

County councillor's monthly report for May 2020

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

There were several virtual meetings during the month including a virtual council meeting (see below) and the general consensus has been that they worked well, there was more discipline and less grandstanding. Council is allowing the use of Zoom except for confidential meetings when it insists on Teams. Thankfully that was not needed in May, although threatened Full Council was able to avoid resorting to it.

Full Council meeting

Full Council met on Zoom with 70-80 participants. [Click here](#) for my account of the event. Sadly we get the formal wind up of the Cambridge Joint Area Committee ([click here](#) for my views on that as reported last month). Because it was the Annual General Meeting of the Council we got to reconfirm representation on outside bodies and I made a fuss about the Council's nominated This Land non-exec who hadn't attended a single meeting. Subsequently related confidential papers have been issued ([click here](#) for more about them). This council seems to like its secrecy.

Committee meetings and other council matters

Most committees met but most didn't discuss anything substantive and just met to get their respective Covid updates. Such Committees were the Health, Highways & Transport, Children & Young People, General Purposes and Environment & Sustainability. Note the names of two 'new' committees and the disappearance of two others.

Note that at the General Purposes Committee I made the point that despite all the reports which it issues Council did not share any specific information about what is actually happening with the pandemic. Coincidentally (or not) Public Health now issues a regular update on infections by district.

Adults: the committee met and also noted the award of a temporary 10% resilience payment to adult social care independent sector providers. This will amount to £3.5 million

Communities & Partnerships: this committee met and approved funding from the Communities Capital Fund.

Commercial & Investment: there was a full agenda with two key decisions but no secret session. The key decisions related to the use of the former Burwell Highways Depot and Fire Station site for the development of a specialist Supported Living building to serve East Cambridgeshire, and the Swaffham Prior Community Heat Project. There were also items on the St Ives Smart Energy Grid and the Comberton Village College low carbon heat network and other school heat pump projects. These 'other projects' include on at Impington Village College.

The Planning committee did not meet. It has not met since Oct 19 and its next meeting has been further (again and again) pushed back to Jul 20.

Neither the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive nor the Assembly met. Both will meet in June.

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority met but spent most of its time rubber stamping decisions made by its committees. Its Transport & Infrastructure, Housing & Communities and Skills Committees, its Overview & Scrutiny and Audit & Governance Committees and its Employment & Skills Board also met. For a small Combined Authority it seems to have a heavy administration.

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The [Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel](#) had a 'virtual telecon'. No documents are available. It will hold an extraordinary meeting in June.

The [Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority](#) did not meet.

The [Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Health & Wellbeing Board](#) did not meet.

Consultations relevant to this division (and elsewhere)

Consultation	Purpose/object	Due date and link
There are no currently active consultations		

More local matters

I worked with local councillors to develop plans for 'pop-up' cycle schemes to be submitted for action with short term DfT funding.

And finally ... we seem to look at everything through a Covid lens these days and you do worry that although we are 'surviving' and that the pandemic appears to be easing that the future is going to be pretty miserable because of the impacts that the lock down has had on so many sectors of our economy. I imagine that there's going to be much more home working in the future so that means less commuting and less traffic in the rush hour so that's good. But what does that mean for Vision Park if there's less demand for office space? I also reckon that as long as we're to live with social distancing air travel as we've recently known it will not return for some time so without low cost travel on EasyJet and Ryanair how am I going to get my annual fix of Italian culture?

At the same time it's good to see the businesses adapting: pubs selling beer and pizzas for take away, restaurants upping their take away game and traders offering home deliveries. Thankfully our High Street is almost back to normal but some outlets have let us down which is sad. This time next month we'll see much more on offer but will it be at the expense of controlling the virus?

Diary (next public meetings)

2 Jun	1000	*General Purposes Committee	Virtual meeting
3 Jun	1000	C&P Combined Authority	Virtual meeting
4 Jun	1000	C&P Health & Wellbeing Board	Virtual meeting
4 Jun	1000	Greater Cambridge Partnership Assembly	Virtual meeting
11 Jun	1400	Adults Committee	Virtual meeting
11 Jun	1400	Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel	Virtual meeting
16 Jun	1000	Highways & Transport	Virtual meeting
18 Jun	1000	Communities & Partnership	Virtual meeting
19 Jun	1000	*Commercial & Investments Committee	Virtual meeting
23 Jun	1400	Children and Young People Committee	Virtual meeting
25 Jun	1400	Health Committee	Virtual meeting
25 Jun	1000	Environment & Sustainability Committee	Virtual meeting
25 Jun	1400	Cambridgeshire Fire Authority	Virtual meeting
25 Jun	1600	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Virtual meeting
23 Jul	1030	Full Council	Virtual meeting
30 Jul	1000	Planning Committee	Virtual meeting

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