

CABINET

25 November 2025

5.30 - 7.09 pm

Present: Councillors Holloway (Chair), Wade (Vice-Chair), Bird, Moore, Nestor, Smart, S. Smith, Thornburrow and Todd-Jones

Other Councillors present:

Councillor Katie Porrer

Other Councillors in attendance virtually:

Councillors A Smith, Bennett, Bick and Clough

South Cambridgeshire District Councillors present:

Bridget Smith Leader of the Council (Chair)

Brian Milnes Deputy Leader of the Council

Henry Batchelor Lead Cabinet Member for Communities (remotely)

John Batchelor Lead Cabinet Member for Housing

Dr Tumi Hawkins Lead Cabinet Member for Planning

Peter McDonald Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development

John Williams Lead Cabinet Member for Resources

Officers Present:

Chief Executive, South Cambridgeshire District Council: Liz Watts

Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development, Greater Cambridge

Shared Planning: Stephen Kelly

Assistant Director and Head of Legal Practice, 3C Shared Legal Practice: Tom Lewis

Monitoring Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council: Nurainatta Katevu

Planning Policy Manager: Jonathan Dixon

Team Leader, Strategy & Economy, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning:

Terry De Souza

Team Leader, Strategy & Economy Greater Cambridge Shared Planning: Max Laverack

Team Leader, Strategy & Economy, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning: Stuart Morris

Team Leader, Strategy & Economy, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning: Lauren Wilkinson

Team Leader, Strategy & Economy, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning: Lizzie Wood

Political Assistant – Liberal Democrats South Cambridgeshire District Council: James Green

Democratic Services Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council: Habbiba Peacey

Democratic Services Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council: Sarah Steed

Deputy Democratic Services Manager, Cambridge City Council : Claire Tunncliffe

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

25/46/Cab Apologies

No apologies were received.

South Cambridgeshire District Councillor Natalie Warren-Green had sent apologies for absence.

25/47/Cab Suspension of Standing Orders

Before the start of the Joint Cabinet Meeting with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Councillor Cameron Holloway, Leader of Cambridge City Council, formally moved the following motion:

“To suspend Cambridge City Council’s Standing Orders for the duration of the meeting to enable a joint discussion on the Local Plan to commence.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Wade

Resolved by Cambridge City Council Cabinet Members.

- i. To suspend it’s standing orders for the duration of the meeting.

A similar motion had been put forward by the Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council, Councillor Smith and seconded by Councillor Milnes. The motion was agreed by South Cambridgeshire District Council

Councillor Bridget Smith then stepped back in as Chair of the meeting.

25/48/Cab Declarations of Interest

No declarations were received.

No declarations were received from South Cambridgeshire District Councillors.

25/49/Cab Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 October were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

25/50/Cab Public Questions

First asked at the meeting at the Performance, Assets, Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, November meeting, 4/11/25, 5:30pm.

Please could the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service consider commissioning an academic who has researched neuroarchitecture at the University of Cambridge and how building facades impact the physical and mental health of people who live and work in the built environments of such places. (See <https://www.ribaj.com/products/facade-design-psychology-neuroscience> as an example).

Please also invite Humanise at <https://humanise.org/> (working in a similar field) to submit evidence on their research and how it might apply to a growing Cambridge.

Given the pioneering research they are doing in the growing sphere of neuroarchitecture, I believe having evidence bases them would have a positive impact on the development of the emerging Local Plan and result in new buildings, developments, and urban spaces that were less mentally harmful than the ones constructed in recent years.

Supplementary Question

The question basically picks up on a whole series of new research that was coming out of the pioneering field of neuroarchitecture.

Concerned that the documentation contains little reference to recent findings on the mental and visual distress caused by contemporary architecture in Cambridge. Research now demonstrates that scientists can measure changes in brain activity and chemistry in response to these environments, highlighting their impact on well-being.

A recent presentation given in Seoul at the end of September highlighted the following:

1. People with neurodiverse dispositions were visually more likely to be mentally and visually distressed by being in these sorts of built environments.
2. There were now case studies where architectural firms were getting complaints from their clients because the staff of the clients were refusing to work in these new spaces, as they were causing migraines, headaches and quite dangerous for people with epilepsy.

The risk for Cambridge is that we start building all these new buildings, homes and offices and end up again creating extra cost and extra work for the Council and for industry because building were being designed and built that were making people ill.

Given the research, especially that some of the research had come from the University based in our city, this should be looked at.

- i. Thanked the speaker for highlighting this fascinating area of research.
- ii. It was clear from the sources referenced that they had a passion for creating great places for all members of the community. These suggestions had been passed on to the Urban Design Team.
- iii. Had sought to create policies through the draft local plan that would shape great places and capture a range of issues that contribute to this.
- iv. Creating healthy places was a golden thread that would run though the whole Local Plan.
- v. Members of the public and the groups that had been quoted would be invited to make comments on the consultation, and feedback would be welcomed on the range of design related policies that had been published.

25/51/Cab Greater Cambridge Local Plan – Draft Regulation 18 plan for consultation and updated Local Development Scheme

Councillor Tumi Hawkins, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cabinet Member for Planning introduced the report which set out a number of long-term plans to meet development needs in the period to 2045 and beyond. Several themes had been incorporated within the draft plan, which included climate change, social inclusion, biodiversity and green spaces with planning policies designed to guide such developments.

Reference was also made to the proposed development needs of the area for homes and jobs and how they would be met. The plan also included transport

infrastructure proposals for Cambourne and in the corridor south of Cambridge where homes were proposed in a new settlement close to the research parks and well connected to the biomedical campus. A new East West Rail Station was also being proposed which had also been incorporated into the plan.

Next steps would be to take the draft plan out to public consultation prior to its submission to the Government in 2026. The Lead Cabinet Member for Planning welcome public comments on the proposals and encourage the Cabinet to endorse it for public consultation commencing 1 December 2025.

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport at Cambridge City Council was then provided with an opportunity to add her introductions to the report.

Both Cabinets concurred with the view that a shared Local Plan was the right decision for the residents of Greater Cambridge. She then went on to pass her thanks to Officers for their hard work and efforts in producing the draft plan. In noting that 8,000 responses had been received in the last consultation, Cabinet Members were informed that artificial intelligence technology would be used for the proposed consultation which would seek to provide an efficient and effective solution to responding to comments.

In her concluding remarks, Councillor Katie Thornburrow reported that the policies proposed were progressive and reflective of the climate and nature emergencies declared by both authorities.

A detailed presentation was then delivered by Jonathan Dixon, Planning Policy Manager providing an overview of the proposals. The presentation covered the following:

- i. What the consultation would include.
- ii. The vision and objectives for Greater Cambridge.
- iii. Development strategy.
- iv. Spatial strategy.
- v. Development and transport strategy.
- vi. Edge of Cambridge site allocations and policy areas.
- vii. Proposals for Cambourne.
- viii. Proposals for land adjacent to A11 and A1307 at Grange Farm.
- ix. Industrial and warehousing A14 sites;
- x. Development management policies; and
- xi. Draft plan of timings.

Councillor Katie Porrer, Chair of Cambridge City Council's Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following comments on behalf of its members:

- i. There was strong support for policy areas relating to biodiversity, climate change, green spaces and social inclusion.
- ii. The availability of hardcopies for residents and the community to ensure accessibility to the consultation.
- iii. The importance of youth engagement during the consultation period.
- iv. Overview and Scrutiny members would be monitoring the conditions around water and sustainability as this was not just relevant to post occupancy rates. The desire was for this to be ongoing.
- v. In respect of the biomedical campus, communities were keen to be made aware of the timescales for this masterplan. No date had been mentioned to date and there was a desire for this to be known prior to building out parts of that site and maintaining active travel loops.

Councillor Graham Cone, Chair of South Cambridgeshire's Scrutiny and Overview Committee confirmed there was nothing further he wished to add.

Stephen Kelly, Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development drew the Cabinets' attention to Appendix K, which outlined actions identified by both Scrutiny Committees and the proposed modifications to the draft Local Plan. He acknowledged the point which had been raised around the biomedical campus and advised that Officers would be determining an appropriate trigger point within the plan with the matter being kept under review. In respect of post occupancy water management, this would be difficult to implement as both Councils would not want to be seen to withhold water from its residents. It was however suggested that this might be a question to be raised with communities as part of the consultation.

Cabinet Members from both authorities raised the following points during consideration of the report which were responded to at the meeting:

- i. Councillor Brian Milnes, Deputy Leader for South Cambridgeshire District Council commented that he wouldn't not want the Government to stifle the growth anticipated in Greater Cambridge owing to a lack of utilities and systems for e.g. transport, water and electricity.
- ii. Councillor Gerri Bird, Cabinet Member for Housing, Cambridge City Council queried the number of wheelchair adapted homes proposed within the draft plan, which was responded to by Councillor Katie

Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council.

- iii. In response to a question raised by Councillor Cameron Holloway, Leader of Cambridge City, it was reported that the plan was in a position to go out for public consultation with relevant criteria met.
- iv. Councillor Rosy Moore, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment, Cambridge City Council commended the plan for incorporating non-fossil fuels. In response to a question whether the benefits of the draft plan could be achieved sooner rather than later, it was confirmed that whilst some weight could be attached to the draft plan now, it would not be possible to enforce changes until the Local Plan was adopted by both Councils.
- v. Councillor Martin Smart, Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services, Cambridge City Council, commented upon the concerns of residents relating to growth and acknowledged the efforts which had been made to acknowledge these concerns and encourage individuals to feed into the planning process.
- vi. Councillor Peter McDonald, Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development, South Cambridgeshire District Council, referred to two studies which had recently been undertaken relating to jobs and the economy. Greater Cambridge was a growth area in this respect, and he welcome the balance which had been struck to achieve this whilst protecting green belt space.
- vii. Councillor Simon Smith, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Cambridge City Council, echoed the concerns which had been raised previously by Councillor Katie Porrer, Chair of Cambridge City Council's Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee around strategic masterplans and the need for landowners, developers and investors to work collaboratively together to deliver shared infrastructure.
- viii. Councillor John Williams, Lead Cabinet Member for Resources, South Cambridgeshire District Council, drew the Cabinets' attention to the recent press release relating to the Development Corporation Cambridge Growth Company. Stephen Kelly, Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development responded that the Chair of the Cambridge Growth Company had made it clear that the Development Corporation would build on the current Local Plan process and not undermine it. Additionally, the Development Corporation would enable discussion on key infrastructure to take place.
- ix. Councillor Antoinette Nestor, Cabinet Member for Culture, Economy and Skills, Cambridge City Council queried what would happen to temporary artist studios. A response was received from Councillor Katie

Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council who highlighted the need for temporary spaces, referred to as “meanwhile spaces” whilst developments came forward. Examples of others included skate parks and allotments.

- x. A further question was then raised by Councillor Antoinette Nestor, Cabinet Member for Culture, Economy & Skills, Cambridge City Council on climate change and whether adaptations would be required. It was responded that policies proposed within the draft Plan would support both Councils in achieving this ambition with changes to building regulations also supporting this change.
- xi. Councillor John Batchelor, Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, South Cambridgeshire District Council welcomed the draft plan and commented upon the current practice of the Council to buy housing stock from developers after planning applications had been agreed. He expressed that the view that this should be included within the draft plan so that it was a requirement going forward.
- xii. Councillor Rachel Wade, Deputy Leader of Cambridge City Council received a response to a question raised which had been raised around the provision for gypsy and traveller communities. Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council reported that the draft plan incorporated 150 new pitches with a further 20 areas identified for travelling show people.
- xiii. Having queried the planning policy for gypsy and travellers proposed within the draft plan, Stephen Kelly, Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development responded that the policy would now be to optimise the existing sites by upgrading amenities and increasing pitch sizes. He further commented upon the desire to actively manage these sites to prevent abuse of allocations.
- xiv. A question was raised by Councillor Rosy Moore, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment, Cambridge City Council on how “hard to reach” groups, such as the gypsy and traveller community, would be engaged with as part of the consultation and engagement process. Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council responded that Members from both authorities had a role to play in contributing to this with training being arranged for Members to take place within the next week. A briefing pack was currently being produced to support Members with their public engagement and contact with local communities and groups. Lizzie Wood, Team Leader (Strategy and Economy) advised that the briefing pack would include a list of events, which included drop-in sessions for the gypsy and traveller communities.

Additionally, it was noted that pre-engagement sessions had already been held at local Universities and that a further 100 events had been identified to take place during the consultation period.

Councillor Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, South Cambridgeshire District Council highlighted the importance of Ward Members engaging with their communities and encouraged Members to reach out to herself and Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council if they required further help and support.

In response to questions from non-Cabinet Members, the following points were raised:

- i. Councillor Anna Bradnam, South Cambridgeshire District Council commended the work of the Youth Engagement Service which provided an excellent remit for engaging with young people. This was echoed by Councillor Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council.
- ii. In response to a question raised by Councillor Naomi Bennett, Cambridge City Council on behalf of Councillor Elliot Tong, Cambridge City Council, Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council undertook to discuss the matter of support in Abbey Ward outside of the meeting. Stephen Kelly, Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development advised that an FAQ document would be included within Members' briefing packs.
- iii. Councillor Tim Bick, Leader of the Main Opposition, Cambridge City Council placed on record his thanks to the Liberal Democrat Group for their work in supporting the draft Local Plan. He commented upon the many obstacles inherent within the draft plan which remained a challenge that both Councils firmly intended to resolve and accomplish. Reference was made to increasing the number of homes and jobs within the Greater Cambridge area to which Councillors Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Katie Thornburrow, Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport, Cambridge City Council acknowledged.
- iv. Councillor Hugh Clough, Cambridge City Council raised a question about how Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans would transition over to the draft Local Plan. Jonathan Dixon, Planning Policy Manager responded that the former would transfer across immediately but that the latter would require updating with changes being made by parishes with Neighbourhood Plans in place.

At this point during the meeting (7:05pm), Councillor Peter McDonald vacated his seat and left the room during deliberations on this item.

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport moved the recommendations. The recommendations were seconded by the Leader, Councillor Cameron Holloway.

For South Cambridgeshire District Council, Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning moved the recommendations. The recommendations were seconded by the Leader, Councillor Bridget Smith.

RESOLVED that Cambridge City Cabinet has:

- a. Agreed the Greater Cambridge Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) for Public Consultation (Appendix A), subject to amendments proposed in Appendix K.
- b. Noted the Sustainability Appraisal (Appendix B) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appendix C) and agree them as supporting documents that will also be subject to public consultation.
- c. Agreed to the publication of the following supporting documents to the public consultation:
 - i. Topic papers for each theme (including responses to First Proposals consultation comments) (Appendix D);
 - ii. Statement of Consultation (Appendix E);
 - iii. Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance (Appendix F);
 - iv. Draft Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground (Appendix G);
 - v. Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix H);
 - vi. Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (Appendix I)
- d. Agreed the Update to the Local Development Scheme (Local Plan Timetable) (Appendix J)
- e. Agreed that any subsequent material amendments to be made to the plan prior to consultation commencing will be approved by the Lead Member for Planning and Transport in Cambridge City Council and Lead Cabinet Member for Planning at South Cambridgeshire District Council; and
- f. Agreed that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content be delegated to the Joint

Director of Planning in consultation with the Lead Members for Planning.

The meeting ended at 7.09 pm

CHAIR