

**COUNCIL**

9 January 2013

6.00 - 6.45 pm

**Present:** Councillors Stuart (Mayor), Saunders (Deputy Mayor), Ashton, Benstead, Bick, Bird, Birtles, Blackhurst, Blencowe, Boyce, Brierley, Brown, Cantrill, Dryden, Gawthrop, Hart, Herbert, Hipkin, Johnson, Kerr, Kightley, Marchant-Daisley, McPherson, Meftah, Moghadas, O'Reilly, Owers, Pippas, Pitt, Pogonowski, Price, Reid, Reiner, Rosenstiel, Smart, Smith, Swanson, Todd-Jones, Tucker, Tunnaclyffe and Ward

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL****13/1/CNL Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Abbott.

**13/2/CNL Declaration of Interests**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Reid	13/4/CNL	Personal: Owner of a rental property in Cambridge that could be affected by the proposed exemptions in the new scheme.
Stuart	13/4/CNL	Personal: Owner of a rental property in Cambridge that could be affected by the proposed exemptions in the new scheme.
Tucker	13/4/CNL	Personal: Owner of a rental property in Cambridge that could be affected by the proposed exemptions in the new scheme.
Smith	13/4/CNL	Personal: Owner of a rental property in Cambridge that could be affected by the proposed exemptions in the new scheme.
Ward	13/4/CNL	Personal: Owner of a vacant rental property in Cambridge that would be affected by the proposed exemptions if it were still empty when the scheme takes effect.

**13/3/CNL Public Questions Time**

Dr Eva addressed the Council and made the following points:

- i. Had raised concern about climate change at the Council meeting on 25 October 2012 and been informed by the Executive Councillor that it was mainstreamed through Council activities rather than treated as a separate issue.
- ii. Had subsequently met with the Executive Councillor and relevant officers on 18 December 2012 to further discuss the issue. Whilst this meeting provided a better understanding of the council's approach to climate change it also highlighted a lack of ambition in the way the Climate Change Strategy had been developed.
- iii. Raised concern that the Climate Change Strategy failed to acknowledge the effects of temperature increases.
- iv. Highlighted quotes by the World Bank, PriceWaterhouseCoopers and the International Energy Agency regarding the effect of temperature increases.

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change responded:

- i. Highlighted that whilst the Council could work towards reducing its carbon emissions to zero, there was no clarity on what effect, if any, this would have. Decisions, as suggested by Dr Eva, on such issues as the closure of swimming pools could therefore not be made lightly.

In response, Dr Eva made the following points:

- i. Whilst the City Council's carbon emissions may be small, the Council's motivation for reducing them could be for the following three reasons:
  - Fairness
  - Leadership
  - Tokenism
- ii. As the Executive Councillor did not appear to take his responsibilities seriously he should resign his position.

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Climate Change responded:

- i. Whilst Dr Eva's comments had been noted and would be taken into consideration, the Executive Councillor would not be resigning his position.

## **13/4/CNL To consider the recommendations of the Executive for Adoption**

### Localisation of Council Tax Support

Councillor Cantrill proposed and Councillor Reiner seconded the following amendment:

Add to the recommendation of the Executive for adoption:

“While opposing the principal of localisation of council tax benefit as outlined by the Government, the Council welcomes the work done by officers to ensure that the arrangements in Cambridge will protect the vulnerable and preserve the equivalent levels of benefit for those currently entitled to it.”

On a show of hands the amendment was carried by 21 votes to 0.

**Resolved** (by 23 votes to 0) that:

- i. The proposed localised Council Tax Support Scheme, as set out in the committee report, be approved.
- ii. The proposals to take advantage of new powers set out in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 (amending the Local Government Finance Act 1992) to vary statutory exemptions from Council Tax in respect of vacant and unoccupied dwellings, as set out in paragraph 5.2 of the committee report, be approved (Annex A of the committee report provides background information).
- iii. Authority be delegated to the Director of Customer and Community Services to make minor amendments to the scheme. Major amendments or fundamental changes will be referred to Executive Councillor, Chair and Oppositions Spokes of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.
- iv. Authority be delegated to the Head of Revenues and Benefits, to make the detailed arrangements required to implement the proposed localised Council Tax Support Scheme and the variations to the exemptions from Council Tax.

- v. Authority be delegated to the Director of Resources to calculate and approve the Council Tax Base for 2013/14 and to notify precepting bodies by 31 January 2013.
  
- VI. While opposing the principal of localisation of council tax benefit as outlined by the Government, the Council welcomes the work done by officers to ensure that the arrangements in Cambridge will protect the vulnerable and preserve the equivalent levels of benefit for those currently entitled to it.

The meeting ended at 6.45 pm

**CHAIR**