

County councillor's monthly report for Sep 2018

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

Full Council meeting

It was a full month with a complete set of committee meetings but no meeting of Full Council. I was also away for a week which limited my activity.

Committee meetings and other council matters

Adults: there was one key decision regarding contracts at Willow Court in Whittlesey and other locations for delivery of 'extra care housing' viz specialist accommodation designed to maximise the independence of older people. Seems like a good idea to me.

Children & Young People: there were two key decisions. The first related to the merger of an infants school with a junior school in St Ives to make a straight through primary school. I guess the same will come to us soon. The other agreed to tender for the recommissioning of young carers support jointly with Peterborough City Council. This support is important. There are over 4000 such carers in Cambridgeshire. Sadly many do badly at school and have poor health outcomes.

Commercial & Investment: there were no key decisions. Note that this committee is the Council's link to This Land and determines its position regarding shareholder reserved matters and exercises its vote accordingly at A and EGMs. Such an EGM took place in September but had to be aborted because due process had not been followed so we have an extra committee meeting in October. Sadly the Committee voted to not go ahead with the CREATE project at St Luke's Barn despite much evidence to support so doing. As a result £1million Arts Council funding will be forfeit.

Communities & Partnerships: there was one key decision viz to agree the Think Communities Partnership shared approach for building Community Resilience. This has been developed by CCC along with the District Councils and the Police but surprisingly not the NHS/CCG and with no evidence of any input from parish councils. You do wonder what this committee really does.

General Purposes: there were two key decisions. The first related to the Council's financial performance and was largely about moving money from one pot to another. The second was to confirm funding for the Adults Positive Challenge Programme. This programme is about designing a new approach and service model for Adult Social Care which will continue to improve outcomes for individuals and communities whilst also being economically sustainable. Magic if it works! The Committee also noted the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and there was some debate as to whether or not this should 'assume' 0% council tax rise after 2019/20.

Health: there were no key decisions although the Committee continued to show interest in air pollution and to scrutinise the CCG's Sustainable Transformation Plan.

Highways & Community Infrastructure: there was one key decision regarding the funding of road safety cameras. It also looked at the abject failure of the Council's scheme to charge for computer use in libraries. A motion to cease such charging was defeated despite evidence that it is inhibiting the use of the computers.

Note that there's a serious shortage of highways engineers etc which do the work for which this committee is responsible. I have challenged them to bring a paper to the next meeting telling it how it will address it.

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Environment & Economy: there were no key decisions.

Planning: the Committee met twice. The first meeting was routine, the second was an all-day affair to consider the Waterbeach waste from energy scheme. The application was rejected.

Health & Well Being Board: the Board met but there's no record of the meeting on the web-site.

The Greater Cambridge Partnership Assembly met but its agenda was reduced because of the Mayor's decision that it should cease work on its plans for transport options along the A428 corridor. Strangely the Mayor has now told them to get on with it. The Executive Board did not meet.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority met with a largely low-key agenda except for the matters relating to the departure of the Chief Executive. Subsequently it's become clear that all the other authorities with which it must work are unhappy with its conduct. Given the amount of money it's spending you've got to worry a little about the way it's being led and managed.

The Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel met firstly to confirm the appointment of a Chief Financial Officer and secondly for a regular meeting. There's no record of this meeting on the web-site.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority did not meet.

Consultations relevant to this division (and elsewhere)

Consultation	Purpose	Due date and link
	For the second month in a row there do not appear to be any active consultations	

More local matters

Following a sudden decision to use temporary lights to control traffic on the B1049 for work relating to Junior School developments I secured an operator to manage the lights during the rush hour and stayed with him as he did so. As a result there was limited disruption and some learning about how these lights should work in the future.

I met councillors from Orchard Park to consider actions to improve the scene at Unwin Square.

I met County Officers to review cycling scheme progress and the role of the Council in overseeing OFO and similar bike rental schemes. Improvements to the Gatehouse Lane cycle/footpath shortly.

I attended the latest A14 engagement meeting. This time we met at Orchard Park which is also blighted by this road and the works on it. This continues to be hard work but at this meeting we agreed a weekly telephone meeting to address operational issue especially regarding night working.

And finally ... what dismayed me most when I observed traffic behaviour at the lights on the B1049 (see above) was the number of people who went through on red. That's selfish and dangerous. By contrast earlier in the month I'd seen traffic in India which is of course a little more chaotic. What struck me was that in a situation of zero lane discipline the traffic moved. It seemed that everyone looked out for everyone else, pedestrians, cyclists, bicycle riskshaws, Tuk Tuks, cars buses etc, so amidst all this chaos there was some innate sense of fair play and unselfishness. Quite a contrast. If you're interested there are a few of my photos at <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmosF5EU> and a blog post at <https://wp.me/phtcF-Mq>.

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Diary (next public meetings)

4 Oct	1000	Planning Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
9 Oct	1000	*Highways & Community Infrastructure	Shire Hall, Cambridge
9 Oct	1400	Children and Young People Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
10 Oct	1400	*Commercial & Investments Committee (extra)	Shire Hall, Cambridge
11 Oct	1000	Economy & Environment Committee	Share Hall, Cambridge
11 Oct	1400	*Health Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
11 Oct	1600	Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board	SCDC offices, Cambourne
16 Oct	1030	Full Council	Shire Hall, Cambridge
18 Oct	1400	Adults Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
18 Oct	1000	Communities & Partnership	Shire Hall, Cambridge
19 Oct	1000	*Commercial & Investments Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
21 Oct	1000	C&P Combined Authority	City Hall, Peterborough
23 Oct	1000	*General Purposes Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge
1 Nov	1400	Cambridgeshire Fire Authority	Hinchingbrooke Park
14 Nov	1400	Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel	FDC office, March
15 Nov	1400	Greater Cambridge Partnership Assembly	Shire Hall, Cambridge
22 Nov	1000	Health & Wellbeing Board	Shire Hall, Cambridge

*committees of which I am currently a member; these may change. Note that the Council's diary is now online https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccc_live/Meetings.aspx. Shaded dates are reserve.