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Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee

P&T1

Tuesday, 29 June 2021

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29 June 2021
5.30 - 7.25 pm

Present: Councillors D. Baigent (Chair), S. Smith (Vice-Chair), Bick, Bond, S. Davies, Gawthrop Wood, Page-Croft, Pounds, Sargeant and Scutt

Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport: Councillor Thornburrow

Officers:

Assistant Director: Sharon Brown

Head of New Communities: Jane Green

Head of Human Resources: Deborah Simpson

Corporate Business & Executive Support Manager: Sharon Line

Principal Urban Designer: Joanne Preston

Built Environment Team Leader: Monteiro Trovine

Natural Environment Team leader: John Cornell

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

21/22PnT Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

21/23PnT Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

21/24PnT Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Baigent	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycle Campaign

21/25PnT Public Questions

Committee Manager's note: Those public questions not read out in the public meeting received a response post meeting as shown in the minutes from the relevant officer.

Question 1:

Under section 62B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, both houses of Parliament have approved a document entitled Improving Planning Performance, which sets forth the legally binding performance criteria and reporting standards that all local planning authorities in England must meet.

How long has Greater Cambridge Planning been aware that the planning performance returns submitted by the planning service to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are materially inaccurate and do not comply with the legally binding reporting standards approved by Parliament, and what measures, if any, has the planning service taken to correct these errors?

The Chair advised a response from the Executive Councillor would be placed in the minutes, which is as follows:

The Shared Planning Services approach to reporting the Councils' performance on planning and related applications was reviewed by the Shared Internal Audit Service earlier this year. That investigation followed a similar representation from you to members of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and focused on Quarter 2 of 2020. Following a three month investigation, the Shared Internal Audit Service found the formula used to calculate performance and returns to be correct but recognised the difference between the advice of the Planning Advisory Service, the extant legislation concerning application processing and the governments subsequent performance standards calculation set out in the approved document. The review also identified a small number of cases where the Local Planning Authority (LPA) did not appear to have a complete record of the applicant's agreement to the extension of time. The findings of that review were reported to SCDC Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 20 April 2021 by the Shared Head of Internal Audit.

Following the internal audit report, and in line with the recommendations in the review, the Shared Planning Service has audited all available records (including former planning officer emails) to determine cases where no written agreement to an extension of time was available for the file. As a result of that review, it has submitted a revised return to MHCLG which recognised the 13

cases (out of 296 decisions) where a written record of the agreement of the applicant could not be located. The service has also revised its procedures for reporting applications “in time” (to address the concerns expressed by yourself at that time) and introduced a procedure note to standardise the process of seeking and recording extensions of time within the Councils planning system.

Question 2:

Members of the Committee may be aware of an outline planning application for the development of the land South of Coldhams Lane. The planning application details the development of a B8 last mile logistic hub through the middle of a residential area. The development would be served exclusively by Coldhams Lane with two approaches:

- i. Through Barnwell Road - which has a low bridge restricting movement of HGV to 4.2m high max.**
- ii. Through the village centre of Cherry Hinton passing by or close to three primary schools and a Grade 1 listed 13th century Church.**

The developer established the roads feeding the proposed development site were at capacity today and cannot accept more traffic and would remain at capacity by 2025 when the sites are planned to open.

The developer also established through their environment study the following heavy vehicles (HV) traffic increases would be achieved on the roads surrounding the development site by 2025 (when they open) because of the development:

- i. Coldhams Lane (east of Norman Way 1000% increase to average 231 HV / 24hours**
- ii. Cherry Hinton High Street 200% increase to average 99 HV / 24hours**
- iii. Teversham Drift 68% increase to average 361 HV / 24hours**
- iv. Barnwell Road 526% increase to average 526 HV / 24hours**

The developer concluded the economic benefit of such a development will “constitutes a negligible magnitude of change to the local economy, which along with a medium sensitive baseline results in a long term permanent beneficial impact of insignificant effect for the regional economy.”

Does the committee agree that any last mile logistic delivery hub, with a significant impact on the traffic and the life of the residents, is better placed outside of the urban areas and adjacent to double carriage A roads and motorways to minimise the HV traffic impact on the surrounding residents?

Would the committee agree when any project has insignificant economic (and likely negative) impact on the local and regional economy balanced against the:

- i. Significant additional stress and cost to maintain Cambridge and the surrounding area's transport infrastructure.**
- ii. compounded by the significant increase in pollution (particle, noise and light) as a consequence of the logistic hub, that such development is not in the best interest of Cambridge residents?**

The Chair thanked the member of the public for attending the meeting. He then explained a response would not be given to the questions, as although general, they were very close to a live planning application and therefore felt it was outside of the scope of Planning & Transport Scrutiny Committee.

Question 3:

The Draft Biodiversity Strategy puts much emphasis on the role of Country Parks in contributing to biodiversity "net gain" and doubling nature, along with other non-statutory designated sites such as City Wildlife Sites. However, there is little indication in the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document of the measures needed to manage sites such as these, as well as potential new ones, so that long-term biodiversity protection and recovery is assured. Such sites are often fully or partially owned by developers, which leads to uncertainty about their future (some City Wildlife Sites have been irreparably damaged in the past) and an insecure funding basis (sites may have to be managed to generate income at the expense of the wildlife they protect). Should not some thought be given to developing measures for such sites, to ensure their financial stability and appropriate management in perpetuity, with clear and strong guidance given to developers so that they fully understand their responsibilities in relation to such areas?

Response from the Natural Environment Team Leader post meeting:

The above question was not entirely relevant to the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (BSPD) as the BSPD did not introduce new regulations, this was not what SPDs did. The SPD guides users through existing legislation, amplifying and interpreting this, but not adding anything new. New policies, such as those indicated in the above question, could be developed through the forthcoming consultation of the new Local Plan. As such, officers would encourage early engagement with this process so that

members of the public could have their say about the kinds of biodiversity policies that they would want to see put in place.

Question 4:

Can the Council state how they intend to comply with the potential new Environment Bill Duty on Local Authorities given the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is not underpinned by any obvious strategic assessment or any meaningful monitoring approach- for instance there is no basic data presented about whether Local Wildlife Sites exist or not?

"The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 placed a duty on public authorities to 'have regard' to conserving biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.

The Environment Bill will strengthen the duty to cover the enhancement, as well as the conservation, of biodiversity. It will require public authorities to actively carry out strategic assessments of the actions they can take to enhance and conserve biodiversity. Greater Cambridge will be required to report on the actions they took to comply with the new duty.

The Cambridge SPD has no evidence of a strategic approach to conserving and enhancing biodiversity and does not mention how monitoring will take place. The present evidence of the approach is not conservation or enhancement but the opposite. At least four Local Wildlife Sites have been recently damaged by development; two have been destroyed and another two are allocated for industrial development on Coldhams Lane. Four of the sites damaged or destroyed because of actions by local authority sponsored development.

There is no evidence that basic protection is being applied to the core of the Cambridge ecological network let alone that Greater Cambridge can comply with the new duty.

How can developers or planners identify the threats (or opportunities) to the ecological network in Cambridge that need to be addressed when they don't even know how many Local Wildlife Sites have been damaged or destroyed, nor what specific threats they face?

The above question is not entirely relevant to the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (BSPD) as the BSPD does not introduce new regulations, because this is not what SPDs do. The SPD guides users through existing legislation, amplifying and interpreting this, but not adding anything new. New policies, such as those indicated

in the above question, could be developed through the forthcoming consultation of the new Local Plan. As such, we would encourage early engagement with this process so that members of the public can have their say about the kinds of biodiversity policies that they would want to see put in place.

The Council will await the publication of the final version of the Environment Bill / Act before commenting on how it intends to meet new requirements set out in that Bill, as guidance from UK Government will likely be included and this is not available.

Response from the Natural Environment Team Leader post meeting:

The above question is not entirely relevant to the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (BSPD) as the BSPD does not introduce new regulations, because this is not what SPDs do. The SPD guides users through existing legislation, amplifying and interpreting this, but not adding anything new. New policies, such as those indicated in the above question, could be developed through the forthcoming consultation of the new Local Plan. As such, we would encourage early engagement with this process so that members of the public can have their say about the kinds of biodiversity policies that they would want to see put in place.

The Council will await the publication of the final version of the Environment Bill / Act before commenting on how it intends to meet new requirements set out in that Bill, as guidance from UK Government will likely be included and this is not available.

Question 5:

Officers at Cambridge City Council have acknowledged that breaches of planning conditions have taken place at 291 Hills Road application 17/1372/FUL and that the protected trees on the site have been unlawfully damaged by the developer, but it appears that they have allowed illegal works to continue on the site without protecting the trees or taking remedial action. Residents have written to the council's enforcement officer but have received no response.

The approved plans listed in the decision notice for application 17/1372/FUL specified that vertical sheet piling was to be used and that all excavation work was to be conducted with equipment operated from within the footprint of the building. Those terms of the decision go to the heart of the permission and the damage done to the protected trees on the site that were to be retained.

If permission has been given to start work to remediate damage to the trees due to the unauthorised excavations, then the works are again in breach of the planning permission. The work that is currently going on at the site is the continuation of the building work which had been suspended because of several breaches of planning conditions.

Cambridge City Council does not publish enforcement data, but this is a shared planning service, we can therefore assume that the trend is the same as for South Cambridgeshire which has seen a significant drop in planning enforcement action.

There are similar concerns about biodiversity and regulation and planning enforcement being expressed all over the city. How will the proposed Biodiversity SPD address these concerns?

The Council is promoting a tree canopy project. It asks residents to adopt trees and water them, yet it appears that it is not taking action to protect the city's existing stock of trees and biodiversity.

How can you have a Biodiversity SPD which talks about doubling nature if basic planning conditions to protect trees and biodiversity are not being enforced on site? Especially as it also appears to be common practice for developers to employ their own consultants to check that planning conditions are being enforced?

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport advised she would like to thank those residents who alerted the Council to the alleged breaches on Hills Road. Planning and Enforcement Officers could not continually inspect building and construction sites all day every day, to ensure that conditions were being adhered to. Officers had investigated on site. It had been agreed all works would cease for several weeks, unauthorised entrances and routes closed, and structures removed from the root protection areas. New details for remediation works had been submitted by the developer's project arboriculturist relating to tree protection. These had been reviewed and work permitted to start in the middle of the site away from the trees whilst remedial work was being organised.

The site would continually be monitored by the project arboriculturist and the council's enforcement officers. Considering any enforcement action, the local planning authority would always consider the national planning policy framework (NPPF) and if there was a clear public interest.

The City Council currently did not have a biodiversity SPD. The guidance on policy was currently case by the case. A draft biodiversity SPD being developed would go out to consultation introducing new standardised guidance

for developers, sign posting existing legislation and current communication clearer.

Would speak with officers regarding the publication of publishing enforcement data.

The member of the public made the following supplementary statement: When a large amount of time had been taken to consider a planning application, and the issues that surrounded that application, such as the surrounding neighbourhoods, places that residents respected, the trees, gardens and valued outdoor space, then witnessing very little result in ensuring protection, it was hard not be cynical about what the Council were proposing for biodiversity.

Questioned how the Council expected residents to buy into the tree canopy project, to water and protect a tree, look after the local biodiversity when they were witnessing what was happening locally to the existing trees and biodiversity.

In response the Executive Councillor stated in her experiences as an architect, she believed it was the responsibility of the applicant (or architect or consultant, if instructed) to ensure that conditions were being met. The developer had acknowledged inadequate monitoring of the conditions and had taken measures for improvement.

Question 6:

The City Council's Chalk Stream Report is only mentioned as a background report for the discussion of the draft Biodiversity SPD and would ask what was the reason for this? Given the threats highlighted in the report and concerns raised by Friends of the Cam (supported by such organisations as Cambridge Labour Party Environment Forum (CLEF), CPRE (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England), Friends of the Earth), and the escalated complaint against Greater Cambridge Planning Service about unanswered questions regarding unsustainable growth, water and sewage not been included in today's discussion on the Biodiversity SPD item as shown in the link below, the matter required consideration:

<https://www.friendsofthecam.org/content/complaint-against-cambridge-planning-escalated>

Furthermore, the SPD did not reference that Natural Cambridgeshire was taking a lead on strategy for the Biodiversity SPD. On the Natural Cambridgeshire website there reports which referenced doubling nature,

a net gain off setting policy to mitigate building 1,000,000 houses along Oxford to Cambridge Arc by 2050.

There was no mention in any of the City Council's biodiversity documentation this strategy is about mitigating a very high level of development. There has been no opportunity for residents to give their opinion on this matter. Would ask what the Committee's views were on this subject?

The Executive Councillor thanked the public speaker for their comments. The SPD that would be considered by the Planning and Transport Committee was related to the SCDC's SPD and updated in line with the Local Plan and current legislation. It did not relate to any proposals or consultation for the next Local Plan (Greater Cambridge Local Plan) and therefore did not reference future development which there would be public consultation on.

The member of the public made the following supplementary statement: The SPD mentioned 'Cambridge Nature Network' and asked if it was correct that a priority list of landscapes would be devised for the Nature Network Plan and that Environmental Land Management Schemes would be funded by net gain off setting.

The Natural Environment Team Leader acknowledged the importance of the Chalk Stream Report and understood the significance of the aquifer, the state of the river and chalk stream. However, the draft SPD was looking at the existing policies, there was currently no place to look at new regulations. The document was guidance for existing national and local plan policies. New policies could not be created through this SPD.

Work had begun on the new Local Plan which permitted opportunities for public engagement and consultation to engage with officers highlighting the importance of aquifer and chalk streams matters.

While the Council supported the notion of doubling nature, this was an aspiration and could be quantified. The Council would use this concept to do more and improve biodiversity.

Question 7:

Welcome the aim of having up to date, robust and clear guidance on biodiversity matters. Although in planning terms this does seem to be related to new developments which impact on the existing green spaces

that are under increased pressure. There has been an increase in visitors of Grantchester Meadows and consideration needs to be given to making safe access and the same time increasing biodiversity. The vast majority visiting the meadows do so on foot or bike, but to get to the meadows they must navigate the footpath by Skaters' Meadow. On weekends and particularly hot days the area is chaotic with too many vehicles reversing in and out of the small area. There has been one accident and the dangers are obvious, other factors are the stress it brings to residents, particularly the elderly, those with mobility issues or with young children. It is known that green spaces are important for reducing stress so it would be important to make this area a stress-free environment.

Residents and Friends Groups have looked after the trees and planted wildflowers on the verges which are trashed by vehicles and bikes. Lawyers for Cambridgeshire County Council have recently established that the area is legally a footpath and therefore illegal for vehicles to park on.

There is a proposal to install bollards to prevent vehicle access and to make the footpath safe for pedestrians and cyclists. This is in line with the City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to address climate change by supporting active modes of travel, with the guidance of the SPD to protect and enhancing biodiversity in Greater Cambridge. To ensure safe access to existing green spaces and enhancing biodiversity wherever possible is as important as giving guidance on these issues for new developments.

Would the Council support Cambridgeshire County Council in closing the footpath to vehicles and support residents to rewild the verges and increase biodiversity there?

The Executive Councillor for Planning and Transport acknowledged the effort that residents had gone to, to improve biodiversity. Was aware that the area was shown as free parking on some websites and that camper vans had parked in the area for weeks at a time, so appreciated the difficulties that residents were faced with. The County Council's Highways and Transport Committee would consider the matter of the bollards on July 27. If it were agreed that the bollards should be installed it would be appropriate to ensure the right width of path was established. As the City Council did not have ownership of any of the area could not commit to any funding.

The efforts of the residents should be celebrated to improve biodiversity and would welcome feedback if biodiversity had increased if the bollards were installed.

The member of the public made the following supplementary statement: The footpath had been legally recognised, and safety of pedestrians was a priority. Unless the bollards were installed it was not possible to make the area more biodiverse. Would appreciate the City Councils support for the County Council to put the bollards in.

The Executive Councillor suggested it may be possible for a Ward Councillor to apply for an Environmental Improvement Grant to assist with rewilding of the footpath. The City Council could also assist with volunteers.

Question 8:

According to the Environment Agency (EA), in the Cambridge and South Cambs areas,

"The Anglian River Basin Management Plan (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anglian-river-basin-district-river-basinmanagement-plan>) considered the status of all rivers and aquifers in the Region. This showed many waterbodies did not have the flow required to support the ecology and groundwater units not meeting good status." (see letter from EA, dated 7th August, attached)

A large tree needs up to 2000 litres of water per day when it is hot and sunny according to forestry commission data, attached. This water in the past will have come directly from the underlying chalk geology, as water moves upwards by capillary action, and tree roots tap directly into this supply. However, due to excessive abstraction to feed population growth, ground water levels have dropped and many trees, either on raised ground or those that are shorter rooted varieties such as cherries and silver birches are no longer able to access this water. Over the last 2 summers many trees, of all species, were showing signs of severe drought stress and the permanent damage is still visible today. Many trees died. A healthy water table is essential, not only to support the ecology of the rivers themselves, but all ecology

Local fauna rely on clean plentiful water in the environment for drinking. The development in Northstowe caused local ponds to dry up, depriving local fauna of drinking water. This is desertification.

What makes you think you can achieve any of your plans for increasing biodiversity if waterbodies cannot support the ecology? What are your plans to restore historic water levels in the Cam Chalk Aquifer and other

waterbodies, such as the ponds in Longstanton, South Cambs, and natural flows in Cam Valley Chalk Streams?

Response received from the Development Manager (Streets and Open Spaces) post meeting:

The City Council and Cambridge Water commissioned the Wildlife Trust and the Wild Trout Trust to assess the health of local chalk streams, including some outside Cambridge.

The report provides a brief overview of the main problems affecting each chalk stream, and the key opportunities to improve each one. It also identifies some potential projects for delivery with stakeholders and landowners.

The aim of the report is to start conversations about what needs to be done, where, and by whom. We want it to facilitate the funding and delivery of projects that will improve the streams' health and resilience, while the longer-term problem of low flows is addressed.

Almost all the watercourses in this report have at least one local person or group who know their river very well and will have more to add. The aim of this report is to start conversations about what needs to be done, where, and by who; and to facilitate funding and delivery of projects which improve the health of local chalk streams.

The report and potential projects are published on the City Council website <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/chalk-streams>

Question 9:

Our question concerns the provision of biodiversity measures within planning conditions for new developments in the city. In the light of what we have learned during the pandemic about the importance to wellbeing of contact with nature within walkable distance, even the presence of mature trees has shown to reduce stress levels. Current provisions for green space in current and planned developments seem inadequate to meet the need. A new development with a pocket park is a development of manicured lawns, half a dozen newly established trees, heavily pruned shrubs visited by two magpies, passing groups of pigeons, the occasional bumble and the resident cat, this does not resemble anything natural. Nor does it support significant biodiversity, there is not even a hedgehog highway connecting to similar area connecting to a neighbouring estate.

Provision of some space for less manicured areas, hedgehog highways and insect hotels, amongst other options would go some way to

enhancing biodiversity within the city. Together with a firm commitment of retention to pre-existing tree covering and vegetation it might start to deliver an environment that best supports wellbeing.

This is particularly important in future developments such as the proposals for Romsey lakes, where the clearance of all existing vegetation and replanting with horticultural specimens seems likely to reduce biodiversity quite unnecessarily.

Can the requirement for existing vegetation to be retained as far as possible and additional provision for suitable encouragement to wildlife be made a planning provision for all new development.

Can the Council move to ensure that some land is set aside for this purpose in all future developments and the design includes consideration for such measures?

The Executive Councillor advised that the SPD would guide applicants with the information to meet conditions on existing and proposed biodiversity habitats.

All major applications were reviewed by the City Council's Biodiversity Officer. As principle, the City Council did try to ensure that existing vegetation was retained where possible and suitable habitat was included in all new developments. Species specific enhancement such as Hedgehog highways, swift boxes, log piles insect hotels were secured to most applications. Standards for open spaces and levels set required for biodiversity net gain would be reviewed as part of the next Local Plan.

The City Council routinely applied planning conditions for hedgehog highways and doorways for both multiple occupancies and single dwellings.

The City Council had looked at all the open spaces in Cambridge to identify areas that would not be cut and let those areas increase in biodiversity. Personally, would like to see areas of biodiversity double and then double again.

The member of the public made the following supplementary statement: I would suspect that many of the provisions which are requested are ignored. For example, there was no hedgehog highway on the estate they lived in even through it was requested so enforcement would help in such matters.

The Executive Councillor asked that she was advised outside of the meeting of the development and would investigate this matter.

Question 10:

I am particularly concerned about the phrase "doubling nature" which I see as contributing to greenwashing, so my question is:

Will the council repudiate as greenwashing the suggestion that the massive building programme in our area, including the OxCam Arc, with its embodied emissions and impact on the natural environment can in any way "double nature"?

Response from the Natural Environment Team Leader post meeting:

The term Doubling Nature originated from the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and was taken up as an aspirational goal by the Council. While there is still some debate as to how to "double nature", the original vision was as much about improving the quality of existing degraded habitats as it was doubling any specific areas of land. As such, it should not be cynically described as "greenwashing", but as a genuine attempt to make a difference by improving both the quality and amount of natural habitats across Greater Cambridge.

21/26PnT Annual Report of 3C Building Control Service & Planning Shared Service 20/21

Matter for Decision

The report summarised the performance of the 3Cs Building Control Shared Service and the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service during 2020/21.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Noted the content of the report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable

Scrutiny Considerations

The Chair advised that as the item had not been requested for scrutiny and debate the Committee would go straight to the vote.

The Committee

Resolved by 8 votes to 0 to note the report.

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport approved the recommendation.

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

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

21/27PnT Review of the Design Review Service (Design and Conservation Panel in Cambridge City Council and the Design Enabling Panel in South Cambridgeshire District Council)

Matter for Decision

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSP) committed to reviewing its design review service in its 2020/2021 Business Plan. Last year, GCSP appointed the independent expert Esther Kurland, from Urban Design Learning (UDL), to review the two panels.

The report sought approval for the proposed arrangements (including charges) which are informed by the recommendations of that review.

The proposal was to replace the two separate design review panels with a new single panel, operating in a consistent manner across Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, with a common charging regime.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport

- i. Agreed the proposals to introduce the new design review service offer and charging schedule set out in the Officer's report for the Greater Cambridge Area from January 2022. Given that the report was also going to South Cambridgeshire District Council's Cabinet, delegated powers were sought should there be any minor changes made by that process to be delegated to the Joint Planning Director in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.
- ii. Agreed the proposals for Cambridge City Council to introduce interim changes to the Design and Conservation Panels terms of reference from July 2021 until the launch of the new design review panel. But discontinue the existing traffic light classification scheme only at a point when an alternative quick reference summary format had been agreed to

replace it, which is qualitative within a spectrum and indicative of progress made.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee considered a report from the Principal Urban Designer and Built Environment Team Leader.

In response to questions and comments from the Committee the Principal Urban Designer and Built Environment Team Leader said the following:

- i. Cambridge City Council was unusual that it did not charge for the Design Review service.
- ii. During the review process applicants and agents had indicated that they valued the services and would be willing to pay for a more professionalised service.
- iii. Most of the schemes reviewed were significant in scale and sensitivity and hence had the resources to pay for the review.
- iv. Cambridgeshire County Council geographic remit was broader than South Cambridgeshire District Council and the City Council.
- v. The new format was designed such that all the panels in this area operated in the same way.
- vi. Surveys and interviews undertaken with panel members. Included a representative from Past, Present and Future and Cambridge Architects Association. A recent meeting was also held with both organisations and the review was also advertised on the agent's forum inviting engagement direct with officers which they could respond to.
- vii. The separate community review panel referenced in the report was a specialised review service currently being promoted in different parts of the country, primarily in London. A decision would need to be made at an appropriate time as to who would lead on setting this up within the Greater Cambridge Planning Services.
- viii. Agreed that the first amendment could be taken forward.
- ix. With regard to the second amendment, there were lots of matters in terms of how the community design review worked in its broader sense as a tool; this was a concept that was new and further work was required

to take this forward, which didn't form the scope of this review. It needed to be considered on its own merits later.

The Head of New Communities said the following:

- i. Each department had a statement of community involvement which set out how each department engages with the community, which had recently been reviewed.
- ii. This first phase of the design review service was to look at professionalising the service, best practice and what users of the services had to say.
- iii. The review starts to look at how community's views are highlighted to the panel and would be looked at in detail during the second stage of the process.
- iv. No objection to the first amendment.
- v. The second amendment referred to an amount of work which was a major undertaking and more detailed work was required; this including looking at variety, talking to communities. Currently there was not the resources to do this, but it would be carried out when the statement of community involvement would be reviewed sometime next year and after the second stage of the process.

Councillor Bick proposed and Councillor Page Croft seconded the following amendments to the recommendation (additional text underlined, and deleted text struck through).

- ii. That the Committee recommend to the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport to agree the proposals for CCC to introduce interim changes to the DCP's terms of reference from July 2021 until the launch of the new design review panel. But discontinue the existing traffic light classification scheme only at a point when an alternative quick reference summary format has been agreed to replace it, which is qualitative within a spectrum and indicative of progress made.

The amendment was carried forward by 4 votes to 0.

- iii. That the committee recommend to the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy & Transport to agree to develop a community design review panel within Cambridge city to enable formative and qualitative input to planning applications without duplicating residents' rights to make representations at the determination stage

The amendment was lost by 6 votes to 4.

The Committee

The Committee unanimously endorsed the Officers recommendations as amended.

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport approved the recommendations.

The Chair noted the comments from Councillor S Smith that Officers should be commended for their report.

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

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor

21/28PnT Review of Taxicard and Transport Initiatives

Matter for Decision

The report referred to several recommendations in relation to transport initiatives funded by Cambridge City Council and the Taxicard scheme.

A review of Cambridge City Council's Taxi card scheme had recently been carried out with the aim of increasing usage by its members, within the remit of providing a more flexible Taxicard scheme.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Noted the report and that a further report would come to the Planning and Transport Committee in January 2022, following the implementation of approved changes and the outcomes of the proposed reviews.
- ii. Approved the proposed changes to the Taxicard scheme for existing and new Taxicard members to operate from 1 October 2021, with a review during the first 6 months, as set out in section 3.3 of this report.
- iii. Approved the undertaking of review work in relation to the Council's Transport Initiatives, working with the Council's partners including the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP).
- iv. Noted there would be further consideration of where delegations and responsibility for policy decisions on transport initiatives should be placed.
- v. Approved the Head of Human Resources be given delegated authority, in liaison with the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport,

and consultation with the Chair and Spokes for Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee, to make any changes that may be necessary to support the transport initiatives and schemes going forward, until such time as a wider decision around the policy and strategy decisions is agreed.

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 Human Resources and the Corporate Business & Executive Support Manager.

In response to comments made by the Committee, the Head of Human Resources and the Corporate Business & Executive Support Manager said the following:

- i. In relation to the Taxi-card criteria this had been means tested, aimed at residents with disabilities who were in receipt of the higher care component of the disability living allowance and daily living enhanced personal independence payment.
- ii. The review undertaken was intended to increase the membership, providing a more flexible Taxi card scheme.
- iii. The scheme was still operating within budget.
- iv. Promotion of the scheme would be through Council magazines, local news and with disability groups.
- v. Noted the comment that it might be more beneficial to residents if the Dial-a-Ride could be more flexible.
- vi. There would be a further review of the Dial-a-Ride service.
- vii. Agreed that it would be beneficial for the Council to have a Transport Officer; had included in the proposals a review to be undertaken with external partners including the GCP who had the expertise in these areas.

The Committee

The Committee unanimously endorsed the Officers recommendations.

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport 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.

21/29PnT Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document**Matter for Decision**

The report referred to the new Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (BSPD) which had been drafted in consultation with Members and technical officers of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (GCSP) and headed toward public consultation prior to amendment and later proposed adoption by this Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council under the auspices of GCSP.

Once adopted, the SPD will provide guidance to users on how to meet the current policy requirements to protect and enhance biodiversity through the planning process as set out in existing Local Plan policy, and national legislation.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Approved the BSPD for public consultation phase to begin in July 2021.

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 Natural Environment Team Leader.

In response to comments made by the Committee the Natural Environment Team Leader said the following:

- i. For the public to acknowledge the prospects that could be gained for biodiversity through development it was important to recognise the net gain opportunities.
- ii. An SPD was to set out the detail of the planning document and was not full of aspirations; these aspirations could form part of the new local plan which was currently being developed through policies.
- iii. There had to be a balance of what could be achieved through current legislation and future ambitions when developing the SPD. It was hoped

this had been achieved but if it were felt that more could be done this could be looked at in future.

- iv. The SPD had been developed through national legislation, particularly the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 which was where measurable biodiversity net gain policy derives. The SPD also highlighted new policies which had come forward.
- v. As there was no current SPD, biodiversity matters were negotiated on a case by case basis.
- vi. Had been advised that in the forthcoming Environmental Bill there would be financial provision for delivery of biodiversity net gain which would be made available to local authorities at district level.
- vii. Confirmed that there were specific Cambridge City Councillors which officers had sought engagement on the outline SPD, these were the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport (Councillor Thornburrow) and the Chair of the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee (Councillor H Davies).
- viii. The consultation period would run from 23 July and had been extended to mid-September due to the summer period.

The Head of New Communities said the following:

- i. The SPD had to meet certain regulations. But in addition, there was good practice currently undertaken with new developments around Cambridge. Officers would be looking at case studies on biodiversity over the next year to demonstrate those opportunities gained through biodiversity.
- ii. Through the consultation process members of the public had the opportunity to express their opinion but did not think there was enough time to include additional information on enforcement. However, comments from members of the public had been noted and would be looked at.

The Committee

The Committee unanimously endorsed the Officers recommendation.

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport approved the recommendation.

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

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

21/30PnT To Note Record of Urgent Decision Taken

Before the Committee were asked to note the Record of Urgent Decisions taken, the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport wished to thank Councillor S. Davies on her consultation response regarding the ROD East West Rail Informal Consultation Stage - Consultation Response. She also wished to place her thanks on record for the work of former councillor Massey, as the Executive Councillor for Transport and Community Safety.

21/31PnT ROD Greater Cambridge Brownfield Register

The decision was noted.

21/32PnT ROD: Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Five Year Housing Land Supply

The decision was noted.

21/33PnT ROD: Changes to the Current Planning System Consultation Response

The decision was noted.

21/34PnT ROD: Cambridge Re-signalling Project C3R Scheme Consultation Response

The decision was noted.

21/35PnT ROD: Joint Response to Uttlesford District Council's (Regulation 18) Local Plan issues and Options consultation

The decision was noted.

21/36PnT ROD East West Rail Informal Consultation Stage - Consultation Response

The decision was noted.

The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

CHAIR