

Monthly report for parish and community councils Jul 2016

For the Cottenham, Histon and Impington (CH&I) county council division of Cambridgeshire which also includes King's Meadow, Oakington & Westwick, Orchard Park and Rampton.

Full Council meeting

There was a full council meeting. Go to <http://bit.ly/2aEdeju> for the report of the meeting and to <http://bit.ly/2aGevrv> for my thinking regarding the impact of overseas workers on the Fens.

Committee meetings and other council matters

Adults: there were no key decisions.

Children & Young People: there were no key decisions. There were two agenda items relating to free schools. One was to approve an application in Chatteris and note the expected applications for specialist free schools in Wisbech and at IVC. The other to support the Wisbech application.

General Purposes: at last key decisions! There were five plus another decision with potentially far reaching consequences. Two of the key decisions were about the Council's year-end financial performance. The third approved the switch of the Council's agency staff employment from a private sector provider to one owned by Suffolk CC with implications for a broader partnership. Number 4 related to a 'total transport' project in East Cambs and the fifth to a significant IT project. The important decision however was to approve the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The Plan as approved is based on continuing zero % council tax increase. I am aghast. Taken with this year's budget decision this potentially deprives CCC of over £100 million tax revenue. I voted against this plan and an amendment to also consider an option based on 2%/year increases was outvoted.

Health: these committees did not meet. There were no key decisions. However in its NHS scrutiny role it took a first look at the proposals for Peterborough and Huntingdon Hospitals to merge.

I followed up previous Health Com and Full Council decisions and presented a motion at the Local Government Association. The motion, which requested the establishment of a Public Health investment fund, was approved unanimously. Go to <http://bit.ly/2adlymq> for more info.

Assets and Investments: this committee met. There was one key decision relating to energy projects. The paper and discussion confused decisions about funding with those about investing and as a result although a decision was made it was asked that a meeting be convened to sort this out. Another decision relating to Wisbech Castle was withdrawn following agreement between the Chair and myself that it was a decision requiring much more consideration within the local context.

Economy & Environment: the committee met. There were two key decisions. The first relates to the funding for energy projects (see above under A&I) and the second to the naming of the contractor for building the Ely southern bypass (strangely still not in the public domain).

Highways & Community Infrastructure: this committee did not meet.

The Planning Committee met but there were no items on the agenda of direct relevance to CH&I.

The Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly and the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board both met. The former considered and the latter approved a work package: research and data-gathering about why people make specific transport choices in the Greater Cambridge area. That seems a bit late in the day to me given the decisions already taken.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Police and Crime Panel did not meet.

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Consultations relevant to this division

Incredibly there's a consultation (<http://bit.ly/2ann2x7>) started 6 Jul which runs just until 3 Aug 16 about the Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme. The contract to run the scheme is up for renewal and the Council wants to know what people think about how it could run in the future.

There's a survey (<http://bit.ly/2aCgbkU>) of selected professionals from within CCC teams/services and external partner agencies across Cambridgeshire to better understand the views and experiences of professionals with regard to Think Family working. This survey runs until 4 Sep 16.

There's a new consultation (<http://bit.ly/2abv5xs>) about Direct Payment Support Service for Cambridgeshire. The Council is consulting with anyone (service users, the public or professionals) who has used the current service or has thoughts on what would make a good service for in the future. This consultation runs until 15 Sep 16.

There's a consultation (<http://bit.ly/2aAp4tt>) on the City Deal proposals for tackling peak-time congestion in Cambridge. These include the Histon Road proposals and much else besides. It runs until 10 Oct 16.

The audit of governing body effectiveness (<http://bit.ly/1r6eCiV>) continues until 31 Aug. Its aim is to aid governing bodies in evaluating their practice and to provide county wide information on governance. There's a related survey (<http://bit.ly/2apM4fs>) for schools. This runs until 14 Oct.

Strangely the big consultation on the devolution proposal is not listed on CCC's web-site under consultations. You can however find it at <http://bit.ly/29JRQt2>. It runs until 23 Aug 16.

More local matters

I attended a meeting with county officers and representatives of Histon Junior School and IVC to review options for new primary school capacity in Histon & Impington.

I attended briefings on the new highways contract, contrary to earlier impressions this is more of an evolution from the current contract and not a totally new way of working, and on A14 progress.

Diary (next public meetings)

25 Aug	1000	Greater Cambridge City Deal Assembly	South Cambs, Cambourne
1 Sep	1000	*Economy & Environment Committee	Share Hall, Cambridge
1 Sep	1430	Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board	Meadows Community Centre
1 Sep	1000	Planning Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
7 Sep	1400	Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel	Peterborough Town Hall
8 Sep	1400	*Health Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
13 Sep	1000	Highways & Community Infrastructure	Share Hall, Cambridge
13 Sep	1400	Children and Young People Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
15 Sep	1400	Adults and Wellbeing Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
15 Sep	1000	*Health & Wellbeing Board	Shire Hall, Cambridge
16 Sep	1000	*Assets & Investments Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
20 Sep	1400	*General Purposes Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
18 Oct	1030	Full Council	Shire Hall, Cambridge

*committees of which I am a member; note these may change. I am Chair of the Health Com.

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And finally ... you'll note my comments above regarding the A&ICom and Wisbech Castle. It's a bit of a misnomer because what's there now is an interesting but unspectacular Regency family home built just 150 years ago. However there's centuries of history beforehand, the interior is in fine condition and there's a splendid garden. However what makes it special is its context. Wisbech Castle sits in the middle of The Crescent which is barely 200m from the centre of Wisbech and such a contrast is difficult to imagine. The Crescent is in fact a circus of rather fine Georgian Houses and when we visited the other day they were all resplendent with hanging baskets Wisbech Castle itself is a twin of Peckover House which is a National Trust property and also worth visiting.