affirmed by UN Resolution 45/130 in 1990, they look to 'the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial domination, apartheid and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle'.

There is crucial work to be done by you, our local political representatives, to put pressure on our national ones. Silence and neutrality are not options here, they make you complicit. Israel must not be allowed to flout international law

any longer: the implications for the rest of Palestine, and beyond, do not bear thinking about.

Gaza has everything to do with us in Cambridge. We are an international City of Sanctuary, welcoming students, visitors and refugees from all over the world. Public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of a ceasefire in the UK and internationally, witness opinion polls and huge demonstrations in many cities. This is certainly what we experience in Cambridge, where people also express their care and concern with generous donations.

#### Question

Will the City Council call for:

An immediate permanent ceasefire

The unhindered entry of all necessary humanitarian aid into Gaza, including the immediate restoration of funding to UNWRA.

An immediate end to the attacks, arrests, land theft and demolitions in the West Bank

An end to the illegal control systems of military occupation, siege and apartheid

And demand that our government does likewise?

The Leader responded:

- i. The City Council acted as a representative for all people in the City. Sought to distinguish their different roles from that as a Council and that as Cambridge Labour Group.
- ii. The Cambridge Labour Group had called for an immediate ceasefire in December 2023 and had written to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition in January 2024. Stood in solidarity with innocent civilians from both Israel and Palestine. Condemned the bombing and seizure of Gaza and the massacre of people who lived there.

Supplementary Public Question:

- i. They were writing to the Council as a whole and they were asking the Council to act. Oxford, Sheffield, Bradford, Bolton, Exeter, Liverpool, Preston, Burnley Aberystwyth had all called for ceasefires as a council, which had a particular political strength nationally.
- ii. Did not believe all public questions asked had been answered.
- iii. Believed that the Council needed to do something concrete; expressions of sympathy and statements of concern were not sufficient. The City Council should follow what other councils had done.
- iv. Should heed the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions. Asked for an evaluation to be conducted of investment, financial banking, and tendering processes.

The Leader responded:

- i. Had called for a ceasefire and had written to the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition to call for a ceasefire.

### **Question 6**

For those Councillors who do not know me, I am John Preston, longstanding Cambridge resident, artist, historic environment consultant and lecturer. I worked in the Guildhall for over 20 years as conservation officer then historic environment manager for the Council; I have organised events and exhibitions in it. I cycle to shop in the market. My question raises issues of public involvement in, and the physical capacity of, our city, firstly in relation to the Market Square and the Civic Quarter in agenda item 7a.

I welcome the inclusion of the Guildhall and the Corn Exchange along with the Market Square in the Civic Quarter combined project (bid SC 873 on page 330), but the Council's plan to appoint architects in April to take proposals to RIBA Stage 2 is seriously premature, perpetuates past mistakes in relation to the Market Square, and risks wasting scarce resources and losing any remaining public goodwill.

Cllr Simon Smith says on the Civic Quarter website: "By working with the community and stakeholders, we will find out what people want from the Guildhall, market and Corn Exchange and spaces between.....". But the Council should have found out what people want as part of the brief, before getting anywhere near the detailed design stage. Its 2019 Market Square Feasibility Study "recommended that visioning workshops with technical stakeholders and the community are arranged prior to design progression to develop and agree a vision and objectives for the scheme"(BDP Feasibility Study, 9.3, p 108). But this did not happen, then or since.

The so-called "vision" agreed by Councillors in 2022 for the market square was aspirational at best, as were the Council's responses to the very inadequate public consultation. The trials of demountable stalls (without which the Council's proposed evening events are a non-starter) were a total fiasco. The Council has still not published its cultural report on potential events, or any evidence on how these could be accommodated whilst maintaining a viable market within the limited space and time available. So neither of the 2 key elements of what is presented to you as an "agreed vision" were or are credible. It was, and remains, demonstrably clear that the project has failed to pass its first hurdle: RIBA Stage 1 "agree a brief and establish that it can be accommodated on the site".

So rather than rushing ahead to appoint an external design team, why doesn't the Council take up the offer of help made by the Chair of the Cambridge Association of Architects in a recent Civic Quarter meeting? Come on City Council, hold public briefing workshops facilitated by local architects, and let's explore the possibility of a realistic vision which resolves, to public satisfaction, the many competing demands on, and potential opportunities offered by our Market Square and civic buildings. Only then you will have a basis for appointing a design team with a viable brief.

And in terms of public goodwill, if you value the market as you claim to do, how about actively promoting it, as East Cambridgeshire does for Ely Market?

Supplementary Question (provided in advance of the meeting)

In my supplementary I will respond to the Executive Councillor's comments. I will also raise a further and very current public involvement and physical capacity issue: the urgent need for a publicly-accessible digital model to allow the individual and cumulative impacts of tall and bulky development proposals to be shown to and assessed by Councillors and public. The urgent need for such a model has been highlighted by the Grafton Centre and Beehive proposals; it could be extremely helpful for the Hartree project (agenda item 6d).

The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources responded:

- i. The Council had reached a consensus to progress the proposals regarding the redevelopment of the Market, Guildhall and Corn Exchange to RIBA stage 2.
- ii. The views of stakeholders and the public would be heard. The engagement plan had been included in the procurement documentation.
- iii. Noted points made at a Civic Quarter Liaison Group meeting on 31 January would be published in the meetings minutes on the website.

Supplementary Public Question:

- i. Welcomed the commitment to the Guildhall, Market Square and Corn Exchange but challenged the process for delivering it.
- ii. A viable market needed to work for everyone. The council was still running separate meetings for the traders. The practical issues which concerned them were of equal concern to the wider public.
- iii. Noted comments that the council would learn from what it had done previously, but the council was repeating its previous mistake of leaping from aspiration to design, without resolving the practical requirements on

which the vision depends. The 'what, why and how' needed to be resolved before moving on to design.

- iv. The market square vision tried to cram too much into a limited space.

The Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources responded to the supplementary question provided in advance of the meeting:

- i. A 3D digital model of the city had been procured, which had allowed for coverage of the city and its setting. The model would complement the existing mapping system and would be further enhanced by a photo realistic layer of data to assist with the visualisation of new developments.

The 30-minute period for public questions was exceeded before question 7 could be responded to. The Executive Councillor for Communities would provide a written response to the member of the public outside of the meeting.

### **Question 7**

What progress has been made in providing a Traveller site/(s) in Cambridge, including transit sites?

A year after the last budget meeting, we are again raising the issue of the lack of Traveller sites in Cambridge. Over 3 ½ years after the rhetorical statement by the then Labour Councillor (subsequently the Executive Councillor for Equalities, Anti-Poverty and Wellbeing) on the impact of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill in criminalising the travelling way of life, the Council have still failed to provide any meaningful solution or change to their policy of eviction. We have pointed out that as the only Labour Council in Cambridgeshire, surrounded almost totally by a sea of Tory councils, this was unacceptable. Within the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership alongside South Cambridgeshire, with a notorious record of anti-Traveller housing policies, particularly aimed at the Irish Traveller community, Cambridge Council have effectively followed their lead. Finding a pitch of ground for legal stopping places has been beyond the GCP. In their response last year, Cambridge Council stated they had changed their focus to looking for permanent sites, despite the fact that it is the lack of transit sites that causes the greatest conflict between the Traveller and settled communities. As we have consistently pointed out, English Romani and Irish Travellers have protected status under the ECHR which includes the right to a home. (1) We are not aware what the new GTANA has recommended, if in fact it has reported.

While the Council would likely decry the treatment of the Bedouin in Israel and Palestine, another travelling people, similar empathy towards the Travellers in

our County appears lacking, alongside the ambition to resolve this long-standing problem.

#### Notes

1 In fact Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 stated 14 years ago that public bodies should have regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations; to remove and minimise disadvantages suffered by those due to their protected characteristics; and to encourage them to participate in public life. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/>

#### **24/6/CNL To consider the recommendations of the Executive for adoption**

**6a** Executive Councillor for Housing: HRA Budget Setting Report (BSR) 2024/25

**Resolved** (by 24 votes to 1) to:

- i. Approve the revised need to borrow over the 30-year life of the business plan, with the first instance of this anticipated to be in 2023/24, to sustain the proposed level of investment, which includes ear-marking funding for delivery of the 10 Year New Homes Programme.
- ii. Recognise that the constitution delegates Treasury Management to the Chief Finance Officer (Part 3, para 5.11), with Part 4F, C16 stating; 'All executive decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer, who is required to act in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities.
- iii. Recognise that the decision to borrow significantly to build new homes impacts the authority's ability to set-aside resource to redeem the HRA Self-Financing debt at the point at which the loan portfolio matures, with the need to re-finance debt in the latter stages of the business plan.
- iv. Approve capital bids, as detailed in Appendix E (3) and Appendix F of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- v. Approve the latest Decent Homes and Other HRA Stock Investment Programme, to include re-phasing of elements of the programme between capital and revenue, as detailed in Appendix F of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

- vi. Approve the latest budget sums, profiling and associated financing for all new build schemes, as detailed in Appendix F, and summarised in Appendix H, of the HRA Budget Setting Report.
- vii. Approve allocation of £15,285,000 of funds from the budget ear-marked for the delivery of new homes into a scheme specific budget for Newbury Farm, in line with the scheme specific report presented as part of the committee cycle.
- viii. Approve the revised Housing Capital Investment Plan as shown in Appendix H of the HRA Budget Setting Report.

**Resolved** (by 35 votes to 1) to:

- ix. Approve the inclusion of Disabled Facilities Grant expenditure and associated grant income from 2024/25 onwards, based upon 2023/24 net grant awarded, with approval of delegation to the Chief Finance Officer, as Section 151 Officer, to approve an in year increase or decrease in the budget for disabled facilities grants in any year, in direct relation to any increase or decrease in the capital grant funding for this purpose, as received from the County Council through the Better Care Fund.
- x. Approve delegation to the Chief Finance Officer, as Section 151 Officer, to determine the most appropriate use of any additional Disabled Facilities Grant funding, for the wider benefit of the Shared Home Improvement Agency.
- xi. Approve delegation to the Director of Communities to review and amend the level of fees charged by the Shared Home Improvement Agency for disabled facilities grants and repair assistance grants, in line with any recommendations made by the Shared Home Improvement Agency Board.
- xii. Approve delegation to the relevant Director, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, as Section 151 Officer, to draw down resource from the ear-marked revenue reserve or capital reserve for potential debt redemption or re-investment, for the purpose of open market land or property acquisition or new build housing development, should the need arise, in order to meet deadlines for the use of retained right to buy receipts or to facilitate future site redevelopment.
- xiii. Approve delegation to the Chief Finance Officer, as Section 151 Officer, to make any necessary technical amendments to detailed budgets in respect of recharges between the General Fund and the HRA, with any change in impact for the HRA to be reported and incorporated as part of

the HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy in September or November 2024.

At this point in the meeting, it was agreed (32 For, 2 Against, 2 Abstentions) that an adjournment would be taken after item 8(b), with all remaining items to be taken at a meeting on Thursday 29 February.

**6b** Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources: Capital Strategy 2024/25

**Resolved** (by 33 votes to 0) to:

- i. Approve the Capital Strategy.

**6c** Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources: Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/25 to 2026/27

**Resolved** (unanimously) to:

- i. Approve the estimated Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2024/25 to 2027/28 (inclusive) as set out in Appendix C of the officer's report.

**6d** Leader of the Council: Hartree - Proposed Early Stage Development and Possible Acceleration (Subject to Permissions)

This item was deferred to the adjourned council meeting taking place on 29 February 2024.

**24/7/CNL To consider Budget Recommendations of the Executive for adoption**

**7a** Budget Setting Report (General Fund) 2024/25 to 2028/29

A supplementary information document was published in advance of the council meeting on pages 19-24 of the Information Pack which updated recommendation 2(c) and the level of council tax for 2024/25 as set out in updated Appendix A(b) and recommendations 2 (g) and (k) as reserve movements were impacted by the final finance settlement.

The Executive presented its budget recommendations as set out in the Council Agenda and as published on the City Council's website.

The Liberal Democrat Group Members presented the Liberal Democrat Group's alternative budget as published in the Information Pack.



The Green Group spoke to their budget commentary as published in the Information Pack.

Under the Council's budget procedure, the Liberal Democrat Group's alternative budget was deemed to have been moved and seconded as an amendment.

The Liberal Democrat Group's alternative budget amendment was lost by:

10 votes in favour: Bick, Bennett, Blackburn-Horgan, Flaubert, Hauk, Hossain, Nethsingha, Payne, Porrer, Young

To 24 votes against: Ashton, Baigent, Bird, Carling, Davey, Divkovic, Gawthrop Wood, Gilderdale, Griffin, Healy, Holloway, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Pounds, Robertson, Smart, A.Smith, S.Smith, Swift, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Thittala Varkey, Wade

2 Abstentions: Howard, Tong

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the Executive's budget proposals by:

25 votes in favour: Ashton, Baigent, Bird, Carling, Davey, Divkovic, Gawthrop Wood, Gilderdale, Griffin, Healy, Holloway, Hossain, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Pounds, Robertson, Smart, A.Smith, S.Smith, Swift, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Thittala Varkey, Wade

11 abstentions: Bick, Bennett, Blackburn-Horgan, Flaubert, Hauk, Howard, Nethsingha, Payne, Porrer, Tong, Young

To approve the following:

- i. Revenue pressures and bids shown in Appendix D(b) and savings shown in Appendix D(c) of the officer's report.
- ii. Delegation to the Chief Finance Officer of the calculation and determination of the council tax taxbase (including submission of the national non-domestic rates forecast form, NNDR1, for each financial year) which is set out in Appendix A(a).
- iii. The level of council tax for 2024/25 as set out in the updated Appendix A (b) detailed on pages 23-24 of the Information Pack.
- iv. Delegation to the Chief Finance Officer authority to finalise changes relating to any further corporate and/or departmental restructuring and any reallocation of support service and central costs, in accordance with

- the CIPFA Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities (SeRCOP).
- v. Proposals outlined in Appendix E(a) for inclusion in the Capital Plan.
  - vi. Subject to (v) above, the revised capital plan for the General Fund as set out in Appendix D(c) and the funding as set out in Section 5, page 20.
  - vii. The impact of revenue budget approvals and the resulting contribution to reserves [Updated General reserves table on page 22 of the Information Pack].
  - viii. The creation of a Civic Quarter Development Reserve with the remit set out in Section 6, page 24.
  - ix. The allocation of £20m of general reserves to that reserve.
  - x. The allocation of £750k of general reserves to the Climate Change Fund, as set out in Section 6, page 23.
  - xi. The resulting level of reserves [Updated General reserves table on page 22 of the Information Pack].
  - xii. The Chief Finance Officer's Section 25 Report, covering the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves, included in Section 8 of the BSR [page 32].
  - xiii. Reconfirm that the incomes below will be disregarded (if above £10 statutory disregard) when calculating entitlement to housing benefit and/or council tax reduction. These schemes are often called local or modified schemes.
    - War disablement pension
    - War widow, widower or surviving civil partner pension
    - Armed Forces Independence PaymentThe estimated cost to the council for payments of housing benefit made under the local scheme is £1,777.50 and for council tax reduction less than £50.
  - xiv. Note the Equality Impact Assessment in Appendix F covering all GF budget proposals.
  - xv. Note the schedule of proposed fees and charges for 2024/25 in Appendix G.

**24/8/CNL To consider the recommendations of Committees for adoption**

**24/9/CNL Civic Affairs Committee: Pay Policy Statement 2024/25**

**Resolved** (unanimously) to:

- i. Approve the change in delegation for fixed term non-leadership team Director level roles and to amend the Constitution in accordance with paragraph 6.3 of the officer's report.
- ii. Approve the draft Pay Policy Statement 2023/2024 attached to the officer's report as Appendix 1.

### **24/10/CNL Licensing Committee: Cumulative Impact Statement**

**Resolved** (unanimously) to:

- i. Approve the draft Cumulative Impact Assessment attached to the officer's report as Appendix C.

### **24/11/CNL To deal with oral questions**

This item was deferred to the adjourned council meeting taking place on 29 February 2024.

### **24/12/CNL To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:**

#### **24/13/CNL Councillor Holloway - Care Experience as Protected Characteristic**

Councillor Holloway proposed and Councillor Bird seconded the following motion:

This Council notes that:

- care experienced people face significant barriers that impact on them throughout their lives. One in five care leavers feels lonely most or all of the time (Baker et al. 2019, p. 6), care leavers make up 25% of Britain's homeless population (Mackie and Thomas 2014, p. 27), and adults who have spent time in care are far more likely than their peers to die prematurely (Sacker et al. 2021, p. 33).
- despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account. Josh Macalister wrote in The Independent Review of Children's Social Care that "The disadvantage faced by the care experienced community should be the civil rights issue of our time" (Macalister 2022, p. 24).

- care experienced people often face direct and indirect discrimination, and need to be protected against both. This discrimination occurs in many areas of life, including housing, health, education, relationships, employment and criminal justice.
- care experienced people may encounter inconsistent support in different geographical areas.
- councillors should be champions of care experienced people and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudices that exist in all aspects of society.
- the Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.
- Current Care Leaver provisions end at age 25, whereas recognition of care experience as a protected characteristic would mean that care experience would be taken into account for a lifetime – in the same way as the discrimination and hardships resulting from care experience last a lifetime.
- Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority have passed motions recognising care experience as if it were a protected characteristic, on 16 May 2023 and 29 November 2023 respectively.

This Council therefore resolves that:

- it recognises that care experienced people are a group who are likely to face discrimination.
- it recognises that councils have a duty to put the needs of disadvantaged people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration.
- future decisions, services and policies made and adopted by this Council should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally have a protected characteristic.
- in its delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty, this Council will include care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who have a protected characteristic in services and employment.

- this Council will treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic.
- this Council formally calls upon all other bodies, including other local authorities in Cambridgeshire, to treat care experience as a protected characteristic until such time as this recognition may be introduced by legislation.
- this Council will continue proactively seeking out and listening to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies.

**Resolved** (unanimously) to support the motion.

### **24/14/CNL Councillor Bennett - Equality Training 2024**

This item was deferred to the adjourned council meeting taking place on 29 February 2024.

### **24/15/CNL Written questions**

This item was deferred to the adjourned council meeting taking place on 29 February 2024.

### **24/16/CNL To note Urgency Action Taken by Officer**

**12a** Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority- Appointment of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserve (substitute) member

This item was deferred to the adjourned council meeting taking place on 29 February 2024.

The meeting ended at 11.15pm.

**CHAIR**