

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 October 2011

4.00 - 7.45 pm

Present: Councillors Kightley (Chair), Saunders (Vice-Chair), Herbert, Marchant-Daisley, Owers, Tucker, Tunnacliffe, Wright and Znajek

Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services: Jean Swanson

Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport: Tim Ward

Patsy Dell (Head of Planning Services), Joanna Gilbert-Wooldridge (Senior Planning Policy Officer), James Goddard (Committee Manager), Jas Lally (Head of Refuse & Environment), Paul Necus (Head of Specialist Services), Matthew Paul (Urban Designer), Simon Payne (Director of Environment), Andrew Preston (Project Delivery & Environment Manager), Glen Richardson (Head of Joint Urban Design Team), Jen Robertson (Waste Strategy Manager), Sara Saunders (Planning Policy Manager)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

11/47/ENV Apologies

None.

11/48/ENV Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Herbert	11/53/ENV	Personal: Occupation involves the selling of pre-used equipment
Councillor Saunders	11/54/ENV	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign
Councillor Wright	11/54/ENV	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign
Councillor Ward	11/54/ENV	Personal: Accompanied Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign on site visit

11/49/ENV Minutes

The minutes of the 21 June 2011 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

11/50/ENV Public Questions

Members of the public asked questions under items 11/54/ENV and 11/60/ENV.

11/51/ENV Determine Options for Increasing Recycling in the City Beyond 45% Recycling Rate

Matter for Decision:

The Officer's report summarised the position relating to Cambridge City Council's past and present recycling performance compared to similar authorities within the council's Nearest Neighbour Group.

The Officer's report set out recommended ways forward for the short term, plus suggested initiatives that needed further information and investigation for the longer term. The report also proposed that further work was needed to establish why some residents were not recycling, which recyclable materials were being put into black bins, and what new initiatives would offer increased recycling rates in the most cost effective way to provide carbon savings and improved customer satisfaction.

Recycling continued to be a Council priority for environmental, legal and financial reasons.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services:

(i) Agreed:

- That a Waste Compositional Analysis be carried out with sampling taking place in spring/summer and autumn/winter.
- That participation monitoring work be carried out.
- That a residents survey be carried out to establish who recycles, why residents recycle and what would help residents to recycle more.

(ii) Agreed that officers would prepare an action plan to increase the recycling rate to 50-55% by 2015/16, based on information gathered from section 2.1 of the Officer's report (with an average target increase of 2% per year).

(iii) Agreed the proposed refinements to the existing service listed in section 3.29 of the Officer's report.

(iv) Agreed to rule out compulsory recycling at an early stage due to its ineffectiveness.

(v) Agreed to reject use of funds recently announced by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for the purpose of black bin collection in Cambridge, which was designed to bribe councils into bringing back black bin collections, which could have a damaging impact on recycling rates.

(vi) Agreed to bring forward budget proposals in the next budget round to fund a targeted communication campaign designed to raise recycling rates amongst demographic groups less likely to recycle, such as short-term residents and those living in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

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 Refuse & Environment regarding options for increasing recycling in the City beyond the 45% recycling rate.

The committee made the following comments in response to the report.

(i) Proposed that it was better to offer incentives rather than impose compulsory measures to encourage recycling.

(ii) The law allowed for compulsion to undertake recycling but the Executive Councillor expressed a desire to avoid taking punitive measures.

In response to Member's questions the Head of Refuse & Environment and Waste Strategy Manager confirmed the following:

(i) Officers worked in conjunction with residents to encourage recycling rates through education. For example, using Cambridge Matters to provide

information on refuse/recycling services. Hard to reach groups were approached through measures such as a door knocking campaign.

(ii) The Recycling Plan was developed to enable individuals to increase their recycling rate. Appendix A of the Officer's report set out recycling services in addition to blue bin collections. Figures on recycling rates were being obtained at the time of the committee meeting. There would be no charge if residents requested additional blue/green bins, but officers would seek to clarify where these would be stored in order to avoid street clutter.

(iii) There were no financial implications in the current year as a result of the Officer's report. Any budget proposals for 2012/13 and beyond would be considered during the forthcoming budget cycle. If Members agreed to the report recommendations, Officers would work them up in more detail with the Executive Councillor as any subsequent work would require a bid to be approved by Members.

(iv) The Recycling Champions scheme was successful with circa 75 volunteers in place to date across the City to promote recycling. No other Cambridgeshire Authority had such an uptake rate. City Rangers could provide advice and assistance in future in addition to that offered by Recycling Champions.

Labour Councillors requested a change to the recommendations. Councillor Owers formally proposed to add the following recommendations from the Officer's report:

- (New 2.4) To agree to rule out compulsory recycling at an early stage due to its ineffectiveness.

The committee approved this additional recommendation by 8 votes to 1.

- (New 2.5) To agree to reject use of funds recently announced by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for the purpose of black bin collection in Cambridge, which was designed to bribe councils into bringing back black bin collections, which could have a damaging impact on recycling rates.

The committee approved this additional recommendation unanimously.

- (New 2.6) To agree to bring forward budget proposals in the next budget round to fund a targeted communication campaign designed to raise recycling rates amongst demographic groups less likely to recycle, such as short-term residents and those living in HMOs.

The committee approved this additional recommendation by 7 votes to 1.

The committee resolved unanimously to adopt the recommendations as amended.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/52/ENV Capital Project to Relocate/Amalgamate Car Park Control Room and Shopmobility Office at Grand Arcade Car Park

Matter for Decision:

The Officer's report set out a proposal to relocate the car parks' operational base within the Grand Arcade Car Park. The new facility would accommodate a new car park management system, plus manage both the car park operations and the ShopMobility service from a single location.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

(i) Approved financial recommendation –

- Recommended this capital scheme (which was not included in the Council's Capital Plan) for approval by Council, subject to resources being available to fund the capital costs associated with the Scheme. The total capital cost of the project was up to £70,000, and it was proposed that this funded from Repairs and Renewals funds.

(ii) Approved procurement recommendations -

- Approve the carrying out and completion of procurement exercises with a number of different contractors for the relocation of the Grand Arcade operations control room. The total cost for this project was estimated to be £70,000, with the building works likely to cost approximately £44,000.
- The permission of the Executive Councillor and Director of Resources would be sought prior to proceeding if the quotation or tender sum exceeded the estimated contract value by more than 15%.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

Committee did not request this item for pre-scrutiny.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

11/53/ENV Replacement of Car Park Management System at Grand Arcade Car Park**Matter for Decision:**

The Grand Arcade car park management system was now more than 7 years old and needed to be replaced to sustain and protect the council's income stream. A decision needed to be made to commit the capital expenditure to procure a suitable solution that addresses customer needs and expectations.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

Delegated authority to the Director of Environment and, in consultation with the Director of Resources and the Head of Legal to procure and award a contract to implement a new car park management system, to be installed in the Grand Arcade car park. The total capital cost of the project was approximately £400,000, and this was to be funded from the car parks' equipment R&R budget.

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 Specialist Services regarding the replacement of car park management system at Grand Arcade Car Park.

The committee sought clarification concerning how replacing the car park management system tied into the Council's greener city aims.

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport answered that the intention of the report was not to change car parking policy (eg minimising congestion and pollution), but to provide new facilities to improve ease of use in the Grand Arcade Car Park.

In response to Member's questions the Head of Specialist Services confirmed the following:

- (i) Customers could pay by cash and debit/credit cards to use the car park, in addition to pre-booking facilities.
- (ii) The prebooking system did not factor in queuing time for the car park.
- (iii) It was proposed that old equipment would not be used when replacing the management system, as it was no longer fit for purpose. However, this could be looked at again if Members specifically desired.

The committee resolved by 5 votes to 4 to adopt the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/54/ENV Eastern Gate Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document

1. Mr Goode raised the following issues:

- (i) Queried if the committee agreed that the section on building heights and height variations referred to in SPD paragraph 3.4.3, and the Joint Urban Design Team Service Plan report key issue 4 needed strengthening.
- (ii) Referred to visual and physical link references in SPD paragraphs 3.2.3 and 2.1.6. Queried if the committee would restore the words "physical links" in appropriate places as they had been removed.
- (iii) Local residents were concerned about the restoration of two-way traffic in New Street and Harvest Way.

(iv) Asked for the following text to be inserted in SPD paragraph 3.3.9 “Developers should note that the provision of open space should be an integral part of design from the onset. Commutation to cash payments of the requirement for open space would only be acceptable in very exceptional circumstances.”

The Head of Joint Urban Design Team answered:

(i) The intention was to mitigate the application’s long frontage through vertical features. Examples were set out in paragraph 3.4.3 of Appendix C of the Officer’s report. The Planning Committee could impose conditions to mitigate concerns if required.

(ii) Inserting “physical links” conditions text was not appropriate at present, but informatives could be requested.

(iii) Consultation would be undertaken with Area Committees and County Councillors when the project goes live.

(iv) Referred to key issue 8 in the Officer’s report, SPD text had been set through the Local Plan.

2. Mr Lucas-Smith raised the following issues:

(i) Welcomed redevelopment of the area.

(ii) Suggested there was a lack of provision for cyclists as cycle lanes were too narrow, and requested these be widened to 2m.

(iii) Took issue with the Officer’s recommendations and asked for greater priority to be given to cyclists on roads.

The Head of Joint Urban Design Team answered:

(i) Referred to P11 of the Officer’s report concerning speed limits, cycle lane widths etc.

(ii) 2m width cycle lanes were desirable, but it would be premature to request these until the road network design had been reviewed to ascertain lane space required by other users. Further input from the Cycle Campaign was welcomed through the consultation process.

Matter for Decision:

The Eastern Gate study area lies to the east of the city centre.

There was widespread recognition of the need to improve the physical environment within the study area. In addition, increased developer activity within the area had created growing pressure such that formal planning guidance needed to be produced to help coordinate and guide future redevelopment in line with the Council's Local Plan policies and objectives.

A Development Framework had been produced as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Eastern Gate area.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

(i) Agreed the responses to the representations received to the draft SPD (Appendix A1) and SA (Appendix B1) and the consequential amendments to the SPD (Appendix C1)

(ii) Agreed to adopt the Eastern Gate Development Framework SPD with immediate effect subject to amendments requested by Committee pertaining to the following:

1. Width of cycle lanes.
2. Building heights.
3. Physical links through development sites.

Wording to be approved by Chair, Spokes and the Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport.

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 Joint Urban Design Team regarding the Eastern Gate Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document.

In response to Member's questions the Head of Joint Urban Design Team confirmed the following:

(i) Noted Member's request for 2m wide cycle lanes. The design could be amended subject to a review of other user's (pedestrian, vehicular etc) needs.

(ii) Building height concerns could be addressed through text to be agreed by the Chair and Spokes.

(iii) North/south links were subject to design constraints, but could be addressed through text to be agreed by the Chair and Spokes.

Residents concerns, such as restoration of two-way traffic in New Street and Harvest Way, could be reviewed through the consultation process.

(iv) It was the purpose of the Local Plan; rather than the SPD; to address protection of open space, air quality, traffic management etc.

(v) The Skyline Strategy would be coming to Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee 18 October 2011, then to Environment Scrutiny Committee for approval in March 2012. This would put in clear guidelines for applications at the start of development, rather than impose them retrospectively once a project had started.

(vi) City Officers would discuss how to take forward the issue of Elizabeth Way roundabout design costs with County colleagues. Officers would be discussing how to progress the key projects with the county council and the related program, costs and timelines of same.

Councillors requested a change to the recommendation. Councillor Saunders formally proposed to amend recommendation 2.1.2 (changes shown in bold) from the Officer's report as follows:

(ii) Agreed to adopt the Eastern Gate Development Framework SPD with immediate effect **subject to amendments requested by Committee pertaining to the following:**

1. **Width of cycle lanes.**
2. **Building heights.**
3. **Physical links through development sites.**

Wording to be approved by Chair, Spokes and the Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the amended recommendations unanimously.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/55/ENV New and Replacement Bus Shelter Project Appraisal

Matter for Decision:

There were currently 176 bus shelters across Cambridge, 25 owned by the County Council, 89 by Clearchannel (formally Adshel) and the remaining 62 owned by the City Council.

The Officer's report proposed to replace approximately 60% of the 62 City Council owned shelters and also provide 10 new shelters at existing bus stops.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

(i) Approved financial recommendations –

- Approved commencement of the project, which was already included in the Council's Capital Plan (PR018) with additional £50,000 funding. The total capital cost of the project was £267,000, this was to be funded £217,000 Reserves and £50,000 R&R for new and replacement shelters.
- The revenue costs of the project were £8,400, these would be the subject of a separate revenue bid.

(ii) Approved procurement recommendations -

- Approved the carrying out and completion of the procurement of new and replacement bus shelters.
- If the quotation or tender sum exceeded the estimated contract value by more than 15%, the permission of the Executive Councillor and Director of Finance would be sought prior to proceeding.

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 Project Delivery & Environment Manager regarding the new and replacement bus shelter project appraisal.

In response to Member's questions the Project Delivery & Environment Manager confirmed the following:

(i) The Streetscene Operations Manager and colleagues monitored the performance of Clearchannel regarding provision and maintenance of bus shelters. The Project Delivery & Environment Manager undertook to liaise with Planning Officers, residents and Area Committee Councillors concerning the proposed new and replacement shelters. Further local consultation would only take place with directly affected residents for new shelter sites.

The Project Delivery & Environment Manager undertook to provide maps to Members setting out proposals for bus shelter locations and actions required (eg repair/replacement).

(ii) The design of bus shelters would be appropriate for their locations (eg in conservation areas).

Bus shelters would have a design life of 20 years. The City Council would be responsible for the maintenance of any shelters that it put in.

(iii) Adshel had previously put in bus shelters at their own expense, covering the cost through advertisements on the shelters. It would therefore require planning permission to move the shelters. The relocation of shelters could be reviewed at the end of the agreement with Clearchannel/Adshel in 2019.

(iv) It was the responsibility of the County Council, not City Council, to provide bus timetable information. The Officer undertook to liaise with county colleagues concerning the introduction of real time display information as part of the bus shelter overhaul.

The committee resolved unanimously to adopt the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/56/ENV Joint Capital Cycleways Programme Prioritised Project List**Matter for Decision:**

The Officer's report sought approval for a prioritised list of schemes to be considered for funding as part of the Cycleways programme 2011-2014 with a budget of £542,000 in total.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

(i) Approved the prioritised list of schemes set out in Appendix A of the Officer's report.

(ii) Approved the setting aside of £10,000 per year for smaller schemes such as cycle parking, flush kerbs and signage.

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 Project Delivery & Environment Manager regarding the Joint Capital Cycleways Programme Prioritised Project List.

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport clarified that work would be undertaken to join up 20 mph speed limits across the City.

In response to Member's questions the Project Delivery & Environment Manager confirmed that project selection criteria was set by the Cambridge Area Joint Committee.

The committee resolved unanimously to adopt the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/57/ENV Pre-Application Charging**Matter for Decision:**

At the 21 June 2011 Environmental Scrutiny Committee meeting, Members agreed that consultation would be undertaken on proposals for the introduction of a scheme of charging for the provision of pre-application planning advice by Cambridge City Council.

The Officer's report provided the results of the consultation on the establishment of a scheme of pre-application charging for Cambridge and also the Fringe sites that straddle the City and South Cambridgeshire.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

(i) Approved the introduction of a pre-application advice scheme with associated charging schedule as set out in the Officer's report. The scheme of charges would be reviewed each year as part of the council's budget cycle process.

(ii) Approved that officers would look to implement the scheme immediately for the joint Fringe sites and from 1st November 2011 for elsewhere within the City. Due to the need to manage joint arrangements on the Cambridge Fringe sites the final detail of the establishment of the scheme to be delegated to the Head of Planning Services.

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 Planning Services regarding pre-application charging.

In response to Member's questions the Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport confirmed the following:

(i) There was no anticipated impact on the service offered.

(ii) The intention was to operate a not for profit scheme, to impose merely a minimum fee for officer time.

(iii) The impact of charges on users would be reviewed annually. Eligible parties would be encouraged to apply for grants to cover costs, rather than trying to seek exemption from the charging scheme.

The committee resolved unanimously to adopt the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/58/ENV Riverside Conservation Area Appraisal and Boundary Review

The Head of Planning Services advised this item had been withdrawn from the agenda. Whilst the consultation undertaken conformed with Council processes, some of the parties notified had not noted the involvement of sites/land in Chesterton. To ensure that all could comment, it was deemed appropriate to undertake a further round of consultation, signposting more clearly the extent of the boundary changes, before bringing this item back to committee in January.

11/59/ENV Newmarket Road Suburbs & Approaches Study

Matter for Decision:

The Officer's report sought approval of the Newmarket Road Suburbs and Approaches study.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

Approved the text of the draft study, in Appendix 2 of the Officer's report, and that the study of local distinctiveness be used to inform planning decisions in this area.

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 Joint Urban Design Team regarding the Newmarket Road Suburbs & Approaches Study.

The committee made the following comments in response to the report.

(i) Observed a typographical error, as Fen Ditton Fields should be Ditton Fields.

(ii) Asked for the next iteration of the Cambridge Local Plan to clarify how to rejuvenate parts of the City.

In response to Member's questions the Head of Joint Urban Design Team clarified that the document did not set out any specific land use criteria/recommendations.

The Head of Joint Urban Design Team proposed a change to the text on P183 of the Officer's report. Amendments are shown in bold and struck out text: "Near the railway bridge, midway along Newmarket Road, the Abbey Stadium has been at the centre of redevelopment proposals for some time **subject to other national and local policy documents**. ~~The relocation of the football ground to a more appropriate and convenient location would allow the area to be redeveloped to create a better setting for the historic building group opposite. Residential development is likely to be the favoured option.~~"

The committee approved amending this report text unanimously.

The committee resolved unanimously to adopt the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

11/60/ENV Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011

1. Ms Kamminga raised the following issues on behalf of Petersfield Area Community Trust:

(i) Referred to paragraph 6.4 of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy document and asked if guidelines related to commuted sums in lieu of on-site open space provision would be helpful.

(ii) Suggested an amendment to paragraph 5.7, Table 2 of the Officer's report as follows: "There should be a presumption that on-site provision of open space open space and play areas should be a requirement of new residential developments and that commuted sums in lieu of this provision should only be accepted in exceptional circumstances."

The Senior Planning Policy Officer referred to Policy 3/8 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006, which requires the provision of public open space and sports facilities in line with the Council's Open Space And Recreation Standards. Provision should be on site as appropriate to the nature and location of development or where the scale of development indicates otherwise through commuted payments to the City Council. If the strategy were to be amended in the way suggested, this would contravene Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policy, and would give rise to additional risk in the processing of planning applications. The future impact of the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy in Cambridge was yet to be determined through the production of a charging schedule, but this could affect how monies were collected and used in areas of the city.

2. Mr Lucas-Smith (Cambridge Cycling Campaign) raised the following issues:

(i) Suggested the aims of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy did not give much weight to transport.

(ii) Queried if guidance could be clarified concerning charges for use of common land for meetings.

(iii) Queried if permission for cyclists to use paths on common land could be formalised in the Strategy or another document, as it was only implicit at present.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer answered:

(i) The document set out the strategy for open spaces, its prime aim was not to set out specific cycling strategy. It was agreed that the Senior Planning Officer would consider making additional reference to the importance of cycling within the strategy and would liaise with the Chair, Executive Councillor and Spokespeople in order to make any substantive changes to the strategy.

(ii) The Senior Planning Officer undertook to liaise with Street and Open Space colleagues and the Director of Environment concerning charges for the use of open spaces and the provision of information on cycle routes across open spaces.

(iii) The Director of Environment undertook to liaise with Legal colleagues before advising on a city cycle route map.

3. Ms Whitehead (Bidwells) sent a letter to the Chair and Head of Planning Services to be read out at Committee:

(i) Expressed concern regarding the consultation process as an Agent acting for a variety of different landowner interests across the City.

(ii) Understood the need for the forthcoming Development Plan, but felt the speed of completion of the document created a perception that consultation comments were not given proper consideration.

(iii) Received advice that the Open Space and Recreation Strategy would not become a formal Supplementary Planning Document, but instead used as a material consideration in the planning application process and as evidence base in the process of development the Local Plan Review. However, Officers referred to the document before the adoption of the strategy.

(iv) The version of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy referred to by today's committee was loaded onto an obscure part of the Council's website in advance of the meeting prior to agenda documentation. This had the potential to cause confusion.

The Senior Planning Policy Officer answered:

(i) The process followed by the Council to complete the Open Space and Recreation Strategy has been open and transparent. In addition to the public discussion of the criteria for assessing open spaces at Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee in July 2010, the consultation period for the draft strategy ran from 25th July through to 2nd September 2011 and was agreed by the Executive Councillor for Planning and Transport and other members of Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee at the 12th July 2011 meeting. Although it did not represent consultation on a Supplementary Planning Document or a Development Plan Document, this evidence base document was issued for public consultation for 6 weeks. The Council is not formally required to consult on such documents, but we do so as it represents good

practice. The Council included Bidwells and all the University of Cambridge's colleges, many of whom are represented by Bidwells, on the draft list of consultees presented at committee. This list was approved at Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 12th July 2011 with some additional consultees included. Prior to consultation commencing in July 2011, the Council then sent notification of the consultation to Mike Carpenter at Bidwells.

The Council has given all of the submitted representations proper consideration. Officers registered representations throughout the consultation period and considered all the representations fully before finalising responses to the representations and changes to the draft strategy. The tight deadline for the completion of the document was due in part to the need to complete the evidence base for the Local Plan Review, but the Council does not consider that there was any undue haste in the way that the process has been conducted. Whilst a relatively small number of amendments were made to the draft strategy as a result of consultation, this does not indicate that representations were not afforded due reflection. Officers have discussed the key issues raised in respect of the draft strategy within the committee report, including a number of concerns raised by Bidwells. Whilst there is always likely to be a greater number of objections than representations supporting a planning policy document, the Council has been consistent in its approach to dealing with representations.

In terms of the document's status, it has been presented at Environment Scrutiny Committee for adoption as a material consideration in the planning process and as part of the technical evidence base for the Local Plan Review. Members adopted the strategy at last night's committee following the officer recommendation. This will mean that if a proposal for development came forward which might give rise to the loss of a Protected Open Space, the work included in the strategy allows the Council the opportunity to evidence its importance for environmental and/or recreational reasons. The case officer for the planning application would use the findings of the assessment and strategy to inform decision-making on the principle of the loss of the Protected Open Space and the quantity and qualities of publicly accessible open space to be provided on site based on deficits in the locality. In relation to forming part of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review, as this strategy suggests new standards, the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 (and the Planning Obligations Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)) standards will stand as the adopted standards for the time-being. The suggested new standards will be used to inform the Local Plan Review and support the Planning Obligations Strategy SPD. Following the adoption of the next Local Plan, the strategy will be formally updated and readopted in order to ensure that the standards of the

new Local Plan and strategy are aligned. Please note that the strategy does not allocate sites at this stage, but recognises their importance as Protected Open Space and provides up-to-date information. Allocation of sites for a range of purposes will be taken forward through the review of the Local Plan.

(ii) In terms of the designation of Protected Open Space, the Council's approach to designating areas of land as Protected Open Space has not changed since the adoption of the 1996 Local Plan. Policy 4/2 of the current Cambridge Local Plan 2006 deals with Protected Open Space and has been subject to examination as part of the Local Plan inquiry process. The supporting text (paragraph 4.7) to this policy includes an important caveat regarding the protection of open spaces which are undesignated, but which fulfil at least one of the Criteria to Assess Open Space included in the Plan. This has separate criteria for Environmental and Recreational Importance. This caveat allows the Council to consider undesignated areas against the criteria for protection at any time. This has occurred in relation to a number of planning applications over the last few years. Furthermore, the Council's approach to dealing with the expansion of educational institutions and the potential impact on Protected Open Space is consistent within both the 2006 and 2011 strategies. This was highlighted as a key issue within the report to Environment Scrutiny Committee in the light of concerns raised by Bidwells and other respondents.

(iii) In terms of officers using the strategy prior to adoption, Ms Whitehead did not clarify which instances she was referring to. Officers have had involvement in work on a number of sites at the pre-application stage. The Council's officers have provided up-to-date advice to Bidwells on the basis of recent site visits and local knowledge. During two meetings, it was made clear that this was a draft strategy, with maps from the draft strategy being used to help provide a context for the discussion. Written advice provided by the Planning Policy team was clear in noting that the 2011 strategy was a draft at the time that the advice was provided. Additionally, the caveat in the supporting paragraph to Policy 4/2 allows us to consider the importance of sites as required. Officers within the Planning Policy team have not referenced the document in the way represented in your letter. It is reasonable to use the draft strategy to inform discussions and any advice has been given on that basis.

(iv) Concerns regarding the silting of the latest tracked changes version of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy on the Council's website are noted. This particular page was used as the full strategy document could not be

uploaded onto the committee system due to file size limits. It was agreed that the best way forward was to mount it on the Council's Open Space and Recreation Strategy page and provide links from the main report page. It was also made clear on the webpage that the strategy had not yet been adopted at the time that it was uploaded.

Matter for Decision:

The purpose of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011 would be to replace the existing Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2006 in setting out the protection, enhancement and requirements for new provision of open space necessary to meet the needs of the expanding City, and the mechanisms for implementation.

After being approved for consultation at Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 12th July 2011, the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011 was issued for consultation between 25 July and 2 September 2011.

Consultation resulted in a number of amendments being made to the Open Space and Recreation Strategy. Appendix A of the Officer's report provided a summary of representations made to the draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy, and provided information on officers' assessment of those representations. Appendix B of the Officer's report set out a tracked changed version of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy in order to allow the amendments made as a result of consultation to be viewed.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport:

(i) Agreed the responses to the representations received to the draft Open Space and Recreation Strategy and the consequential amendments to the strategy.

(ii) Adopted the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011 as a material consideration and as part of the technical evidence base for the Local Plan Review.

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 Senior Planning Policy Officer regarding the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011.

The committee made the following comments in response to the report.

(i) Observed that some wards had more open space than others, the east area of the City was particularly deficient.

(ii) The viability of land should be considered so open spaces were created where appropriate and fit for purpose, as opposed to just being inserted to meet criteria. That was, they needed to be of a useful size in appropriate locations around the City.

In response to Member's questions, the Senior Planning Policy Officer and Head of Planning Services confirmed the following:

(i) Noted Member's comments concerning the commuting of cash sums in lieu of open space provision. The Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport undertook to take forward this issue in discussion with officers.

(ii) It was difficult to provide recreational facilities for all age groups in 1 play area, this was more practicable in larger play areas than smaller ones. This was more of a management than a policy issue. In assessing the need to upgrade facilities in a given area of the City, consideration should be given to the demographics of the area in order to provide appropriate play facilities.

(iii) The Senior Planning Policy Officer undertook to provide training to Planning Officers to ensure consistency of application of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011 and the policies contained in the Cambridge Local Plan 2006.

The committee resolved unanimously to adopt the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm

CHAIR