

## Monthly report for parish and community councils May 2017

For the Histon and Impington (H&I) county council division of Cambridgeshire which also includes King's Meadow and Orchard Park.

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It's been the first month of a new council so it's maybe useful to explain what's happened and what sort of council we now have. The election of the beginning of the month has resulted in major changes. Firstly of course I have been re-elected but this time for the smaller single member division of Histon and Impington which covers the same territory as the district council ward. [Click here](#) for the result. But the main change can simply be described as a reversal of the big change four years ago when the Tories lost their majority as UKIP took so many seats off them. This time they won these seats back and therefore once more have an overall majority. At the same time Lib Dems and Labour both gained a seat and the Independents went down one.

With their regained majority the Tories can be expected to go for a return to an executive cabinet model of government but they can't do that for two years. In the meantime they have used their majority to take the chair and vice-chair positions on all committees except Audit & Accounts and to push through a number of other constitutional changes. The most significant of these are:

- There will no longer be Spokes. This is a surprise because these have been part of CCC for all the time that I have been there (and more) and are a key part of running the Council. Instead there will just be Lead Members;
- Abolition of oral questions. This means that there is no method of questioning a committee chair except at a committee meeting. It's another surprise because it's been a useful method of highlighting an issue which needs attention;
- A limit on amendments to motions. In future these will not be accepted less than one day before a council meeting. This is ironic because it's always been the Tories who come forward with last minute amendments; and
- An end to the right to call-in committee decisions; What will happen next time there's a dreadful decision like the Central Library one a couple of years ago?

Furthermore the Assets & Investment Committee is renamed the Commercial & Investment Committee and there's a new committee, the Communities & Partnership Committee.

Within the Lib Dem group I am to be the Lead Member for Commercial & Investment and will serve on the General Purposes, Health and Commercial & Investment committees.

### Full Council meeting

Council held its Annual General Meeting and the first meeting of the new council. Go to <http://wp.me/p7tuu7-1Aa> for my account of the meeting 'as it happened'. Mandy Smith is the new Chair. Mac McGuire is the new deputy chair. I guess he gets it as some sort of long service reward. Steve Count continues as Leader of the Council.

### Committee meetings and other council matters

It's been a slow start to the municipal year with little substantive committee business. There were no meetings of the General Purposes, Adults, Children & Young People's, Economy & Environment, Health, Communities & Partnership and Planning committees.

The Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee met. It was a largely procedural meeting but it did consider potential bids by the Combined Authority for extra funding from the National

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Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) which has just been made available. Six schemes were prioritised, all in the north of the county. I'm presuming that the south is considered to be sufficiently covered by City Deal funding although there's nothing in the papers to explain this.

The Commercial & Investment Committee met. There were no key decisions. Note that this committee is the keeper of the Council's investment project log and at present this is not a public document. The committee always goes into private session before this is discussed. I'm inclined to challenge this and find ways to limit the secrecy to projects which really are commercially sensitive. I made the point before we went into closed session that as a matter of principle the Council should not proceed with projects if there is not local support and/or they are incompatible with local plans.

Note that the Environment & Economy Committee has just met (1 Jun 17). It also considered the NPIF bid and it confirmed three parts of the County (Cambridge City, March and Huntingdon) as flood risk areas.

There were also no meetings of the City Deal Joint Executive Board, the Greater Cambridge City Deal Assembly, the Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel or the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority met again for (yet) another largely procedural meeting. However this one was at least able to confirm the Mayor.

### Consultations relevant to this division

Consultation	Purpose	Due date and link
There are no current CCC consultations		

### More local matters

I met officers and parish councillors to move Histon & Impington's 2015/16 Local Highways Initiative bid forward and to review options for the Northern Corridor funded projects at the crossroads by the Green and at the Cambridge Road/B1049 junction.

I had a first meeting to begin to move the Histon & Impington High Street project forward.

I met the Chair of Cottenham Parish Council to ensure that cross parish projects would not suffer as a result of the redrawing of county electoral divisions.

And finally ... I've got to say that I'm troubled with what's happening: locally, nationally and globally. I've articulated my local disappointment above and who knows where the national election is now taking us? There was a time when the major parties competed to see which ones could best command the middle ground. Not any more. Both now seem determined to appeal to the far ends of our political spectrum and to play to the vested interests of those who are there. What happened to making decisions in the national interest? And as if that wasn't enough we've got the man in the White House with his twitter based government walking away from the Paris Climate Change deal because that's the way to bring jobs back to America's coal miners. Never mind that it's not going to happen it reduces the US in the eyes of the world and could have consequences which don't bear thinking about. It comes to something when we have Gary Lineker leading liberal thought in this country and Germany and China showing rational global leadership regarding climate change.

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### Diary (next public meetings)

18 Jul	1330	Full Council	Shire Hall, Cambridge
30 Jun	1000	*Commercial & Investments Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
11 Jul	1000	Highways & Community Infrastructure	Shire Hall, Cambridge
28 Jun	1000	C&P Combined Authority	ECDC offices, Ely
1 Jun	1000	Economy & Environment Committee	Share Hall, Cambridge
13 Jul	1400	Adults and Wellbeing Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
6 Jul	1000	Health & Wellbeing Board	SCDC offices, Cambourne
12 Jun	1400	Children and Young People Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
13 Jun	1400	*General Purposes Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
19 Jul	1400	Greater Cambridge City Deal Assembly	SCDC offices, Cambourne
12 Jun	1000	Planning Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
14 Jun	1400	*Health Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
14 Jun	1400	Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel	Peterborough Town Hall
26 Jul	1600	Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board	Guildhall, Cambridge
15 Jun	1400	Cambridgeshire Fire Authority	Hinchingbrooke Park
6 Jul	1000	Communities & Partnership	Shire Hall, Cambridge

\*committees of which I am currently a member; these may change. Note that the Council's diary is now online at [https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccc\\_live/Meetings.aspx](https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccc_live/Meetings.aspx).