

County Council – Minutes

Please note the meeting can be viewed on YouTube at the following link:

[Cambridgeshire County Council Full Council Meeting- YouTube](#)

Date: Tuesday 16 May 2023

Time: 10:30 a.m. – 15:28 p.m.

Present:

D Ambrose Smith	L Dupré	E Meschini
H Batchelor	S Ferguson	B Milnes
A Beckett	J French	E Murphy
K Billington	I Gardener	L Nethsingha
G Bird	N Gay	C Rae
M Black	M Goldsack	K Reynolds
C Boden	B Goodliffe	T Sanderson
A Bradnam	N Gough	G Seeff
A Bulat	R Hathorn	N Shailer
S Bywater	A Hay	A Sharp
D Connor	R Howitt	P Slatter
S Corney	B Hunt	S Taylor
A Costello	S Kindersley	F Thompson
S Count	J King	S Tierney
P Coutts	M King	S van de Ven
S Criswell	S King	A Whelan
C Daunton	P McDonald	G Wilson
D Dew	M McGuire	

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Councillors M Atkins, R Fuller, J Gowing, M Howell, S Hoy, K Prentice and J Schumann.

135. Election of Chair of Council

It was moved by Councillor Nethsingha and seconded by Councillor Meschini, that Councillor Kindersley be elected Chair of the County Council for the period to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2024.

It was also moved by Councillor Count and seconded by Councillor Goldsack, that Councillor McGuire be elected as Chair of the County Council for the period to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2024.

It was resolved by a majority:

that Councillor Kindersley be elected Chair of the County Council to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2024.

Councillor Kindersley signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office, took the Chair and thanked the Council for his election.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; Conservatives against.]

136. Election of Vice-Chair of Council

It was moved by Councillor Nethsingha and seconded by Councillor Meschini, that Councillor Bird be elected Vice-Chair of the County Council for the period to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2024.

It was also moved by Councillor Count and seconded by Councillor Goldsack, that Councillor McGuire be elected as Vice-Chair of the County Council for the period to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2024.

It was resolved by a majority:

that Councillor Bird be appointed Vice-Chair of the County Council to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2024.

Councillor Bird signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and thanked the Council for her election.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; Conservatives against.]

137. Minutes – 21 March 2023 and Motions Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The motions log was noted.

138. Chair's Announcements

The Chair made a number of announcements, as set out in Appendix A.

139. Report of the County Returning Officer

Council received and noted the report of the County Returning Officer on the election of Councillors Michael Black and William Hunt in the by-elections held on 4 May 2023 for the electoral divisions of Arbury and Soham South and Haddenham, respectively.

140. Declarations of Interest

The following councillors declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute 150b, Motion from Councillor Count:

- Councillor Meschini – Member Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Executive Board
- Councillors Milnes and Shailer – Member GCP Assembly
- Councillor Gough – Former member of the GCP Executive Board

Councillor Ferguson declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute 150c) Motion from Councillor Goodliffe, as an adoptive parent.

141. Public Question Time

The Chair informed Council that due to high levels of interest, he had exercised his discretion to accept any eligible public questions that had been received before the deadline.

The Chair reported that six public questions had been received from members of the public, as set out at Appendix B.

142. Petitions

The Chair reported that no petitions had been received from members of the public.

143. Item for determination from Strategy and Resources Committee

People Strategy 2023-2028

It was moved by the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Nethsingha, and seconded by the Vice-Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee, Councillor Meschini, that the recommendation from the Strategy and Resources Committee, as set out on the Council agenda, be approved.

It was resolved unanimously by affirmation to approve the People Strategy.

144. Constitution and Ethics Committee recommendations to Full Council - Proposed Changes to the Constitution

It was moved by the former Chair of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Kindersley, and seconded by the Vice-Chair of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Bulat, that the recommendation from the Constitution and Ethics Committee, as set out in the report on the Council agenda, be approved.

It was resolved unanimously by affirmation to approve:

a) the following proposed changes to the Constitution:

- (i) a revised version of Chapter 5-2 (Officers' Code of Conduct), attached at Appendix 1 to this report;

- (ii) amendments to Chapter 3B11 (Staffing and Appeals Committee), attached at Appendix 2 to this report;
 - (iii) amendments to Chapter 4-6 (Officer Employment Procedure Rules), attached at Appendix 3 to this report;
 - (iv) the inclusion of decision-making principles in Article 12 (Decision Making), as set out in Section 2.3 of this report; and
 - (v) amendments to Chapter 3B7 (Audit and Accounts Committee), attached at Appendix 4 to this report.
- b) the Scheme of Delegation or such part of it as the Constitution determines it is for Council to agree (as set out in Part 3 of the Constitution).

145. Committees – Allocation of seats and substitutes to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, and seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Bird, to approve the allocation of seats and substitutes on committees to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules, as set out in the report circulated to Members and published on the website on 15 May 2023.

Councillor Count moved the following amendment, seconded by Councillor Sharp:

Delete one Liberal Democrat place on Highways and Transport Committee and replace with one Conservative place with the number of substitutes amended accordingly.

Delete one Conservative place on Adults and Health Committee and replace with one Liberal Democrat place with the number of substitutes amended accordingly.

Following discussion, the amendment on being put to the vote was lost.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives in favour; Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents against.]

Following further discussion, on being put to the vote, it was resolved unanimously to approve the allocation of seats and substitutes on committees to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules, as set out in the report circulated to Members and published on the website on 15 May 2023.

146. Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Committees

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Bird, and resolved unanimously by affirmation that the appointment of the chairs and vice-chairs of committees, as circulated to Members and published on the website on 12 May 2023, be approved.

147. Appointments to Outside Organisations and Annual Report of Representation on Outside Bodies 2022-23

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Bird, and resolved unanimously by affirmation to:

- a) appoint to the outside bodies set out in Appendix A; and
- b) note the Outside Bodies Annual Report 2022/23 set out in Appendix B.

148. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority: Membership and other appointments

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Bird, and resolved unanimously by affirmation to make the following appointments to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the municipal year 2023/24:

- a) appoint the Leader of Council to act as the Council's appointee to the Combined Authority and the Deputy Leader as the substitute member;
- b) appoint Councillor Atkins from the Liberal Democrat party and Councillor Goldsack from the Conservative party to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Councillors Coutts and Count as the two substitute members from the same political parties as those appointed; and
- c) appoint Councillor Wilson from the Liberal Democrat party to the Audit and Governance Committee and Councillor Whelan as the substitute member from the same political party.

149. Approval of Calendar of County Council Meetings

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Bird, and resolved by unanimously affirmation that calendar of council meetings, as set out in the agenda, be approved.

150. Motions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10

Five motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

a) Motion from Councillor Firouz Thompson

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Thompson and seconded by Councillor Goodliffe:

This Council notes that:

- nannies and childminders play an important role within the childcare sector, offering flexible childcare for families.

- the local authority has a responsibility to:
 - (i) ensure sufficient and suitable quality early education and childcare places to enable parents to work, or to undertake education or training which could lead to employment.
 - (ii) secure sufficient and suitable early years and childcare places to meet predicted demand.
 - (iii) secure free early years provision for all 3 and 4 year olds, and the most vulnerable 2 year olds, of 570 hours per year.
- in the spring budget, it was announced that there would be an increase in childcare support available to families. The additional support will be rolled out in the following stages:
 - (i) from April 2024, all working parents of 2-year-olds can access 15 hours per week.
 - (ii) from September 2024, all working parents of children aged 9 months up to 3 years old can access 15 hours per week.
 - (iii) from September 2025 all working parents of children aged 9 months up to 3 years old can access 30 hours free childcare per week.

This Council expresses concern that:

- some house builders place restrictive covenants on their properties which prohibit residents living within them from running a business from home including childcare.
- as a restrictive covenant does not expire, it will be applicable indefinitely, even if the building is sold and the ownership changes.
- whilst it is possible to have a covenant revoked, it is not guaranteed and therefore it is a risk to those looking to move, or to start a business, who may need to invest in training and resources prior to a decision being made.
- advice has been sought from legal teams who have highlighted the fact that any request to have a covenant revoked could be met with legal challenge as neighbouring properties will have been sold on the assumption that such covenants would be in place.
- data suggests that fewer childminders are operating on new developments despite evidence of demand for childcare.

This Council recognises the need to:

- be proactive and develop strong partnerships with district councils and the planning departments to ensure that this issue is highlighted, and possible solutions explored.
- ensure regular communication with the Place Planning Team / Early Years Team at Cambridgeshire County Council to ensure any all issues are logged and can be explored further.

The Council therefore resolves to:

- make a recommendation to the district councils that on strategic new developments, a condition of planning is that such restrictive covenants which are to be put in place state explicitly that childcare on domestic premises will be exempt, where there is an identified need which can be demonstrated.
- highlight the importance of such changes with developers and house builders to ensure that they are aware of the barrier that these covenants can cause.
- signpost childcare providers, and residents, to the appropriate support within the local authority when concerns are experienced.

Following discussion, on being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously by affirmation.

b) Motion from Councillor Count

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Count and seconded by Councillor J King:

Core Purpose: To directly compare the Cambridge Past, Present and Future (CPPF) on road proposal against the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) largely segregated proposal and submit a report after consideration at Full Council in October as evidence to be considered by the relevant Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) application.

This Council notes that:

- at its meeting on 21 March 2023 an amendment to ask the Chief Executive to have an impartial report prepared to directly compare the on-road bus prioritisation scheme and separate cycle scheme proposals, put forward by CPPF, (including the ability to liaise with CPPF should any clarifications be required) against the largely segregated busway and maintenance track GCP proposal, was lost and the unamended motion was passed by majority.
- this resulted in the GCP being granted the power to apply for a TWAO. This TWAO, due to the highly contested route chosen, is expected to go to public inquiry in late 2023.
- the debate at the Council meeting in March was seriously flawed from a factual perspective.
- there are many individual objections and representations on differing details of the Cambourne to Cambridge project, but the clearest largest individual publicly supported objection is that no direct comparison has been made between the GCP proposal and the CPPF proposal.
- the Council's Constitution states that "A motion or amendment in similar terms to one that has been rejected at a meeting of Council in the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least a third of members. Once the motion or amendment is dealt with, no one can propose a similar motion or amendment for six months".

- 22 members of the Council have e-mailed to support a motion to full Council within the six-month time limit, which is similar to the amendment to reconsider the Cambourne to Cambridge alternative route proposed by CPPF.

This Council notes the following reasons to reconsider the amendment in the form of a motion:

- the government guidance for Transport and Works Act Orders states “The importance of meaningful pre-application consultation [is reinforced by the statutory procedure rules](#) which require a report summarising the consultations that have been carried out to accompany the application”. Including the importance of consulting the local MPs.
- the need for this comparison to be made is supported by the local MP Anthony Browne whose opinion specifically carries weight regarding “meaningful” pre-application consultation.
- as part of the consultation, another important opinion came from the superintendent of the American Cemetery, who also specifically and publicly requested the comparison be made.
- the guidance expressly points out “effort devoted to removing or limiting objections before an inquiry opens will almost certainly pay dividends. Even where objectors are unlikely to withdraw their objections, if the matters in dispute can be narrowed down before the inquiry, and agreed statements of common ground produced, this is likely to lead to a more efficient (and hence less costly) public inquiry”.

This Council asks:

- i) the Chief Executive to have an impartial report prepared to directly compare the on-road bus prioritisation scheme and separate cycle scheme proposals, put forward by CPPF, (including the ability to liaise with CPPF should any clarifications be required) against the largely segregated busway and maintenance track, the GCP proposal. The report to be produced, using latest available data and officers’ professional judgement to include direct comparisons between the two schemes for:

1. A matrix to compare:

- I. Both legs of return journey times, to and from Cambourne to:

- (a) the West Cambridge Campus,
 - (b) the Addenbrooke’s bio medical campus,
 - (c) the Cambridge Science Park,
 - (d) CB1 employment area; and
 - (e) the historic city centre, using public transport.

- II. Both legs of the return journey time for general traffic, to the destinations described in (I) above.

III. All journey times to comprise of peak am, inter-peak and peak pm assessments.

2. Estimated capital costs.
3. Estimated impact on the County Council finances for future maintenance costs.
4. Delivery timescales and a judgement on which powers would be required to deliver each scheme, in particular whether any elements of the GCP Cambourne to Cambridge (C2C) scheme will require powers other than those conferred by the TWAO and whether both schemes need powers of Transport and Works Act orders.
5. The difference in the ecological impacts of constructions that would therefore need to be mitigated.
6. Impact on carbon net zero targets, considering both embodied and operational impacts.
7. The benefit cost ratio (BCR) for both schemes and a value for money judgement for both.
8. Anticipated impact and timescales on both schemes should the A428 and A11 be connected directly at or adjacent to the Girton Interchange.
9. Impact and timescales on both schemes and their BCR in relation to government announcements in the March budget and in May regarding details of proceeding with the East West rail (EWR) proposal, noting that social benefits may not be double-counted, and the EWR will offer significantly larger Travel Time Savings to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and CB1.
10. Officers' professional judgement on compliance with the Local Plan 2018, in order to deliver the pace of growth outlined.

This Council further agrees to:

- ii) delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with Group Leaders, the right to add (but not subtract) any other further important points of comparison felt needed to be included in the report.
- iii) bring the completed comparison report back to Council in October 2023 to agree a final version to be submitted to the public inquiry.
- iv) publish as appendices to the report, all supporting evidence, calculations and reasoning behind any statements or figures used in the report

Under Part 4 Rules of Procedure, Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 15.5 of the Constitution, more than fourteen members requested a recorded vote on this matter.

Following discussion, on being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

[Recorded vote set out in Appendix C]

c) Motion from Councillor Bryony Goodliffe

It was proposed by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, and resolved unanimously by affirmation to suspend any standing orders to allow a young person to speak on the motion on behalf of Cambridgeshire's care experienced people.

[Young person's statement set out in Appendix D]

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Goodliffe and seconded by Councillor Bradnam:

This Council notes that:

- care experienced people face significant barriers that impact them throughout their lives.
- despite the resilience of many care experienced people, society too often does not take their needs into account.
- care experienced people often face discrimination and stigma across housing, health, education, relationships, employment and in the criminal justice system.
- care experienced people may encounter inconsistent support in different geographical areas.
- as corporate parents, councillors have a collective responsibility for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us as an authority.
- all corporate parents should commit to acting as mentors, hearing the voices of looked after children and young people and to consider their needs in any aspect of council work.
- Councillors should be champions of the children in our care and challenge the negative attitudes and prejudice that exists in all aspects of society.
- the Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies, such as councils, to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation of people with protected characteristics.

This Council therefore resolves that:

- it recognises that care experienced people are a group who are likely to face discrimination.
- it recognises that Councils have a duty to put the needs of disadvantaged people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration.
- future decision, services and policies made and adopted by the Council should be assessed through Equality Impact Assessments to determine the impact of changes on people with care experience, alongside those who formally share a protected characteristic.

- in the delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty the Council includes care experience in the publication and review of Equality Objectives and the annual publication of information relating to people who share a protected characteristic in services and employment.
- this Council will treat care experience as if it were a protected characteristic.
- this Council formally calls upon all other bodies to treat care experience as a protected characteristic until such time as it may be introduced by legislation including:
 - (i) working to establish Cambridgeshire as a County where all local government treats our care leavers similarly.
 - (ii) calling on the City, towns, districts, parishes, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Greater Cambridge Partnership to also pass this motion to enable us all to work together to protect and provide for our care experienced young people.
- to continue proactively seeking out and listening to the voices of care experienced people when developing new policies based on their views.

Following discussion, on being put to the vote, the motion was carried unanimously by affirmation.

d) Motion from Councillor Ros Hathorn

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Hathorn and seconded by Councillor Ferguson:

This Council notes that:

- there are enormous opportunities in Cambridgeshire to increase both the number of people who cycle for daily activities (such as part of a journey to school or work) and those who cycle for leisure and tourism.
- the footpaths and cycleways we have are extremely well designed and easy to use and the number and quality of connections grows all the time.
- it is not always straightforward to follow routes, find routes on maps or indeed find the maps themselves.
- it can also be a challenge to work out how user-friendly cycle paths are.
- understanding the cycle network and how it connects to the public transport network is critical to supporting people who want to cycle more frequently.

This Council further notes the following actions are examples of things which could be done to increase understanding:

- developing an app.
- using County Council maps more effectively.

- putting QR codes on cycle paths.
- putting maps permanently on display in libraries and other community spaces.
- installing interpretation boards along cycle routes showing cycle paths and connections.
- boarding up redundant ticket machines in busway bus stops with cycle maps.
- offering cycling maps to community partners.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- call for joint work with the Combined Authority and Greater Cambridge Partnership to develop a clear action plan to make information about our cycle network and its links with public transport easily accessible and well used.
- work with officers and members with expertise in communities and communication alongside those with cycling expertise when developing the action plan.
- consider way marking signage and systems to create an easily identifiable way of following cycle routes.

Following discussion, on being put to the vote, the motion was carried by a majority.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour, Independents and Conservative majority in favour; 3 Conservatives abstained.]

e) Motion from Councillor Alan Sharp

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Sharp and seconded by Councillor Goldsack.

Core Purpose: The condition of the highways, footpaths and cycleways in Cambridgeshire is completely unsatisfactory, therefore an urgent injection of resources and an improvement in the way repairs are carried out is proposed to help address the situation.

This Council notes that:

- the Joint Administration decided to ignore inflation meaning the total highways budget for maintenance was cut by £710k in real terms for this financial year.
- furthermore, since coming to power they have repeatedly rejected calls from the Conservatives to increase the budget by voting against its proposals.
- the result of this is plain to see and the public are clamouring for something to be done.
- this Council welcomes the additional indicative £3.617m increase in pothole funding (over and above the £8.329m expected and budgeted for) the Conservative Government has allocated through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) to the County Council.

- whilst the Joint Administration is prepared to wait for the CPCA to advise the Council and Strategy and Resources Committee to allocate funds later on in the year, the Conservatives propose an immediate allocation to boost the highways, footpaths and cycleways maintenance budgets (Hereafter called the highways maintenance budget).
- this early action will help accelerate planning for expenditure in the summer months when preventative action is more effective than delayed actions leading to reactive pothole filling.
- making this decision at full Council now also prevents the Joint Administration from allocating this welcome increase to the highway's maintenance budget to simply paying off debt, which it chose to use the increased money for last year.

This Council also recognises:

- the need to bring to the attention of the Chief Executive the often-repeated claims by members of the public that repairs are not of an acceptable standard.
- there is little to be gained by an increase in allocation of funding without an assurance the money will be well spent.
- the need to ask the Chief Executive to treat this matter as one of the highest importance and take personal oversight to ensure that the organisation effectively spends highways maintenance monies.

This Council agrees that:

- the roads and footpaths are in an unacceptable state of repair.
- urgent action is required to address this situation and develop plans for the warmer months as early as possible in the year.

This Council recommends that the:

- Highways and Transport Directorate is informed that the full amount of the Government's pothole fund will be allocated to it for use as part of the highways' maintenance budget.
- Chief Executive allocate sufficient resources and take a specific interest in the quality and quantum of highways maintenance.
- Chief Executive deliver a draft action plan to members for improvements in dealing with Highways Maintenance at least one week prior to the July meeting of Council.

Councillor Beckett moved an amendment seconded by Councillor Shailer, as set out in Appendix E.

Following discussion, the amendment, on being put to the vote, was carried by a majority.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour, Independents and one Conservative in favour; Conservative majority against.]

Following discussion, on being put to the vote the substantive motion, as set out below, was carried by a majority.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; Conservative majority abstained; one Conservative against.]

Core Purpose: The condition of the highways, footpaths and cycleways in Cambridgeshire is completely unsatisfactory, therefore an urgent injection of resources and an improvement in the way repairs are carried out is proposed to help address the situation.

This Council notes that:

- the Joint Administration took over control of Cambridgeshire County Council in 2021 following 10 years of decline in our highways network under Conservative leadership at the Council.
- furthermore, since coming to power they have increased the funding available for highways maintenance by £2.4m, but this is unfortunately not enough to compensate for the increases in inflation caused by Conservative government policies.
- the poor condition of our roads is plain to see and the public are clamouring for something to be done.
- this Council welcomes the additional indicative £3.617m increase in pothole funding (over and above the £8.329m expected and budgeted for) the Conservative government has allocated through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) to the County Council, but regrets that this will still not be enough to keep pace with the increased inflationary costs, nor compensate for the years of managed decline which have left our highways network in such a dreadful condition.
- Cambridgeshire has seen its real terms cash settlement under the Conservative central government fall from £144.31m to 67.87m.
- the Joint Administration will need to wait for the CPCA to advise the Council and Strategy and Resources Committee to allocate funds later on in the year, but welcomes the work the administration and officers have been doing in preparing for this money and working at pace to secure additional resources ahead of other councils. The Joint Administration welcomes the arrival of three additional dragon patchers which will enable us to operate on a proactive basis rather than the purely reactive strategy adopted by the previous administration.
- this early action will help accelerate planning for expenditure in the summer months when preventative action is more effective than delayed actions leading to reactive pothole filling.
- under the previous administration no sampling of maintenance work quality was undertaken and welcomes the changes by the current administration to develop reliable key performance indicators on maintenance work quality.
- highways improvement, including the focus on potholes, deserves full and proper scrutiny and consideration by the Highways and Transport Committee – which enables officers to contribute to this, rather than a report to full Council.

This Council also recognises:

- that Highways Maintenance is already a top priority for the council, and that the attention of the Chief Executive is fully engaged with this topic thanks to the often-repeated claims by members of the public that repairs are not of an acceptable standard.
- the Council's management structure is clear that highways is the functional responsibility of the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability. With our new Executive Director, who was unanimously appointed to the role by the cross-party Staffing and Appeals Committee, having recently taken up post, it would seem sensible for the Executive Director to lead on this work, enabling the Chief Executive to maintain his oversight of all Council services.

This Council agrees that:

- the roads and footpaths are in an unacceptable state of repair following years of under investment and mismanagement from Conservative led administrations over many years.
- urgent action is required to address this situation, including the continuation of the expansion of the proactive action being taken during the warmer months of the year.

This Council recommends that the:

- Highways and Transport Directorate is informed that the full amount of the government's pothole fund will be allocated to it for use as part of the highways' maintenance budget.
- Chief Executive allocate sufficient resources and take a specific interest in the quality and quantum of highways maintenance.
- Executive Director of Place and Sustainability delivers a draft action plan to members for improvements in dealing with highways maintenance for consideration by the Highways and Transport Committee in July.

151. Questions

- (a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Council Procedure Rule 9.1)

No questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.1 of the Council's Constitution.

- (b) Written Questions (Council Procedure Rule 9.2)

No questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2 of the Council's Constitution.

Chair

Chair's Announcements

People

Executive Director for Children, Education and Families

Martin Purbrick joins the council from Bedford Borough Council where he is the Director of Children's Services. With more than 24 years' experience working within Children's Services and a strong track record of service improvement and innovation, Martin, who is a qualified social worker, has a career which spans roles in the London Boroughs of Sutton, Barnet, Hackney and Haringey as well as with Essex County Council.

In his most recent role in Bedford, he oversaw the council becoming only the fourth Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) sector-led improvement partner with the Department for Education, and Ofsted graded 'outstanding' children's homes as well as leading Children's Services at the council from 'Requires Improvement' to an overall 'Good' rating from Ofsted.

Executive Director for Adults, Health and Commissioning

Patrick Warren-Higgs joins the council from Essex County Council, where he is currently Director of Adult Social Care Essex Operations, and deputy to the Statutory Director of Adult Social Services.

Having led the Adult Social Care response to Covid-19 across the whole of Essex, Patrick has worked closely with health partners across the county, helping to significantly reduce the numbers of delayed transfers of vulnerable people from hospital – as well as having been instrumental in the Integrated Care Systems, forming with partners the five alliances, across Essex; with a focus on locality working and supporting communities in an integrated way. His roles at Essex have also included acting Director of Commissioning, Director of Local Delivery and acting Head of Care.

Patrick, who is also a qualified management accountant, has previously worked in adult social care and community services roles in Doncaster Council.

Both Martin and Patrick are expected to join the Council on 12 June 2023.

Messages

St Neots Mayor's Ball

Councillor Ferguson attended the St Neots Mayor Charity Ball which supports charities such as Disability Huntingdonshire, Love's Farm Community Money Advice and Young People's Counselling Service.

Unity Campus Topping Out Ceremony, Pampisford

Councillor Ferguson attended the Topping Out Ceremony of the first of three new laboratory buildings at Unity Campus, Pampisford. Completion of all three buildings is scheduled for this summer and autumn.

The Mayor of St Ives Civic Charity Ball

Councillor Ferguson attended the Mayor of St Ives 'Casino Royale' Civic Charity Ball to raise money for The Mayor of St Ives charities, which are MAGPAS Air Ambulance, The Mayor's Youth Support Fund, CALMtown St Ives, Memory Lane Singing Café, St Ives Rangers Disabilities Team, St Ives Rugby Club Youth Teams, Darby and Joan St Ives and St Ives Youth Theatre.

Octavia Hill Birthplace House

Councillor Ferguson attended an afternoon tea to celebrate the refurbishment of Octavia Hill Birthplace House to help get it back on the map for tourism in Wisbech and the Fens.

VIP Visit to Harry Specters

Councillor Ferguson was part of the Civic Dignitary Line up to welcome His Royal Highness, The Duke of Edinburgh visiting Harry Specters on 12th April. Harry Specter's mission is to empower autistic people with award winning chocolates.

Flag Raising for St George's Day at New Shire Hall

Councillor Ferguson was honoured to raise the St George's Day flag at New Shire Hall.

The sad passing of Colonel Derek Bristow OBE DL

Councillor Ferguson attended the funeral of Colonel Derek Bristow OBE DL at All Saint's Church in Huntingdon.

Huntingdon Town Council Sunday Civic Service

Councillor Ferguson attended the Civic Service in Huntingdon which was particularly ceremonial as it coincided with Huntingdonshire Day and Oliver Cromwell's birthday.

Service of Thanksgiving for the Coronation of His Majesty The King

Councillor Kindersley and Councillor Ferguson attended A Choral Evensong to mark the Coronation of His Majesty The King & Her Majesty the Queen Consort at Ely Cathedral.

VIP visit to break ground on the new Whittle Laboratory in Cambridge

Councillor Ferguson was part of the Civic Dignitary Line up to welcome His Majesty The King Charles III who was visiting the University of Cambridge in his first public engagement following the Coronation. His Majesty was in Cambridge to break ground on the the new Whittle Laboratory.

Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Making Ceremony, Ely

Councillor Kindersley attended the Annual Council Meeting and Mayor Making Ceremony in Ely.

Support Global Road Safety Week

The Chief Executive and Councillor Ferguson lowered a flag at New Shire Hall on 11 May to support Global Road Safety Week, and Project EDWARD - Every Day Without a Road Death to show respect to all the people who have lost their lives on the roads of Cambridgeshire.

Public Question Time

Question from Daniel Fulton to Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, Leader of the Council:

Thank you very much, Chair.

When parliament created the role of elected police and crime commissioners in 2011, it also created a statutory framework to ensure that these police and crime commissioners were held to account for serious misconduct. Under this statutory framework, police and crime panels, comprised primarily of members of local authorities, are tasked with the mandatory duty of recording complaints about police and crime commissioners. In practice, this mandatory duty is often delegated to a particular local authority, known as the host authority.

At present, the host authority for the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel is Peterborough City Council. Inexplicably, Peterborough City Council has failed to perform its mandatory duty to record complaints about misconduct by the elected police and crime commissioner. This is particularly problematic because the Independent Office for Police Conduct can only investigate allegations once they are recorded.

Since 2021, Cambridgeshire County Council, which represents over three-quarters of the Cambridgeshire police area, has demonstrated its commitments to high standards of accountability, professionalism and propriety. In doing so, this council has upheld the principles of our democratic tradition and has helped to restore confidence in local government. Confidence in policing demands that the host authority for the police and crime panel discharges responsibilities in accordance with the principles of public service and the rule of law. If the police and crime panel were to request that this council become host authority, would the leaders support the consideration of such a request? Thank you.

Response from Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, Leader of the Council:

I would like to say that, should we receive any such request from the police and crime panel, we would certainly consider it, as we would consider any request for us to look at our working relationships with partners. But I would also like to add that we do not, at present, have any reason to believe that Peterborough City Council are not hosting the panel in a satisfactory way. Thank you.

Supplementary Question from Daniel Fulton:

I would just like to thank the leader for her response. Thank you very much.

Question from Marilyn Treacy to Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Thank you. This question is directed to Councillor Meschini.

At one hour forty-one minutes into the County Council meeting on March 21st you stated, 'you have been lied to today. This particular on-road option has never been professionally appraised'. Nonsense it has. This relates to the C2C route proposed by CPPF. Review of the GCP document library on C2C reveals that a GCP appraised a tidal scheme with gantries and an inbound scheme

with some additional outbound sections which included a four-metre-wide cycle lane, duplicating the nearby Comberton Greenway. There was also a quick wins paper as well– proposal as well.

We believe that these schemes were set up to fail. There is no record of the proposed CPPF scheme having been appraised. Could you please direct us to the documentation for the appraisal of this particular on-road scheme on the GCP website?

Response from Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Thank you very much, Chairman and thank you Dr Treacy, welcome back to the Council after last time.

We have all the assessments and evidence in the documents published online on the projects- the Cambourne to Cambridge projects dedicated web pages; and I pulled out the link to where the Past, Present and Future's proposal was appraised. I've printed out a link, it's next to you on the page on the table over there. It was covered as part of the background documents for the 2021 independent audit that Field Swan conducted.

It is worth noting that on page 2 of that document that is at that link, the proponents themselves of the proposal state that they recognised this proposal is being a short-term fix, while CAM [Cambridge Autonomous Metro], East West Rail and the Girton Interchange are worked out. An inbound only scheme does not provide sufficient capacity for the projected growth at West Cambourne and Bourn Airfield and the jobs at West Cambridge – all of which I expanded on last time. Thank you.

Question from Allan Treacy to Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Thank you, Chair.

Given Cambridge's position as a world class academic institution and in the knowledge that University representatives sits on the GCP Board, would it not be appropriate for alarming statements made by GCP officials and councillors in support of the C2C off-road busway to be subject to at least some scrutiny?

For example, you heard it last full Council meeting that students in Cambourne are currently barred from access to post-16 education opportunities, unless they have a car of their own, or a lift, or money for taxis. They are currently spending three hours stuck in traffic on the A428 on public transport. You also heard that the 428 is one of the most congested and polluted routes in Cambridge. You also heard that the Local Plan needed high quality segregated transport link. These incorrect or questionable statements, and many others, were made without a shred of evidence in support, yet undoubtedly influenced you, the councillors, in the way you voted.

Can I ask that the Chair should be empowered to ask for evidence supporting wild claims like these and that, if none is forthcoming, that councillors are instructed to ignore the claims.

Response from Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Thank you, thank you very much Mr Chairman and, once again, Mr Treacy, welcome back - it's nice to see you again.

All the evidence from which I quoted in the last debate is, once again, on the GCP website. The letter from Cambourne Village College – I have it over here – is also on the GCP website, with a printout on the table over there. This is where I quoted when I said 'for those students who do not have' – and I'm reading this – 'for those students who do not have access to a car and/or a lift, or the financial support to utilise taxis, the lack of transport links between Cambourne and Cambridge leads in shaping the decision that they make regarding the post-16 education'. And later on in the letter, 'at present, many pupils have to travel over three hours per day. This clearly impacts on their studies, mental and social wellbeing'. So, that's where that statement came from.

In terms of the other statement regarding the Local Plan, I have printed out a link to where the special planning document is held, which is part of the Greater Cambridge Joint Local Plan, which was adopted in October 2019 and makes- so this is a special planning document for Bourn Airfield Village. It was adopted – as I said – in 2019, and it makes specific reference to the need for the Cambourne to Cambridge incorporation within the site and the need for this segregated quality link. So that's where the evidence is and, again, there's print outs on the desk.

All of these things matter. We are talking about real people with real needs. And I think that ought to be remembered. Thank you.

Supplementary question from Allan Treacy:

Thank you. I quoted three examples, but there about a dozen examples, as you well know, that we have evidence of. For example, Councillor Meschini has also said that there's no evidence that an on-road option would cost less than the off-road option. But there are papers produced by the GCP which show that the low cost, the on-road option would cost significantly less. And these questions are not being questioned- these statements are not being questioned at the meetings. And I do think that there is danger that councillors are going to make wrong decisions if they're not given all the evidence on these points.

Response from Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Board:

I am very happy to say that I am, you know, quite happy to help, or anybody can help in directing councillors to evidence, should they seek it, in terms of how to shape their decision. I don't think from my part at least, there has ever been any intent to mislead.

Thank you.

Question from David Cairns, Transport Lead for Coton Parish Council, to Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

So, firstly, many thanks to you, Chair, for accepting our questions; and to Steve Count for the end item later on. This question refers to Agenda Item 16b).

Later in this morning's or today's meeting, you will also hear a motion from Councillor Sharp around the maintenance of the highways in Cambridgeshire. As we all know, those are in a terrible state - potholes are everywhere. Some of the worst in the country. And you will be talking about increasing budgets by about 50% to fix them. The C2C busway, as currently proposed by the GCP, includes a new, segregated highway. That, in turn, is going to demand more maintenance over the long-term than an inbound bus route on the Madingley highway. Would it not be sensible, councillors, before the final decision is taken, that in parallel to that works that you've already approved for consultation, that the Council instructs the GCP to do a final look about whether the inbound option is possible or not, and therefore possibly to reduce your future maintenance liabilities. Thank you.

Response from Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Thank you very much, Chair. And thank you very, very much – please forgive me, I'm having a complete moment of blank – David, is that your name? I'm so, so sorry. Thank you very much David for coming and, actually, for asking this question, which gives me the opportunity to expand on a point that I believe is not very well understood.

The maintenance budget for guided busways, which is the same, should this busway be built, would work in the same way as the current Huntingdonshire busway. This maintenance budget is paid for by the transport operators who use the infrastructure that we allow them to use. This would not change in the future that we envisage, where we are looking to support the Mayor of the Combined Authority with his franchising ambitions. And in a franchised environment, once again, transport operators as part of their contract would be maintaining the busway in exchange for using it. So, there is no maintenance cost for the segregated busway for this Council.

There is also a second point to be made which is, you know there is something in the question that you asked, David, where it says 'a bus lane, by definition being smaller would need less maintenance than a whole new busway. These things are not quite as clear cut or as easy as they sometimes seem.

The biggest factor influencing the level of (what's the word I'm looking for) the level of damage, I suppose, is not the size of an item but the usage and the level of segregation. So, for something fully segregated, you would actually be looking at something that would be easier to maintain.

It's obviously very, very, very complex; but it's very important that these things are considered in the round.

Thank you.

Supplementary question from David Cairns, Transport Lead for Coton Parish Council:

Thank you very much Chair, and thank you for the response.

So councillors, you might have seen in the Cambs news of 12th May a report about the county's first guided busway to St Ives. It cost– it was planned to cost £120 million, it cost £150 million. Three people have been killed and that's cost £25 million in legal fees and £10 million in maintenance. These are a serious, serious projects to build and they're difficult to deliver.

Often after projects when they go wrong, councils and others conduct post-mortems to say how could we have done things differently? Isn't it not better to do what they call a pre-mortem, look

ahead to possible mistakes, look ahead to possible risks and make sure you've done the absolute due diligence you can and by this way, as Councillor Count has proposed, making sure that you consider a possible inbound bus road. Is that not the best thing to make sure you don't regret this decision in ten years' time?

Thank you.

Response from Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Very happy to take all of that onboard. Thank you, Chair.

Question from Anna Gazeley to Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Good morning. Thank you Chair and thank you Council for accepting my question today. At the Council meeting on the 21st March, Councillor Nethsingha cited the UN IPCC report calling for urgent climate action, a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonisation, as justification for supporting and subsequently voting for a Cambourne to Cambridge (C2C) busway scheme with an off-road section, necessitating the felling of hundreds of trees at Coton Orchard.

Studying the C2C environmental statement, specifically Section 10.3, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, I noted that the infrastructure, or embodied carbon is predicted to be around 49,000 tonnes. This is essentially the carbon dioxide emitted from the construction of the busway and the new motorway bridge over the M11. The impact from vegetation loss required for this construction, as well as the release of carbon sequestered within the soil from excavating an estimated 211,000 tonnes of previously undisturbed soil, as found at Coton Orchard, is marked as XXX TCO2E (impact still to be confirmed) - meaning it's not been worked out.

Modal shift, active travel and public transport is modelled as saving around 34,205 tonnes over the scheme's sixty-year lifetime. Now, unlike trees and other vegetation, which actively takes carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere by means of photosynthesis, this reduction is only an estimate of how much less would be added as a result of this proposed busway, not what will actually be taken away.

So, my question is: how does the proposed scheme represent a decarbonisation and taking steps towards carbon net zero targets, given that by your own calculations, it adds over 14,000 tonnes of carbon or carbon equivalent, and that is without counting the impact of vegetation loss and release of carbon sequestered in the soil.

Response from Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Thank you, Chairman, and thank you Anna for coming, it's lovely to see you again.

As the environmental impact assessment shows and the application for the Transport and Works Act order will show when it is done, the scheme is expected to achieve and will achieve net zero carbon and 20% biodiversity net gain.

There is also another- a broader point to be made, since we're talking about environmental impact and these things are extremely important. That the alternative, that we later on in this meeting will

be asked to evaluate again, does make, even if it was to be taken at face value, does make a number assumptions about its environmental impact. The proposed solution assumes CAM, East West Rail and the Girton Interchange to be done. There is no consideration, I mean obviously CAM isn't happening anymore, as to the present state of affairs. The proposed environmental impact of East West Rail is not known and not taken into account. There is no expectation that in the short to medium term that would be anything done to Girton Interchange. If there was any such expectation, there is no knowledge of any environmental impact of those works. It is also not clear from the proposal, which is, as I said, proposed as a short-term interim fix, no indication of what the long-term fix is supposed to be and what the environmental impacts of that are supposed to be. So the picture, again, is complex. And, if I may, Anna, there is absolutely no desire on the part of any of us here – there never has been - to do work, to build infrastructure that isn't needed. To have an impact that is not needed.

All we need to make sure we do is to consider the needs and to consider the damage to the environment that is being done now. And to ameliorate that.

And also we, I say 'we' – the technical experts who are going to work on this - are absolutely convinced that there is still quite a lot of room for compromise about the area where Coton Orchard is. More work will be done on that.

Thank you, sorry Chair.

Supplementary question from Anna Gazeley:

Thank you.

Well actually the figures that I cited in my question were from- or are from the GCP papers and your own modelling, as 14,000 tonnes of carbon and it hasn't worked out how much carbon will be added to the atmosphere from the vegetation offset at Coton Orchard and we're grateful that you don't want to cut down the trees if you don't have to. So maybe that should be worked out and, later in this meeting, the proposed- the motion proposed by Councillor Count to compare the on- and off-road versions, maybe it's worth comparing the two and seeing what is the carbon that will be added and if there is, you know, if there is a saving and a positive effect on the on-road.

Thank you very much.

Response from Councillor Elisa Meschini, Council Representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:

Very quickly, thank you very much, and thank you, Chair. I absolutely agree. I fully expect all of that could be worked out. I don't think it is necessary. It will be worked out if the motion later today passes. If it does not pass, it will be worked out as part of the TWAO - the national planning inspector will see to that - and I fully expect that. Thank you.

Voting Record for Item 16b) (Minute 150) – Motion from Councillor Count

COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote	COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote
AMBROSE-SMITH D	Con	X				HOWELL M	Con				X
ATKINS M	Lib Dem				X	HOWITT R	Lab		X		
BATCHELOR H	Lib Dem		X			HOY S	Con				X
BECKETT A	Lib Dem		X			HUNT B	Con	X			
BILLINGTON K	Con	X				KINDERSLEY S	Lib Dem		X		
BIRD G	Lab		X			KING JONAS	Con	X			
BLACK M	Lab		X			KING MARIA	Lib Dem		X		
BODEN C	Con	X				KING SIMON	Con	X			
BRADNAM A	Lib Dem		X			MCDONALD P	Lib Dem		X		
BULAT A	Lab		X			MCGUIRE M	Con	X			
BYWATER S	Con	X				MESCHINI E	Lab		X		
CONNOR D	Con	X				MILNES B	Lib Dem		X		
CORNEY S	Con	X				MURPHY E	Lib Dem		X		
COSTELLO A	Con	X				NETHSINGHA L	Lib Dem		X		
COUNT S	Con	X				PRENTICE K	Con				X
COUTTS P	Lib Dem		X			RAE	Lab		X		
CRISWELL S	Con	X				REYNOLDS K	Con	X			
DAUNTON C	Lib Dem		X			SANDERSON T	Ind		X		
DEW D	Con				X	SCHUMANN J	Ind				X
DUPRE L	Lib Dem		X			SEEFF G	Lib Dem		X		
FERGUSON S	Ind	X				SHAILER N	Lab		X		
FRENCH J	Con	X				SHARP A	Con	X			
FULLER R	Con				X	SLATTER P	Lib Dem		X		
GARDENER I	Con	X				SMITH M	Con				X
GAY N	Lab		X			TAYLOR S	Ind		X		
GOLDSACK M	Con	X				THOMPSON F	Lib Dem		X		
GOODLIFFE B	Lab		X			TIERNEY S	Con	X			
GOUGH N	Lib Dem		X			VAN DE VEN S	Lib Dem		X		
GOWING J	Con				X	WHELAN A	Lib Dem		X		
HATHORN R	Lib Dem		X			WILSON G	Lib Dem		X		
HAY A	Con	X				Total		21	31		9

Item 16c) (Minute 150) – Motion from Councillor Goodliffe

Public Speaker Transcript

Hello. Perfect. Thank you so much for taking the time to listen to me.

Ok. Care experience is often misunderstood. The first words that are usually said to me once I tell somebody that I was in foster care are: 'you mean like Tracy Beaker' followed by a long and often really awkward pause.

Of course, it's understandable why people react like this, given the presentation of us in the media alone. It's enough to scare anybody. And this is without the added mystery and misconceptions of being taken out of class regularly to meet with the social worker, or police, or support staff - all of which the system require. Combine this with outcomes for children in care and it doesn't look great.

But we need to shift our perspectives. It's common for these children to have experienced trauma all over the country as a child, and I think it's important to remember this - that they're vulnerable children.

I am one of the lucky ones, actually. I get to sit here and tell you my story. But I have a job, next week I'll be graduating from a fantastic university, and I had the unconditional love and support at both of my foster parents. I'm often told I made it out, but every day I struggle with the label of being in care. I face decisions none of my peers face - to choose to leave my family behind as they did not support my decision to attend university; to work multiple jobs alongside my degree to get me through; to even get to university I had to car hop to attend open days, which already made me feel like I didn't belong. When I made it to university, I had to learn how to maintain friendships, even how to write an essay, because I'd never been anywhere long enough to learn those skills.

In three months, I will have no home, no job, no degree course anymore and there is an expectation that I will know what to do. To start the process of transitioning, I'm interviewing for jobs. I, of course, value the work that I do with children in care and as a result my CV reflects this. Because of my work with fostering charities, my roles outside of university, and of course my own background. But this isn't shared by employers. When employers find out about my care experience, I often have questions about what that means. Funnily enough, they don't like to hear that you are abused and traumatised as a child and put into a dumping ground filled with other vulnerable children, despite the achievements I've made since and the resilience I've continuously shown.

This isn't just with employers though. It stands with friendships and relationships too. It affects every area of life.

But, of course, these are only a few examples. It often feels like I have to find something to say to justify this upbringing and why I deserve to live a normal life. So, for those reasons alone, the recognition and understanding of what care experience is is significant. Often these children feel completely alone. They've been left without connections, networks, skills and opportunity - and all of which are needed in order to have a chance at life. Policies such as this is the only way for this to begin to change. Recognising that this group is disadvantaged is one thing, but recognising that this group is also discriminated against is another. Whilst we cannot undo the disadvantage and cannot take away the trauma, we can ensure that these children are considered and prevented

from further discrimination when it comes to policy and decision making - which is a positive start. And it's a wonder that this action has not been taken already. This is an opportunity for Cambridgeshire to be at the forefront of innovative thinking and change which, in my experience and understanding, has not been the case in the past. Whether it's data gathering and engagement in virtual schools, campaigning, or simply even a social media post, I've seen efforts from many local authorities in care experience matters, but never my own. What we're doing right now is not enough. It is my hope that with this motion, we can begin to move forward, improve our understanding around care experience, and ensure that future policy is made that considers a group which for far too long has been disregarded.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to me.

Item 16e) (Minute 150) Motion from Councillor Alan Sharp

Liberal Democrat Amendment

Councillor Beckett moved an amendment seconded by Councillor Shailer, as follows (additions in **bold** and deletions shown in ~~strikethrough~~):

Core Purpose: The condition of the highways, footpaths and cycleways in Cambridgeshire is completely unsatisfactory, therefore an urgent injection of resources and an improvement in the way repairs are carried out is proposed to help address the situation.

This Council notes that:

- the Joint Administration ~~decided to ignore inflation meaning the total highways budget for maintenance was cut by £710k in real terms for this financial year~~ **took over control of Cambridgeshire County Council in 2021 following 10 years of decline in our highways network under Conservative leadership at the council.**
- furthermore, since coming to power they have ~~repeatedly rejected calls from the Conservatives to increase the budget by voting against its proposals.~~ **increased the funding available for highways maintenance by £2.4m, but this is unfortunately not enough to compensate for the increases in inflation caused by Conservative government policies.**
- the **poor condition of our roads** ~~result of this~~ is plain to see and the public are clamouring for something to be done.
- this Council welcomes the additional indicative £3.617m increase in pothole funding (over and above the £8.329m expected and budgeted for) the Conservative Government has allocated through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) ~~to the County Council,~~ **but regrets that this will still not be enough to keep pace with the increased inflationary costs, nor compensate for the years of managed decline which have left our highways network in such a dreadful condition.**
- **Cambridgeshire has seen its real terms cash settlement under the Conservative central government fall from £144.31m to 67.87m.**
- whilst the Joint Administration ~~is prepared~~ **will need** to wait for the CPCA to advise the Council and Strategy and Resources Committee to allocate funds later on in the year, ~~the Conservatives propose an immediate allocation to boost the highways, footpaths and cycleways maintenance budgets (Hereafter called the highways maintenance budget).~~ **but welcomes the work the administration and officers have been doing in preparing for this money and working at pace to secure additional resources ahead of other councils. The Joint Administration welcomes the arrival of three additional dragon patchers which will enable us to operate on a proactive basis rather than the purely reactive strategy adopted by the previous administration.**

- this early action will help accelerate planning for expenditure in the summer months when preventative action is more effective than delayed actions leading to reactive pothole filling.
- **under the previous administration no sampling of maintenance work quality was undertaken and welcomes the changes by the current administration to develop reliable key performance indicators on maintenance work quality.**
- **highways improvement, including the focus on potholes, deserves full and proper scrutiny and consideration by the Highways and Transport Committee – which enables officers to contribute to this, rather than a report to full Council.**
- ~~— making this decision at full Council now also prevents the Joint Administration from allocating this welcome increase to the highway's maintenance budget to simply paying off debt, which it chose to use the increased money for last year.~~

This Council also recognises:

- ~~the need to bring to~~ **that Highways Maintenance is already a top priority for the council, and that** the attention of the Chief Executive **is fully engaged with this topic thanks to** the often-repeated claims by members of the public that repairs are not of an acceptable standard.
- **the Council's management structure is clear that Highways is the functional responsibility of the Executive Director of Place and Sustainability. With our new Executive Director, who was unanimously appointed to the role by the cross party Staffing and Appeals Committee, having recently taken up post, it would seem sensible for the Executive Director to lead on this work, enabling the Chief Executive to maintain his oversight of all Council services.**
- ~~— there is little to be gained by an increase in allocation of funding without an assurance the money will be well spent.~~
- ~~— the need to ask the Chief Executive to treat this matter as one of the highest importance and take personal oversight to ensure that the organisation effectively spends highways maintenance monies.~~

This Council agrees that:

- the roads and footpaths are in an unacceptable state of repair **following years of under investment and mismanagement from Conservative led administrations over many years.**
- urgent action is required to address this situation, **including the continuation of the expansion of the proactive action being taken during** and develop plans for the warmer months ~~as early as possible in~~ of the year.

This Council recommends that the:

- Highways and Transport Directorate is informed that the full amount of the Government's pothole fund will be allocated to it for use as part of the highways' maintenance budget.

- Chief Executive allocate sufficient resources and take a specific interest in the quality and quantum of highways maintenance.
- **Executive Director of Place and Sustainability** ~~Chief Executive~~ deliver a draft action plan to members for improvements in dealing with Highways Maintenance **for consideration by the Highways and Transport Committee in July** ~~at least one week prior to the July meeting of Council.~~