

**COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

15 March 2018  
5.00 - 5.44 pm

**Present:** Councillors Ratcliffe (Chair), Sinnott (Vice-Chair), Abbott, Austin, Barnett, Bird, Gillespie and O'Connell

Executive Councillors: Johnson (Executive Councillor for Communities) and Smith (Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces)

**Officers:**

Strategic Director: Suzanne Hemingway  
Head of Corporate Strategy: Andrew Limb  
Strategy and Partnerships Manager: David Kidston  
Sustainable Drainage Engineer: Rachel Veysey  
Committee Manager: James Goddard

**Others Present:**

Senior Engineer: John Richards  
Energy Projects Team Leader: Justin Smith

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

**18/12/Comm Apologies**

No apologies were received.

**18/13/Comm Declarations of Interest**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Interest</b>
Councillor Abbott	18/16/Comm	Personal: Is a governor at Addenbrooke's Hospital
Councillor Barnett	18/16/Comm	Personal: Works at Addenbrooke's Hospital
Councillor O'Connell	18/16/Comm	Personal: Member of Trumpington Residents Association
Councillor Barnett	18/18/Comm	Personal: Works at

		Addenbrooke's Hospital
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### **18/14/Comm Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **18/15/Comm Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

### **18/16/Comm Hobson's Brook Corridor 10 Year Vision**

#### **Matter for Decision**

Hobson's Brook Corridor is an important green infrastructure corridor extending between the natural spring at Nine Wells on Cambridge's southern fringe and running northwards in to the city centre.

Hobson's Brook Corridor 10 Year Vision (covering the period 2018 – 2028) describes the nature and character of the corridor, defines various pressures faced and outlines management and maintenance priorities over the next 10 years; based upon an assessment of historical records and more recent data gathered.

It is intended to guide activities which focus on water quality improvements, ecological enhancements, maintenance and restoration work along with community engagement activities within the corridor.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces**

- i. Endorsed the Hobson's Brook Corridor 10 Year Vision as an evidence base to inform planning policy and decisions, and to influence management and maintenance priorities.
- ii. Supported the establishment of a delivery action plan setting out future investment priorities in order to assist obtaining funded as needed.

#### **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 Sustainable Drainage Engineer.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. There was a disappointing response rate to the Hobson Conduit public consultation.
- ii. Queried if land owners near the Conduit, particularly the University of Cambridge, were disengaged. If so, would this cause difficulties regarding consent and funding for future work?
- iii. Councillor O'Connell offered to help engage the University of Cambridge in the Hobson Conduit public consultation process in her capacity as Ward Councillor.
- iv. Historically the Market Square fountain was an important feature as the end of the Conduit and a source of drinking water. Requested this be brought back into the Vision document, possibly as a way to reduce the number of plastic drinking bottles in the city.
- v. Raised concern about the number of pollutants and chemicals that could affect the Conduit and local water supplies through surface run off from agricultural and industrial areas in/around/bordering the city.

The Sustainable Drainage Engineer said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The University of Cambridge were directly engaged through stakeholder consultation. Further engagement work would continue in future.
- ii. It was unclear if future problems would arise from stakeholder disengagement.
- iii. The Vision document was not a contentious document, which may explain the low consultation response rate. The Conduit was seen as an asset to the city.
- iv. The majority (70%) of consultees were involved in earlier stakeholder engagement work ie landowners along the Conduit corridor such as the University of Cambridge.
- v. There was greater public interest in the visible parts of the Conduit (eg the open brook) than underground sections. Both were equally important but the open sections had a higher profile as a public amenity. Funding would be easier to target for the open sections.
- vi. Various water quality tests were undertaken over time to ensure there were no adverse impacts from local farms or (new) developments. There were no issues to report at present eg floating pennywort or pesticide pollution. Part of the checks were to measure and collate what was occurring with the brook ie what was in/on it and whether this was good or bad.

- vii. Officers engaged with Pemberton Farms who were major land owners on the south of the city. Land use and ownership around the brook was changing over time.
- viii. Local wildlife charities were engaged in the consultation rather than national ones as they were seen as more appropriate.

The Committee resolved by 6 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

Councillors Abbott and Barnett did not vote due to their declarations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations. She undertook to raise the suggestion of reconnecting the Market Square fountain to Hobson's Conduit (as a potential drinking fountain) with the Planning Department and Executive Councillor for Environmental Services and City Centre.

### **Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

## **18/17/Comm Allocation of Sharing Prosperity Fund**

### **Matter for Decision**

The Council has an Anti-Poverty Strategy, which sets out a range of ongoing and new actions to address poverty in Cambridge over a three year period from 2017/18 to 2019/20. A dedicated Sharing Prosperity Fund (SPF) was created in 2014 to support projects which contribute to the objectives of the strategy. The Officer's report presented details of 8 projects, which the Executive Councillor for Communities is recommended to approve for funding from the SPF during 2018/19 and 2019/20. The proposals are either for new projects, or for continued funding for existing projects.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Communities**

Approved the proposed allocation of funding from the Sharing Prosperity Fund as set out in Table 1 (paragraph 3.5 of the Officer's report).

### **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 Strategy and Partnerships Manager.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Councillor Gillespie referred to comments he previously made in October 2017 Community Services Committee. He thought the Anti-Poverty Strategy was good but could do more to anticipate trends that would affect the ability of people to avoid food poverty. Climate change and Brexit were both likely to affect the cost of importing food, and Cambridge has a particularly high reliance on imported food. He would like to see more action to increase food security because it would affect the poorest the most. He suggested the Council needed a sustainable food strategy, with a section on food poverty.
- ii. Councillor Bird expressed concern about Universal Credit as people may become homeless if they could not pay bills.

The Strategy and Partnerships Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The Officer's report presented details of 8 projects that could receive SPF funding. It also set out expenditure to date in Appendix A. Some projects had received more SPF funding than others, and over a longer term. Other projects were funded for shorter periods if they subsequently received additional funding from other sources (not listed in the Officer's report).
- ii. A further report on project outputs and outcomes would come back to Community Services Committee in 2019.
- iii. (Ref Appendix A) it was proposed that further SPF funding be given to existing projects, such as Digital Access and Active in Cambridge, in 2018/19 to provide extra activities and outputs.
- iv. Food security was an important consideration and the city needed to live sustainably. There were no specific SPF projects to cover this in this round of funding, but the Council was working with Cambridge Sustainable Food to support this objective as part of wider work being carried out to deliver the Council's Climate Change Strategy.
- v. If the proposed Universal Credit Outreach project were approved for SPF funding, CAB advisors would be on hand in JobCentre Plus Offices to provide financial advice to residents receiving Universal Credit. This would be similar to the work in Great Yarmouth, which has proved very successful.

The Executive Councillor responded to Councillor Gillespie:

- i. The Council was also working with Cambridge Sustainable Food in respect for their plans for a 'Food Hub' in the city. They work with Food

Cycle and other groups in the city in promoting the preparation of healthy, low-cost meals for families on low incomes. The Council already helped people with debt and money problems through Sharing Prosperity Fund initiatives, such as the 'Advice on Prescription' project.

- ii. The Council Revenue and Benefits team have been preparing for the launch of Universal Credit for several years and were well-placed to ensure help is on hand for those affected by benefit changes.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

### **Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

### **18/18/Comm Annual Update on the Work of our Strategic Partnerships - Communities Portfolio**

#### **Matter for Decision**

The Officer's report provides an update on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Trust as a part of the Council's commitment given in its "Principles of Partnership Working", to set out annual reports on the work of the key partnerships it is involved with.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Communities**

Agreed to continue to work with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children's Area Partnership, at a time of change, to ensure that public agencies and others can together address the strategic issues affecting Cambridge and that the concerns of Cambridge citizens are responded to.

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

As set out in the Officer's report.

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

Not applicable.

#### **Scrutiny Considerations**

This item was not requested for pre-scrutiny and the committee made no comments in response to the report from the Head of Corporate Strategy.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

**Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 5.44 pm

**CHAIR**