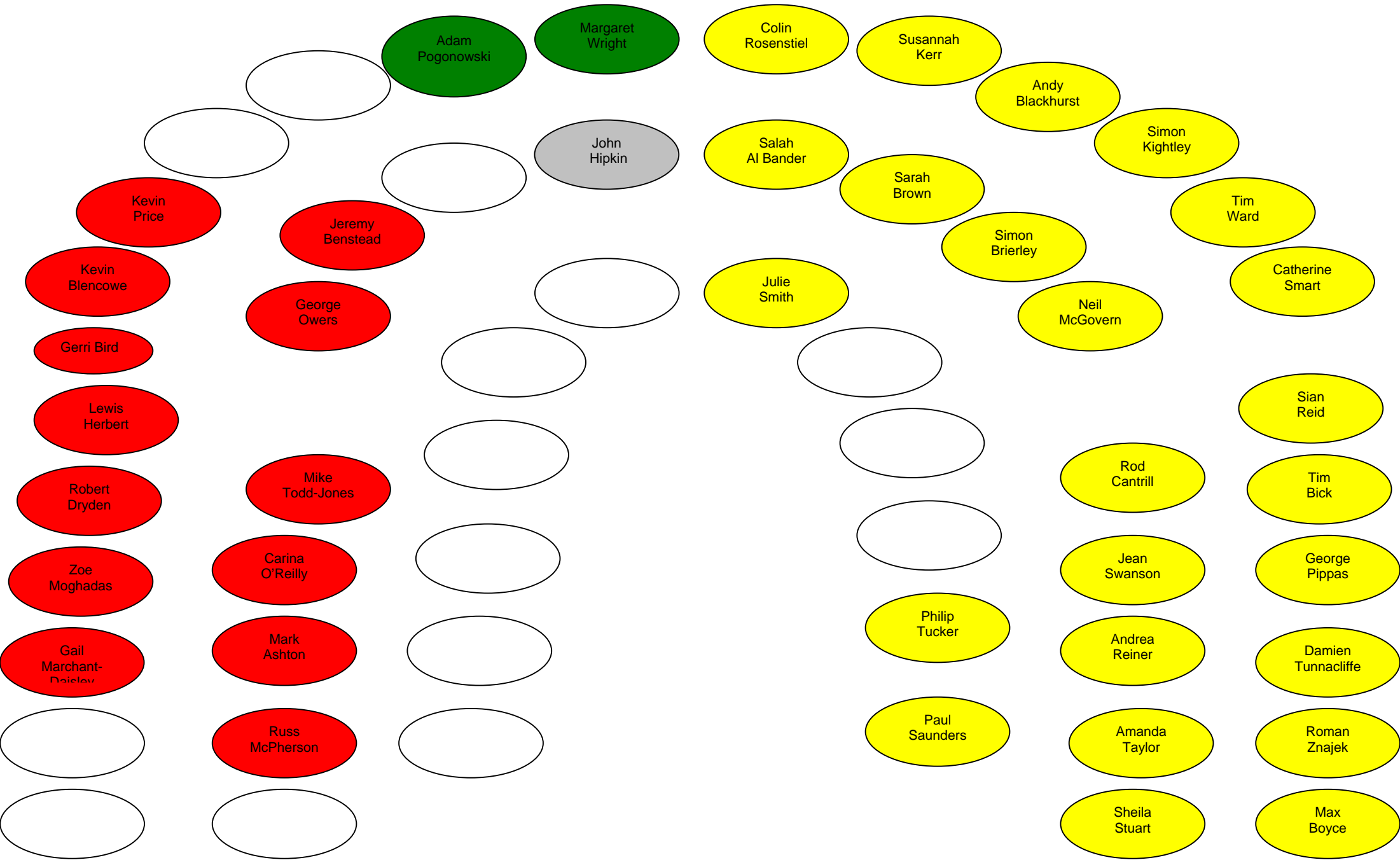




CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Council Information Pack

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The Chief Executive Head of Legal Services, Simon Pugh The Mayor Ian Nimmo-Smith The Deputy Mayor Caroline Hart The Mayor's Chaplain

Agenda Item 4a
Medium Term Strategy (MTS) – September 2011

Treasury Management Strategy Amendment

Since the meeting of The Executive on 12 September 2011, which recommended the MTS to Council, two of the major rating agencies (Moody's and Fitch) have downgraded the ratings of a number of UK financial institutions reflecting their assessment that, in the current financial circumstances, the Government is likely to provide reduced systemic support to the 5 larger eligible institutions whilst it may not be able to support the 7 smaller ones. It should be noted, however, that the agencies have stressed that the downgrades do not reflect a deterioration in the financial strength of the banking system or that of the Government, and are purely reflective of the downward rating pressure from lower systemic support.

Tension is still high in the financial markets and an action plan dealing with the issues faced by the Eurozone is still to be fully agreed. In this context, and in line with the advice of our independent treasury management advisors (SECTOR), the Council is maintaining a cautious approach to its investment activity at this time. In practice, the Council has adopted a policy limiting the maximum period of investment with UK banks and building societies to a maximum of 3 months and the decision to revise the lending limits that had originally been proposed has been put on hold.

The position will be reconsidered as part of the Treasury Management Strategy, which will be incorporated in the Budget-Setting Report to be recommended to Council in February 2012. At this point, the position will also be clearer in terms of the Icelandic Supreme Court decision relating to Landsbanki Islands hf and the treasury management consequences of the debt take-on resulting from the implementation of the new self-financing regime for the HRA.

Accordingly, Council is recommended to:

Delete existing recommendation at 2.8 and replace with:

To approve the changes to the counterparty list.

[The resulting revised Current Counterparty List is attached, replacing page 143 of Appendix J of the MTS Version 3]

Current Counterparty List

The full listing of approved counterparties is shown below, showing the category under which the counterparty has been approved, and the appropriate investment limit:

Name	Colour as at 19 Oct 11	Category	Limit
All UK Local Authorities	N/A	Local Authority	£6m
All UK Passenger Transport Authorities	N/A	Passenger Transport Authority	£6m
All UK Police Authorities	N/A	Police Authority	£6m
All UK Fire Authorities	N/A	Fire Authority	£6m
All UK Nationalised Industries	N/A	Nationalised Industry	£6m
Debt Management Account Deposit Facility	N/A	DMADF	None
Barclays Bank Plc	Green	UK Bank	£6m
HSBC Bank Plc	Green	UK Bank	£12m
Standard Chartered Bank	Green	UK Bank	£6m
Bank of Scotland Plc	Blue	UK Nationalised Bank	£6m
Lloyds TSB Bank Plc	Blue	UK Nationalised Bank	£6m
National Westminster Bank Plc	Blue	UK Nationalised Bank	£6m
The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc	Blue	UK Nationalised Bank	£6m
Ulster Bank Ltd	Blue	UK Nationalised Bank	£6m
Nationwide Building Society	Green	UK Building Society	£6m

For banks within the same Banking Group there is an additional Group limit of £9m (1.5 times the individual limit).

Due to the recent reduction in the Sovereign rating of Spain from AAA to AA+, Santander UK Plc (a UK subsidiary of the Santander Group) have been removed from the counterparty list.

Oral Questions (in order for Council)

1. Councillor Herbert to the Leader

What will be the extra cost (a) for Cambridge city, and b) across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, of postponing the Police Commissioner elections from May to November 2012 and does she support this separate election date initiated by the Liberal Democrat's Home Affairs lead in the House of Lords?

2. Councillor Moghadas to the Executive Councillor for Housing

Re: Seymour Court Housing Development

How are you addressing the clash of interests between meeting the functional housing requirement, balancing the council budget and ensuring the design of the Seymour Court site meets the full needs of the community and enhances the street landscape?

3. Councillor Owers to the Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services

What is the precise reasoning behind the 'Gold Star' bin scheme in terms of reducing household waste and increasing recycling?

4. Councillor Cantrill to the Executive Councillor for Housing

The Council commits significant resources to supporting and helping the disadvantaged within Cambridge particularly those who are homeless and vulnerably housed. This is welcomed at a time of hardship for many people.

Could the Executive Councillor for Housing indicate what actions we are taking to help people progress towards a more stable life?

5. Councillor Dryden to the Executive Councillor for Arts, Sport and Public Places

In March 2008 I first asked the question to the council if we could reinstate the Holy Trinity War Memorial so it could be brought back into use for residents and visitors to Cambridge. In June 2010 it was finally agreed by the City Council that there was money now available to carry out this work so the War Memorial could be open to the public. We are in October 2011, how near are we now to opening up the Holy Trinity War Memorial to the general public?

6. Councillor O'Reilly to the Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health

Is the Executive Councillor concerned that ending the live monitoring of CCTV at certain times could see a rise in crime during those hours?

7. Councillor Wright to the Leader

What did the Council expend on consulting the public in the Council year May 2010 - May 2011 and on which areas of Council activity? How is the effectiveness of such consultations assessed?

8. Councillor Bird to the Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources

1. Why does the city centre management not work better with City Councillors when they take issues to them?

2. I would like to ask what is happening to stop the preventing sprawling street cafes expanding far that they block both pavements and A Boards which causes problems for wheelchair/pushchair access.

9. Councillor Dryden to the Leader

As a result of a VAT audit in May 2010 it was discovered that VAT had been omitted from rental invoices to Legion Group Plc between the period 1st October 2005 and 31st March 2010. The rental was for office accommodation at Mill Road depot under the Local Authority Parking Enforcement agreement.

Most commercial rents are exempt from VAT, however the Council has the option to make a decision to 'Opt to Tax'. The Council took the decision to 'Opt to Tax' this part of the depot in March 2004 due to the impending refurbishment works of the offices. The invoices raised by City Services to Legion Group Plc should have included VAT of £8,142.75, but were unable to establish why the invoices were specifically raised as Exempt (without VAT).

In May 2010 a VAT only invoice for £8,142.75 was sent to Legion Group Plc with a covering letter explaining the omission. Legion Group Plc contacted the Council to request payment in 3 equal instalments between June and August 2010 to which was agreed. The first payment of £2,714.25 was received on the 25th June 2010 reducing the debt to £5,428.50. However, Legion Group Plc subsequently entered Administration before any further payments were made.

A proof of debt was submitted to the Administrator, has the Council received any further payments yet?

10. Councillor Owers to the Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services

Can you update council on the progress and the details of the proposal to roll out weekend cover for City Rangers?

11. Councillor Herbert to the Leader

Does she support the stance of city LibDem Councillor Geoffrey Heathcock in voting for a 25% increase in Councillor allowances at the County Council?

Council 20 October 2011 Written Questions

1. Councillor Moghadas to the Executive Councillor for Housing

Could you clarify whether there are any proposed changes to design at this stage of the Seymour Court housing scheme in Romsey following the public consultation.

Variations to the designs for the new development at Seymour Court are to be submitted prior to consideration by the Planning Committee.

23 people attended the pre-planning public consultation on 20 July 2011. The main areas of comment were in respect of cladding materials to be used on parts of the flats; the height of the corner block; and that the development would increase the pressure on car parking in the area. The planning application that was subsequently made addressed these issues by proposing a light coloured zinc cladding that in turn was intended to soften the impact of the height of the corner block. The design of the corner building was also varied by proposing the introduction of a full height glazing panel on the eastern façade and by increasing the height of windows. The application also demonstrated that rather than increase the pressure on car parking the relocation of the community health facility at the centre of the existing site would be helpful.

Following subsequent comment from the Design and Conservation Panel as part of the planning process further consideration to the design of the corner block has been given and an alternative is to be submitted that reduces the overall height of the façade by some 2 metres and introduces a pitch to the roof on the eastern side. The zinc cladding on the corner block will also be reduced with an element of brickwork now forming more of the façade.

2. Councillor Herbert to the Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources

What is the Council doing to meet the needs of residents and visitors in the city centre, as well as it's prioritising of retailer interests, including on:

a) ensuring that Grand Arcade deliver on their long promised addition of public seating

b) returning public seating removed by Lion Yard

c) adding seating elsewhere in the centre particularly for families and people with mobility problems

d) preventing sprawling street cafes expanding so far that they block both pavements and wheelchair/pushchair access

e) working with the county council to remove A boards, so people are not as now forced to take risks by walking on the road?

a) **Grand Arcade Seating** – The City Council continues to follow up regularly with the Grand Arcade Management on the provision of seating within the centre. The most recent update it has received is that a couple of design options have been developed. Detailed costings for these are in the process of being prepared for consideration. We hope to receive a progress update from the Grand Arcade around mid November.

b) **Seating in Lion Yard** – The City Council has requested an update from Lion Yard regarding plans it might have to reintroduce seating in the centre. Lion Yard has fed back that currently there are no immediate plans to introduce seating. The current focus is on resolving the development plans for the centre to accommodate the public toilets on the ground floor. They have advised that as Lion Yard does not have the same width of mall as the Grand Arcade the opportunity for seating in common areas is limited.

The City Council will continue its dialogue with both shopping centres to highlight the importance of seating in these areas.

c) To date the City Council has not received a significant request for increased public seating on the public highway areas within the city centre. Most of the complaints received have been in relation to the Grand Arcade and Lion Yard shopping centres. In most towns and cities seating on the public highway is the responsibility of the highways authority although this is not the case in Cambridge. The City Council does not currently have a budget for public seating but if significant requests were to be made to increase provision the Council would need to review how this might be delivered.

d) Street Cafes -Tables and chairs on the highway have the potential to enhance the ambiance of an area, to promote leisure and tourism interests and support to the local economy. However it is extremely important that when assessing the suitability of highway located tables and chairs, care is taken to ensure that their presence does not unduly impact on other core highway needs. Ensuring adequate accessibility for highway users must remain a key requirement when determining these matters.

It is the case that there is an emerging trend in some areas in the city centre where businesses are expanding beyond their approved area and not showing due consideration to other users of the public highway.

Following the termination of the highways agency agreement with the City Council the City Council continued to lead on the determination of licences for tables and chairs on the highway with the involvement of county highway officers. However, a recent review has highlighted that the City Council does not have the powers to substantiate its current lead role and that in fact this lead role should sit with the County Council as the highways authority.

As a direct consequence of this the County Council is planning to undertake a thorough review of the licensing of tables and chairs over the next few months working closely with each of the districts. It is clear that there is a lack of clarity over how the licensing of tables and chairs on the highway should be managed and the opportunity has been taken to review the process. Key objectives of this will be to:

1. Achieve a consistent approach across the county
2. Ensure that local members are at the heart of decision-making
3. Ensure that it is robust in terms of legislation

From a Cambridge City Council point of view this represents a real opportunity for the Council to influence the tightening up of the policy and procedures and to ensure that local engagement is at the heart of this. The City Centre Management team will continue to work with officers at the County council to ensure this happens. The aim is that this review should be complete and any new policies and procedures should be in place by the beginning of the next financial year.

e) A Boards -It is the responsibility of the County Council to take the lead on the removal of A boards from the public highway. However Officers from the Public Realm Enforcement Team and the City Rangers are working closely with colleagues at the County Council to remove them.

In the week beginning 10th October these City Council officers hand delivered letters from the County Council Highway's department to businesses with an A board advising them that they have 14 days in which to remove it. The County Council have advised businesses in this letter that if A boards are still illegally placed after that period, they will be removed.

3. Councillor Herbert to the Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Transport

a) In addition to the welcome cyclepark at Grand Arcade, how many secure cycle parking spaces have been added in central Cambridge and key other locations in the city in the last two years, and where?

As part of Cycle Cambridge 70 racks (140 spaces) were installed in the central area, 47 racks in other local shopping centres and about 400 other racks around the city and in nearby villages at businesses (including 150 at Addenbrookes), on carriageway (eg. St Philips Rd, King St, Kings Parade) and outside pubs and community centres/village halls. Racks have also been installed as part of Environmental Improvement Projects such as on Gwydir St, Kingston St and Ditton Walk.

b) Where does the Council identify there still to be a significant secure parking space shortage, and what action is planned, particularly on the current deficit of approximately 1000 secure spaces needed in and near the railway station, which looks to be made even worse by CB1 plans?

There is an obvious shortage of cycle parking in the city centre but also a lack of available space. Work is ongoing to identify any areas where additional racks can be installed. As part of the European 2 Seas project the County Council are also in the process of identifying space to install additional on-carriageway cycle parking in the central and Mill Road areas.

The County Council are currently working with the Station Manager to install additional racks, probably double decker, (providing a possible 200 extra spaces) at the station in the area currently used for short stay car parking and some space at the back of the new bus stops is also being considered for a small number of racks. In the longer term provision is planned for a significant number of spaces in a cycle park facility which is associated with the Pink Phase of the station development.

4. Councillor Wright to the Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Development

What progress has been made since motion E was passed in Council on July 21st 2011 with regard to 20 mph limits in Cambridge in:

""evaluating current schemes, looking into harmonising best practice, (and) consulting on expansion of the schemes, subject to consultation of residents into areas of the city where they would be appropriate.""

City Council officers have undertaken some scoping work on motion E, passed on July 21st 2011. This work has involved:

- Clarifying with the County Council their position on reviewing the existing 20mph zones in Cambridge. They confirmed that they currently have no plans to review any of the zones.
- Investigating the feasibility of the City Council evaluating the current schemes and harmonising best practice. This has included reviewing the methods and processes required to perform a comprehensive review of the existing schemes, and the resource implications of this (in terms of staff time and cost).
- Officers have also investigated the feasibility of implementing new zones. This would best be completed following a review of the existing zones, to maximise the learning from past experience and harmonise best practice. The staff resources and costs involved in implementing a new zone are being scoped.
- In conjunction to this work, the County Council have been looking into the implementation of new 20mph zones through the 2 Seas Project (European funding). County Council officers are currently looking at drawing up an assessment criteria to decide which areas should be considered first. This criterion is likely to be based on aspects such as accident stats, existence of strategic cycle routes through the area, current traffic speeds and local support. In addition to this, the implementation of 20mph zones is also on the City and County Council's Joint-Funded Cycleways priority list of schemes for 2011/12, meaning there could potentially be two pots of funding for any work.

5. Councillor Wright to the Executive Councillor for Planning and Sustainable Development

What efforts are being made to attract house builders to Cambridge who are prepared to create car-free developments within the city?

The Cambridge Local plan 2006 identifies land and sites for development to meet identified needs. New housing development is largely promoted by developers or house builders and proposals are assessed for their conformity with the adopted policies set out in the development plan. The role of the local planning authority is to allocate land and establish a policy and guidance framework that gives certainty about what is expected and the standards to be achieved in new development. Car-free schemes have their place in the delivery of sustainable development in the City and are encouraged where this is the appropriate solution having regard to location and accessibility characteristics.