

Monthly report for parish and community councils July 2017

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

Full Council meeting

Council met in July. Go to <http://wp.me/p7tuu7-1F8> for my account. It was a notable meeting because of the items on Members' allowances which split the council and on the proposed merger of police and fire which united it. It's a funny old world.

Committee meetings and other council matters

General Purposes Committee: there were no key decisions.

Commercial & Investment Committee: There was one key decision regarding the governance of the £1million Invest to Save Energy Efficiency Fund for the Council's non-schools buildings portfolio. The committee also agreed to grant a lease on Wisbech Castle to the town council for 'less than best consideration'. This shows that the council thinks beyond simply maximising revenues sometimes.

Environment & Economy Committee: there were no key decisions. However it did agree continued funding for the bikeability training which was 'saved' at the last meeting before the new council.

Outside of the committee the big news was a report by Smarter Cambridge Transport on the problems with the Busway. Go to <http://wp.me/p7tuu7-1Ft> for my most recent assessment.

Children & Young People's Committee: There was one key decision viz to retrospectively endorse procurement of a contract for new modular mobile classroom. I guess this is a tad embarrassing because contract has been awarded without due process. It's particularly important for H&I because of developments at the Junior School (see below).

Adults: there were no key decisions.

Communities & partnerships: the committee met, it needs to do so if it is to justify its existence, but there were no key decisions.

Health Committee: there were no key decisions. In its scrutiny role it challenged the Clinical Commissioning Group on its plans regarding the Chesterton out-of-hours service where it appears to have reneged on a promise to mitigate the move by extending local GP hours. In its continuing scrutiny of the Sustainability & Transformation Plan it was critical of a report which implied that there were no issues to report.

Highways & Community Infrastructure: there was one key decision relating to Local Highway Improvement and Privately Funded Improvement schemes. A more aggressive charging policy for officer support work is to be introduced.

A series of workshops has been announced to address 'the future of libraries in Cambridgeshire'. We seem to do this continuously and will need to be vigilant that whatever comes out of this doesn't undermine the excellent work done to save and support Histon library.

The Planning Committee did not meet. The extra temporary classrooms which will be needed at the Junior School have been authorised by officers under delegated powers.

The rebranded Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Executive Board and the Greater Cambridge Partnership Assembly both met. The former agreed funding for a review of rapid mass transit options and to go ahead with proposals for bus and cycle improvements along Milton Road.

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I attended the big relaunch meeting. It's good to see that there are new faces and an apparent willingness to be a little more ambitious with the way that Cambridge's congestion problems are to be addressed. I guess we can't expect much by way of apology for the time wasted so far but we could do without the zappy new web-site and the video. What's the point, why waste the money?

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority met and made key decisions. It agreed to move forward with projects regarding apprenticeships and 'pay and progression' in the health care sector. It repeated its commitment to exploring mass transit options for Cambridge. It committed £4.65million to the development of a portfolio of affordable housing schemes. It was also in receipt of a call-in request regarding its staff costs which are coming in at 25% above the initial budget.

The Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel did not meet.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority met specifically to finalise a response the Police & Crime Commissioner's proposal to merge the two services.

Consultations relevant to this division

Consultation	Purpose	Due date and link
Children's Centres	To ensure that the money spent has the greatest positive impact on young children's development before re-tendering contracts.	22 Sep 17 http://bit.ly/2tbZBhp
Proposed merger of police and fire	To make the case for the Police & Crime Commissioner taking on responsibility for Fire & Rescue	4 Sep 17 http://bit.ly/2ubtXRP

More local matters

Work is about to start on the improvements to the Baptist Church junction. Closing the road for the duration of the works will save about £15000 in unnecessary traffic management expenses.

I met County Officers to review plans for the development of Children's Centres. There is a consultation and some reductions are being proposed for H&I. Note the consultation on Children's Centres above. I am lobbying for an event to take place in H&I.

I attended the latest meeting of the Milton Road Local Liaison Forum at which the plans to be submitted to the GCP Executive Board were presented.

I met the new head of transport delivery for GCP to ensure that the B1049 would be included in its consideration of major transport arteries. We also discussed changes to Histon Road, rogue parking and an extra Guided Bus stop in Histon.

And finally ... this report seems to have become a little bloated of late. It's the consequence of a couple of trends. The first one is the emergence of bodies (the Greater Cambridge Partnership, the Police & Crime Commissioner, and the Mayor and the Combined Authority) which have taken over responsibilities from the County Council. They need to be reported because they are spending public money and county councillors seem to be the only elected people who can hold them to account. The other trend is the sudden enthusiasm of the County Council to spawn more committees even as it does less. I'll be thinking about ways that this report can evolve as it responds to these trends without boring the reader to death. Advice would be appreciated.

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Diary (next public meetings)

17 Aug	1400	*Health Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
18 Aug	1000	*Commercial & Investments Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
24 Aug	1000	Communities & Partnership	Shire Hall, Cambridge
6 Sep	1400	Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel	Peterborough Town Hall
7 Sep	1000	Planning Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
8 Sep	1000	Health & Wellbeing Board	SCDC offices, Cambourne
12 Sep	1000	Highways & Community Infrastructure	Shire Hall, Cambridge
12 Sep	1400	Children and Young People Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
13 Sep	1400	Greater Cambridge Partnership Assembly	SCDC offices, Cambourne
14 Sep	1000	Economy & Environment Committee	Share Hall, Cambridge
14 Sep	1400	Adults and Wellbeing Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
19 Sep	1400	*General Purposes Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
20 Sep	1600	Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board	Guildhall, Cambridge
27 Sep	1000	C&P Combined Authority	ECDC offices, Ely
17 Oct	1330	Full Council	Shire Hall, Cambridge
26 Oct	1400	Cambridgeshire Fire Authority	Hinchingbrooke Park

*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.