

# County Council – Minutes

Please note a video recording of the meeting can be viewed on the Council's [YouTube channel](#):

Date: 21 May 2024

Time: 10:30 a.m. – 2:28 p.m.

## Present:

### Councillors:

David Ambrose Smith

Michael Atkins

Alex Beckett

Ken Billington

Gerri Bird

Mike Black

Chris Boden

Anna Bradnam

Alex Bulat

Simon Bywater

David Connor

Adela Costello

Steve Count

Piers Coutts

Steve Criswell

Claire Daunton

Doug Dew

Lorna Dupré

Stephen Ferguson

Jan French

Ryan Fuller

Ian Gardener

Nick Gay

Mark Goldsack

Bryony Goodliffe

John Gowing

Ros Hathorn

Anne Hay

Richard Howitt

Samantha Hoy

Bill Hunt

Sebastian Kindersley

Jonas King

Maria King

Simon King

Peter McDonald

Elisa Meschini

Edna Murphy

Lucy Nethsingha

Keith Prentice

Catherine Rae

Kevin Reynolds

Tom Sanderson

Geoffrey Seeff

Neil Shailer

Alan Sharp

Philippa Slatter

Mandy Smith

Simone Taylor

Firouz Thompson

Steve Tierney

Susan van de Ven

Alison Whelan

Graham Wilson

Andrew Wood

## Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Henry Batchelor, Steve Corney, Neil Gough, Mark Howell and Josh Schumann.

## 208. Election of Chair of Council

It was moved by Councillor Nethsingha, seconded by Councillor Meschini, and resolved unanimously:

That Councillor Kindersley be elected Chair of the County Council to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2025.

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

## 209. Election of Vice-Chair of Council

It was moved by Councillor Nethsingha, seconded by Councillor Meschini, and resolved by a majority:

That Councillor Dew be elected Vice-Chair of the County Council to the next annual meeting of the Council in 2025.

Councillor Dew signed the statutory declaration of acceptance of office and thanked the Council for his election.

*[Voting pattern: majority of Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; two Conservatives abstained]*

## 210. Minutes – 19 March 2024 and Motions Log

The minutes of the meeting held on the 19 March 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The motions log was noted.

## 211. Chair's Announcements

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

Councillors observed a minute silence in memory of Jacqueline Anscomb-Moon, Business Officer in Education, and Gillian Poulton, Business Officer in Children and Safeguarding.

## 212. Report of the County Returning Officer

Council received and noted the report of the County Returning Officer on the election of Councillor Andrew Wood in the by-election held on 21 March 2024 for the electoral divisions of Yaxley and Farcet, respectively.

## 213. Declarations of Interests

Councillor Costello declared a non-statutory disclosable interest in relation to Minute 222c) as a member of Ramsey Town Council and reported that she would not take part in the debate or vote on this item.

## 214. Public Question Time

The Chair informed Council that he had exercised his discretion to accept two additional eligible public questions which had been submitted before the deadline, as one related to two motions on the Council's agenda and the other was time critical.

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

## 215. Petitions

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

**216. Constitution and Ethics Committee Recommendations – Proposed changes to the Constitution and the arrangements for the appointment of Independent Person(s)**

It was moved by the Chair of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Dew, and seconded by the Vice-Chair of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, Councillor Kindersley, that the recommendations 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:

- a) approve the revisions to the Constitution set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to ensure compliance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2015;
- b) approve changes to the Contract Procedure Rules set out in Appendix 3;
- c) authorise the Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary or incidental to implement the changes to the Constitution detailed in this report;
- d) reappoint Gillian Holmes and Grant Osbourn as Independent Persons until the Annual General Meeting on 20 May 2025; and
- e) approve 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).

**217. 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 Dew, 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 16 May 2024.

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 16 May 2024.

**218. Appointment of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees**

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Dew, and resolved unanimously by affirmation that the appointment of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees, as set out in the report on the Council agenda, be approved.

**219. Appointments to Outside Organisations**

The Chair informed the Council of a correction; there were two appointments to the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel, not three as stated in the report.

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Dew, and resolved unanimously by affirmation, to approve the appointments to outside bodies, as set out in the report on the Council agenda.

## 220. 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 Dew, and resolved unanimously by affirmation to make the following appointments to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the municipal year 2024/25:

- (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) nominate two members (Councillor Mark Goldsack from the Conservative party and Councillor Anna Bradnam from the Liberal Democrat party) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and two substitute members from the same political parties as those appointed (Councillors Steve Count and Michael Atkins respectively); and
- (c) nominate one member from the Liberal Democrat party – Councillor Graham Wilson to the Audit and Governance Committee and Councillor Alison Whelan as a substitute member from the same political party.

## 221. 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 Dew, and resolved unanimously by affirmation that the calendar of council meetings, as set out in the agenda, be approved.

## 222. Motions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10

Five motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

### a) Motion from Councillor Alex Beckett

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Beckett and seconded by Councillor Nethsingha. The motion included alterations from the version included on the agenda, which were proposed by Councillor Beckett and agreed by the meeting without discussion. (additions in bold and deletions shown in strikethrough).

Core Purpose: To assess and prepare for the future impact of new technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), genomics and automated vehicles, on local communities and the services, operations and obligations of Cambridgeshire County Council.

The Council notes that:

- Rapid advancements in technology are reshaping our society, economy, and environment, offering significant opportunities and posing challenges.
- Technologies such as artificial intelligence, renewable energy, genomics, digital infrastructure, biomedical implants, and automated vehicles, have the potential to

enhance the lives of our residents, create more effective and efficient public services, improve environmental sustainability, and stimulate economic growth.

- Automated vehicles, in particular, could represent a transformative shift in transportation, offering prospects for improved mobility in rural areas and requiring careful integration within **rural**/urban settings to address potential congestion and safety concerns.
- Genomics, personalised medicine and biomedical implants could transform the lives of patients but will require significant changes to the way we deliver social care.
- The rise of social media and increased connectivity has the potential to reduce isolation for some groups of society but brings additional challenges for our young people navigating a complex world. The ability to easily and quickly create realistic fake photos/videos is a particular concern in the coming years.
- These advancements also introduce risks including cybersecurity threats, ethical dilemmas, job displacement, and the digital divide.
- Proactive planning and strategic investment in technology can help mitigate these risks, leverage opportunities for innovation, and ensure equitable benefits for all residents of Cambridgeshire.

The Council is recommended to commit to:

- presenting long-term Technology Impact Assessment, as part of business planning, reports to each Policy and Service Committee to inform members awareness of the potential opportunities and risks new technologies (including but not limited to autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence/Machine Learning, renewable energy generation/storage, Internet of Things) may present to our ways of working with and in our communities over the short, medium and long (20+year)-term. This should consider the financial costs and gains, environmental impacts, economic opportunities, social changes, and potential security risks.
- using the assessments to continually refresh the Council's Digital Strategies and the action plans that support their delivery, as well as the Council's business plan. This should be reported annually alongside the Business and Budget Plan to the Strategy, Resources and Performance Committee.
- **work with the Combined Authority to create**ing a technology forum to foster collaboration with local universities, technology companies, research institutions, and other local authorities in order to explore the challenges and opportunities technology can bring to our area. A member technology champion would assist in supporting this Forum.

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

*[Voting pattern: majority of Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour: three Conservatives abstained]*

b) Motion from Councillor Geoff Seeff

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Seeff and seconded by Councillor Bulat.

Council notes that:

- There are 14 known allergens posing the highest risk, often contained in non-pre-packed foods that can cause anaphylaxis when ingested by persons intolerant to them. These allergens include inter alia various types of nuts, cereals with gluten, seafoods such as shellfish, certain vegetables and dairy products.
- Reactions can range from mild discomfort in the mouth and throat, to nausea and vomiting, skin itching, rash, or swelling, and, in extreme cases, swelling of the tongue and the airways causing respiratory difficulties. Unless appropriate medication such as adrenaline, oxygen, and intravenous fluids are administered within a short period after severe anaphylactic shock, the outcome may be fatal.
- Most adults who have experienced sensitivity or who know their children to be sensitive will carry with them emergency medication in case of accidental ingestion of the allergen to which they are intolerant. They occasionally leave home without their medication or can become too ill to self-administer it.
- Customers purchasing prepared foods are entitled to be provided with sufficient detail on allergen content so as to enable them to make informed choices. Whilst restaurants, cafes or other catering outlets serving foods prepared in their own kitchens or preparation spaces are legally bound to indicate where information can be found on the allergens contained in the ingredients used in their recipes and to provide such information if requested, the form in which that information is to be presented is not prescriptive and is left to their discretion. The best food businesses will present comprehensive written statements on allergen content and train their staff to discuss the implications with customers but many regard the requirement as a formality and there is no consistency across the food sector.
- In 2022/23 there were reported to be over 5,000 admissions to hospitals in England specifically for anaphylactic shock arising from adverse allergenic reactions to food consumption. Of these about two thirds were for children under 18 years of age. In the same period and in respect of adverse allergenic reactions to food, there were 28 adult and 48 under 18s admissions to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough hospitals. Although falling slightly in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, nationally there has been an increase in admissions from food related anaphylaxis in each of the past 7 years and it is responsible for an estimated average of 10 fatalities per year.
- The charity Allergies UK estimates that the annual cost to the NHS of treating all allergy conditions is over £1 billion.
- Following the death of 18-year-old Owen Carey in 2017 from his reaction to eating a burger marinated in buttermilk, one of a number of allergens to which he was hypersensitive, his family initiated a campaign to lobby Government to introduce legislation making it compulsory for all restaurants and outlets serving prepared foods to identify in writing on their menus, display boards or other prominent media the allergen content of each item offered to diners, at the point of ordering without the customer having to ask ("Owen's Law"). A petition supporting Owen's Law was debated in

Parliament in May 2023 but its request for action was referred back to the Food Standards Agency (“FSA”) and local authorities.

- In 2014 the Republic of Ireland introduced legislation with the same requirement for the provision of allergen information as called for by Owen’s Law. From academic and empirical studies undertaken, there is evidence that it was implemented smoothly and secures a high degree of compliance from the hospitality industry.

Council recognises and welcomes:

- The work undertaken by the Owen’s Law campaign (“the Campaign”) to raise awareness of a critical public health risk potentially affecting an estimated 2 million UK citizens to a greater or lesser extent and to bring the seriousness of the issues to the attention of the Minister of State for Food, Farming and Fisheries, other members of the Government and MPs.
- The endorsement in December 2023 of the Campaign by the Board of the FSA, following its research into the operation of the current legislation and its impact on consumers and food businesses. Apart from agreeing with the Campaign’s proposition that Government legislates for the provision in writing of standardised accessible allergen identification, the FSA recommends associated measures to improve allergen management designed to minimise cross contamination, extend staff training, report anaphylactic incidents and step-up enforcement.
- That the FSA continues to work on the related matter of the use of disclaimers by food businesses, such as “may contain....” with research under the banner of Precautionary Allergen Labelling.
- The adoption by the University of Cambridge of the Campaign’s proposals for providing allergen information for each dish listed on the menus of its various refectories and dining rooms.

Council expresses its disappointment that the Government has failed to respond decisively to the Campaign and to take any tangible action on progressing legislation, specifically amendment to FIC 1169/2011, that would address the concerns of food allergy sufferers and their families.

Council is therefore recommended:

- to endorse the Campaign and, through its various media channels, make known its support for Owen’s Law to the district and town councils and other public sector bodies in Cambridgeshire, other UK local authorities via the Local Government Association and to the general public;
- through its Public Health and Trading Standards teams, and where possible, with the co-operation of the Environmental Health teams in the district councils, raise awareness within Cambridgeshire’s hospitality sector of the risks to allergy sufferers of not having access to reliable written information on the allergens used in prepared food and that, until such time as the relevant legislation has been enacted, encourage all food businesses in the sector to adopt voluntarily the Campaign’s proposal and the associated measures recommended by the FSA;

- to adopt, until such time as the relevant legislation has been enacted, and effective from 1st January 2025, whichever is sooner, the Campaign's proposal and the associated measures recommended by the FSA with respect to non-packaged food prepared and served at public events and functions which it organises; and
- to ask the Chief Executive to write to the Minister of State for Food, Farming and Fisheries to bring forward as soon as practical legislation embodying the Campaign's proposal and the recommendations of the FSA.

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

*[Voting pattern: majority of Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; one Conservative abstained]*

c) Motion from Councillor Steve Count

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

Core purposes: To ensure compliance with updated Department for Transport guidance, as well as demonstrating local support for the introduction of 20mph zones.

This Council:

- welcomes point 85 in the guidance - There is clear evidence of the effect of reducing traffic speeds on the reduction of collisions and casualties, as collision frequency is lower at lower speeds, and where collisions do occur, there is a lower risk of fatal injury at lower speeds.
- notes that research shows that on urban roads with low average traffic speeds, any 1mph reduction in average speed can reduce the collision frequency by around 6%. There is also clear evidence confirming the greater chance of survival of pedestrians in collisions at lower speeds.

The Council notes that the updated guidance sets out the following points on proposals to introduce 20mph limits should:

- only be introduced, in the right places, over time and with local support in urban areas and built-up village streets that are primarily residential.
- ensure any such measures are targeted and not introduced as a blanket measure.
- ensure local speed limits should not be set in isolation, but as part of a package with other measures to manage vehicle speeds and improve road safety.
- consider use of the speed limit appraisal tool, which is provided free of charge and is not restricted to Local Authorities.
- consider a survey of speeds, a study of crashes and the potential presence of vulnerable users.
- be satisfied that the expected benefits exceed the costs.
- use mean speeds as the basis for determining local speed limits.



- conduct a comprehensive and early consultation of all those who may be affected, which is an essential part of the implementation process. This needs to include residents, all tiers of local government, the police and emergency services, public transport providers and any other relevant local groups.
- not include roads where motor vehicle movement is the primary function.

Furthermore, the Council also notes that the:

- process for determining traffic regulation orders set out in the constitution is delegated to an officer in consultation with the Local Members only considering objections to proposals, in a private meeting.
- consultation responses for recent schemes in Huntingdon, Soham and Ely were 8 (0.03%), 6 (0.05%) and 195 (1%) respectively. These are based on Town populations only and are further diminished as percentages, should populations of those affected in nearby settlements, or visitor numbers have been included.

Council is concerned that in the pursuit of reducing injury, sufficient account may not have been taken of existing guidance, as drawn out in updated guidance, when objections to Traffic Regulation Orders were considered, as follows:

- no evidence was presented with regards to mean speeds, or benefit to cost comparisons.
- insufficient information in some cases had been provided regarding how a package of measures would be required or introduced.
- the example consultation responses of 0.03%, 0.05% and 1%, and a lack of responses from required consultees, appears to fall short of the “demonstration of local support”.
- significant decisions affecting large populations are automatically delegated by the Constitution, this could affect public confidence in democratic accountability.

Council recommends that:

- existing proposals and new schemes currently proposed for the introduction of 20mph zones are re-examined to ensure compliance with updated guidance and new consultations undertaken where deemed necessary, advising all County Councillors in advance.
- the constitution is reviewed so that decisions which have a significant impact, currently delegated to officers consulting members in private meetings, are in future reserved to the appropriate committee held in public.

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

*[Voting pattern: Conservatives and non-aligned Independents in favour; Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents against]*

d) Motion from Councillor Lucy Nethsingha

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Nethsingha and seconded by Councillor McDonald.

This Council expresses its disappointment that central government have withdrawn funding for air quality monitoring. Poor air quality has a serious impact on health, and if monitoring is not funded it will not be possible to assess the impact air quality is having on residents in Cambridgeshire.

This Council asks:

- the Chief Executive to write to the Air Quality Minister, Rebecca Pow MP, to express its concern over the withdrawal of this funding, and ask what assessment was done prior to the decision to withdraw this funding.
- the Chief Executive and officers of the Council to work with key partners such as District Councils and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to assess the local implications on the removal of this funding on understanding and addressing poor air quality in Cambridgeshire.

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

*[Voting pattern: one Conservative, Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; eleven Conservatives against; seven Conservatives abstained]*

e) Motion from Councillor Susan van de Ven

The following motion was proposed by Councillor van de Ven and seconded by Councillor Meschini.

This council notes:

- Cambridgeshire's success over centuries has been the result of local initiative and international collaboration, whether in delivering the breadbasket that is the Fens, its ageless education sector, or the health and science industries that have more recently been spun out of our universities.
- In recent years, the pandemic and the UK's departure from the European Union have changed patterns of migration, employment and investment. Isolation has to some degree made its way into our ways of life, curtailing opportunity, prosperity, and enjoyment.
- For a multitude of reasons, enhanced engagement with the wider world outside the UK is needed.
- At ground level many sectors of the public service workforce depend on a stable international workforce; this in turn relies on an adequate housing and transport infrastructure. At higher levels, bringing to the broad university community the best of the world is critical to Cambridgeshire's future. Cambridge University remains renowned for international excellence. But the world is changing with new industries in new countries rapidly advancing, and that excellence cannot be taken for granted.

- The national importance of the Cambridge area economy, and the global potential of the life sciences industry, is a driver behind government's Cambridge 2040/50 scheme, which will undoubtedly carry forward in some fashion regardless of the outcome of the next General Election.
- Likewise, success for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's (CPCA) engagement in place marketing activity, such as attendance at the UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum, depends on strong international relationships for best outcomes.

This Council resolves:

- to seek to influence its partnership activity with the CPCA and District Councils to strengthen links with the international community, with a view to encouraging cross-cultural understanding, exchange, and investment; and
- that political leaders within the council work together with the university community, the CPCA and Business Board to understand how we can re-build more collaborative relationships with our international partners, both nearby and further afield.

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

*[Voting pattern: one Conservative, Liberal Democrats, Labour, Independent Group and one non-aligned Independent in favour; one non-aligned Independent against; sixteen Conservatives abstained]*

## 223. Questions

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

Three questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.1 of the Council's Constitution, as set out in Appendix C.

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

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

Chair

## County Council – 21 May 2024

### Chair's Announcements

#### People

##### Jacqueline Anscomb-Moon

It is with deep regret that the Chair reports the recent death of Jacqueline Anscomb-Moon. Jackie was a Business Officer in Education. The Council's thoughts are with her family, friends and colleagues at this very sad time.

##### Gillian Poulton

It is with deep regret that the Chair reports the recent death of Gillian Poulton. Gillian was a Business Officer in Children and Safeguarding. The Council's thoughts are with her family, friends and colleagues at this very sad time.

##### David Way, High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire

David Way was inaugurated as the High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire on 22 March 2024 for 2024.

##### Sarah Callaghan, Service Director: Education

Sarah Callaghan has been appointed as Cambridgeshire County Council's new Service Director: Education. She joins from a similar position in Islington and will start in Cambridgeshire on 5th August.

##### Val Thomas, Acting Director of Public Health

Val Thomas, Deputy Director of Public Health, was formally appointed as the Council's Acting Director of Public Health with effect from 1 May 2024, following a formal interview conducted by elected members, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities Deputy Regional Director and Chief Executive.

##### Rachel Stopard, Chief Executive, Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)

Rachel Stopard, Chief Executive of the Greater Cambridge Partnership, has announced that she is stepping down from her role in May 2024. Rachel has decided to retire after more than 37 years of local government service. As the Chief Executive of the GCP, Rachel was employed to reinvigorate the partnership and to bring clarity, focus and leadership to the delivery of the up to £1bn City Deal programme, to deliver major transport, infrastructure, and connectivity improvements across Greater Cambridge. Rachel has overseen significant progress across the

whole of the GCP programme and ensured a clear pipeline of projects is ready to be delivered between now and 2030.

## Vice Chair of the Association of County Chief Executives

The County Council's Chief Executive, Dr Stephen Moir, has been elected the new Vice Chair of the Association of County Chief Executives (ACCE) for the next two years.

Dr Moir was elected unanimously by his peers at the annual general meeting of the association in April 2024. The Association brings together the Chief Executives of 38 large English upper tier and unitary authorities. Members of the Association work to identify common challenges, commission research, share solutions and discuss key issues with Senior Civil Servants from across Government and with other key stakeholders. ACCE is supported by, and aligned with, the County Councils Network.

## Messages

### South Cambridgeshire District Council's 50th Anniversary Celebration

The Chair attended the South Cambridgeshire District Council 50th Anniversary celebrations at South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park

### Visitors from Heidelberg, Germany

The Chair attended Shelford Rugby Club with Deputy Lieutenant Mrs Jennifer Crompton to welcome guests from Heidelberg, Germany on their exchange trip to Cambridgeshire.

### St George's Day Flag Raising

The Chair raised the St George's Day Flag at New Shire Hall on the 23rd April, accompanied by Deputy Lieutenant Lord Grimthorpe and Chief Executive Dr Stephen Moir.

### British Empire Medal (BEM) investitures at Great St Mary's Church, Cambridge

The Chair attended the BEM investitures at Great St Mary's Church in Cambridge where six Cambridgeshire residents were honoured. Five were awarded a British Empire Medal for their services to the community and one an honorary Member of the Order of the British Empire by the Lord-Lieutenant.

### Visit of Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal to Illumina Cambridge

Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal visited Cambridgeshire on 25th April, the Chair was part of the civic line up to welcome her to Illumina Cambridge for DNA day, where they were championing STEM opportunities for the children of Cambridgeshire.

### Mayor of Ely's Civic Service

The Chair attended the Mayor of Ely's Civic Service at Ely Cathedral on 28th April.

## Huntingdon Mayor Making

The Chair attended the Huntingdon Mayor Making at the Town Hall, Huntingdon where Councillor Karl Brockett was elected as Mayor.

## Preparing for Adulthood Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Festival

Alongside Councillor Bryony Goodliffe, the Chair opened the Preparing For Adulthood SEND Festival at Burgess Hall, St Ives. This event provides advice, support and fun activities for young people and their families who are beginning to think about their future and next steps.

## St John Ante Portam Latinam Feast

The Chair attended the St John Ante Portam Latinam Feast at St John's College, Cambridge.

## Mayor of Peterborough's Thanksgiving Service

The Chair attended the Mayor of Peterborough's Service of Thanksgiving at All Saints' Church, Peterborough.

## Visit of Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Gloucester to Anglia Ruskin University

Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Gloucester visited Cambridge on 10th May, to attend a conference at Anglia Ruskin University, the Chair was part of the Civic line up for this visit.

## Ely Mayor Making

The Chair attended the Ely Mayor making at The Maltings, Ely where Councillor Chris Phillips was re-elected as the Mayor of Ely.

## Raising of the Progressive Pride Flag for International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia

The Chair raised the Progressive Pride Flag at New Shire Hall with Deputy Lieutenant Mr Daryl Brown MBE to mark International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia on 17th May.

## Citizenship Ceremonies

The Chair attended Citizenship Ceremonies at New Shire Hall on 22nd and 29th April, and 13th May.

The Vice Chair attended Citizenship Ceremonies at New Shire Hall on 25th March, 8th, 15th & 22nd April.

Alongside a Deputy Lieutenant the Chair and Vice Chair presented over 300 Cambridgeshire residents with their British Citizenship.

## Mayor of Huntingdon's Civic Service

The Vice-Chair attended the Mayor of Huntingdon's Civic Service at All Saints' Church in Huntingdon.

## Daniel Snowdon, Deputy Democratic Services Manager

Daniel Snowdon, Deputy Democratic Services Manager, leaves the Council at the end of June to join Peterborough City Council as the Democratic and Constitutional Services Manager. Daniel has worked in Democratic Services for 10 years and was instrumental in bringing in the Council's streaming and voting system.

## Public Question Time

### 1. Question from Mr Fernando Gris to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Good morning to you all and I thank you for the opportunity of letting me ask a question. My question relates to the coverage of a 20 miles speed limit introduced on March 23<sup>rd</sup> of this year in Ely. I understand that the request was made by the City of Ely Council. It is the policy of the coalition administration that facilitated and encouraged the request. It is disappointing that the City of Ely Council didn't have enough time to discuss it at any one of their council meetings. They agreed by email with not all councillors responding. This led to a democratic deficit on this issue from the start. The traffic regulation order was sent out for consultation at the beginning of August, at the request of the leader of the East Cambridgeshire District Council was extended until September, and the results were apparently published in December. Now, I believe these are not necessarily the best dates for carrying out or publishing a consultation; holidays and Christmas spirits are renowned for absenteeism and minds being in other places. The guidance requires a comprehensive and early consultation of all those who may be affected by the introduction of a 20 miles speed limit and 20 mph scheme in an essential part of the implementation process. This needs to include local residents, all tiers of local government, the police, the emergency services, public transport providers and any other relevant local groups including, for example groups representing pedestrians, cyclists, drivers or equestrians. The guidance also requires evidenced-based decision making and demonstration of good community support; neither of these have been satisfied. I wish I had all the time necessary to present a fully substantiated motion, but alas I only have two minutes. So, this issue begs the question on accident statistics.

The Chair stated: Mr Gris, you have had your two minutes now, so I am going to take the question that is published in the agenda as your question which is 'what was the basis upon which a decision to institute the coverage of the 20-mph speed limit in Ely was taken.'

### Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you very much and thank you Mr Gris for coming along and asking your question. The Ely 20mph zone was originally requested by Ely City Council and supported by Ely's County Councillors.

The extents of the proposed limit were agreed with Ely City Council, the District Councillors representing Ely and both County Councillors for Ely. The limit covers most of the urban area in and around the city where you would expect to see large numbers of non-motorised users and vulnerable users, including those walking, cycling and wheeling.

The required statutory formal consultation was undertaken in summer 2023. This included notices in the press which were referenced locally on social media and in the Ely Standard. The consultation process was extended by an additional three weeks to account for the fact it had started during the summer holidays.

Both positive comments and objections to the proposal were received. In line with County Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation, in December 2023 a delegated decision meeting was held with the two County Councillors for Ely, both of whom indicated support for



the proposals, informed by the consultation responses. A delegated officer decision was therefore taken to implement the 20mph limit as proposed. Thank you.

### Supplementary Question from Mr Fernando Gris:

I have a follow-on question which is given the controversy, high degree of annoyance and lack of proper consultation on this measure, not to mention that lack of solid proof, can we get a commitment to review this measure?

### Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

The County Council is satisfied that it has followed all correct procedures at the time. We have also reviewed all of our procedures in light of the latest guidance, and we are confident that we have done everything that was required and that the order is valid. Thank you.

### 2. Question from Mr Leigh Carter to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you, thank you for this opportunity. I am concerned about the East West Rail proposals and their impact on Cambridgeshire and would like to ask the following question please. The first stage of a statutory consultation on East West Rail is imminent. The Department for Transport state that the benefit cost ratio for the project is only 0.3 but they argue that strategically East West Rail would relieve road congestion into Cambridge, thus unlocking growth. This seems unlikely as their proposed housing plan at Cambourne, Tempsford and further west caters for 213,300 new people only 1,600 of whom would use the railway to commute to Cambridge. Our roads would get much busier. Recent Freedom of Information requests show a 500 metre wide strip of land, 50km long, would be taken for construction from Clapham, north of Bedford, to Hauxton, near Cambridge, and that Cambridge rail services to London would be closed for 6 months over the 6 to 15 years of construction. Bedford Borough Council has performed due diligence on the economic impact and the choice of route of this proposal. What plans do Cambridgeshire County Council have to do further due diligence on these proposals? Thank you.

### Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you and Mr Carter thank you very much for coming along and asking your question.

Technical specialists across the Council will review and provide comments on the East West Rail Company's proposals throughout the Development Consent Order / Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project process for this project. As part of this, officers will consider the information provided by the East West Rail Company on the impact and the construction and operation of the proposed new railway will have on communities and businesses in Cambridgeshire and will provide responses back to the East West Rail Company and the Planning Inspectorate at the appropriate points in the process.

The Council, as a Host Authority, will also be required to produce a Local Impact Report, which will need to holistically consider all impacts in the local area, both positive and negative. It is expected that the information provided by the East West Rail Company covering severance, noise, public health, transport and other impacts both during construction, and in operation, will

be considered fully, and responses made to the Planning Inspectorate who will consider the merits of the project in due course as part of the public examination.

At this time, although information provided will be reviewed robustly by officers the Council is not expecting to formally undertake an independent review of the business case and route choices outside of the processes referred to above. It is for the East West Rail Company to demonstrate that its business case as the ultimate decision makers and funders at the Treasury and Department for Transport.

Limited information has been formally submitted to the Council at this time, and we are preparing for the forthcoming statutory consultation. This will be the next formal stage in the DCO / NSIP process for the proposals and will be when the East West Rail Company will publish new information. Thank you.

Supplementary question from Mr Leigh Carter:

Thank you. So far Parish Councils have led on engagement with East West Rail and critiquing its proposals. What steps is the County Council taking to ensure that it properly represents the views of its electorate in responding to East West Rail's first stage of the statutory consultation coming soon. Thank you.

Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee,  
Councillor Beckett:

Thank you very much. The Council will obviously take on board all of the representations that it receives. We do indeed have a report currently scheduled to come to the next committee meeting of the Highways and Transport Committee looking at our consultation response and I would advise that Mr Carter takes a look at that when it is published, and we will be able to comment more at that time with that paper as it's published.

3. Question from Mr Paul Ormerod to the Chair of the Children and Young People Committee, Councillor Bryony Goodliffe:

Thank you, Mr Kindersley. As a Harston resident and a parish councillor, I would like to ask whether the County Council has considered, and specifically the Education and Transport Departments have reported, on the impact of EWR construction works, and the subsequent EWR line operation on access to uninterrupted and undisturbed education for the county's children? For example, the projected line construction works will surround Comberton Village College, and Costain says the work will go on for possibly 5-16 years at least, and the line will operate regular trains very close to the school thereafter. In addition, it is expected that many other schools in the county will be detrimentally affected by this line and its construction and operation. Will the Council's Education, Transport and other relevant departments report on the effect that this EWR line is likely to have on children's access to education, the impact on learning and their career prospects? Thank you.

Response from the Chair of the Children and Young People Committee,  
Councillor Bryony Goodliffe:

Thank you for your question, Paul.

Technical specialists across the Council will review and provide comments on the East West Rail Company's proposals throughout the Development Consent Order and the Nationally

Significant Infrastructure Project process for this project. As part of this, officers will consider the information provided by the East West Rail Company on the impact that construction and operation of the proposed new railway will have on educational facilities close to the route and will provide responses back to the East West Rail Company and the Planning Inspectorate at the appropriate points in the process.

The Council, as a Host Authority, will also be required to produce a Local Impact Report, which will need to holistically consider all impacts in the local area, both positive and negative. It is expected that the information provided by East West Rail covering severance, noise, public health, transport and other impacts both during construction, and in operation will be considered fully, and the responses to the Planning Inspectorate who will consider the merits of the project in due course as part of a public examination.

Educational facilities including Comberton Village College as an Academy can take part in the Development Consent Order process and make representations themselves to raise any concerns, initially through the East West Rail Company's consultations. Following this, once the East West Rail Company have submitted their application to the Planning Inspectorate, and if the application is accepted for examination, they can register as Interested Parties and take part in the examination. Information on how to take part will be made available by the Planning Inspectorate and linked to the websites of the East West Rail Company and the County Council at the appropriate time.

Limited information has been formally submitted to the Council at this time, and we are preparing for the forthcoming statutory consultation. This will be the next formal stage in the DCO / NSIP process for the proposals and will be when the East West Rail Company will publish new information.

Supplementary question from Mr Paul Ormerod:

Just a small matter, will the Council actually quantify how many schools that are situated along this line, primary, secondary, childcare facilities, that are within a small distance, reasonable distance of this line and make that a focus for their study of the effects on education. It's not sufficient to rely upon East West Rail's statements in this area.

Response from the Chair of the Children and Young People Committee, Councillor Bryony Goodliffe:

I'm sure that when the proposal comes through as a full proposal and goes to the Planning Inspectorate, we will look at the educational establishments along the route, yes.

4. Question from Ms Georgia Orwell, read by Mrs Sarah Hughes, to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Good morning.

"School Streets" and 20mph zones around schools have been shown to improve safety and encourage active travel in the final part of children's journeys to school and nursery. However, most children in Cambridgeshire live outside the immediate radius of their school. Therefore, they are forced to use the current network of badly maintained pavements, unreliable and patchy bus networks, inappropriate shared cycle/footways and many 30mph roads, including some in central Cambridge, on a daily basis. This is compounded by poor driver behaviour with phone use at the wheel, pavement parking, driving into cycle boxes at traffic lights, not giving

way to pedestrians where required, and close-passing families on bicycles all at epidemic levels.

Given that private car use is increasing in the city and wider county, with no hope or plan for this to change in the near to mid-term future, what is being done to prioritise active travel and safety along the whole journey to school for children and families in Cambridgeshire?

**Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:**

Thank you. Firstly, I apologise for not being Councillor Goodliffe. Also, I say thank you to Sarah for reading Georgia's question.

The Council is committed to improving conditions for the travelling public and increasing the use of Active Travel to meet our objectives in relation to climate, road safety, congestion, health, and accessibility and connectivity.

School travel is a key part of our work on these issues. In the context of individual schools and their catchments, one size does not fit all. Each individual school location and catchment has its own unique set of challenges and tackling them is prioritised where a school or the community identifies an area for concern and where injury collision data would support an intervention be that a 'School Street' or another engineering intervention.

More broadly, the Council is committed to delivering improvements to active travel networks across Cambridgeshire, including in Cambridge, to make the whole journey safer and more convenient for pedestrians, wheelers and cyclists. Modal filters and width restrictions that limit a road use by general traffic have been very effective for many decades in parts of Cambridge and continue to be introduced where local demand is present and resources allow. The Council has long lists of planned interventions to improve facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in its transport strategies and associated walking action plans, including the Active Travel Strategy and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Interventions in these plans across Cambridgeshire are again introduced as resources allow.

The Council will be bringing forward proposals for further 20mph speed limits in Cambridge, and initial consultations on this proposal is likely to commence later in the year.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Road Safety team works with a range of partners through the Vision Zero Partnership to reduce injuries and deaths on the road network. The team works with Primary and Secondary Schools across the county to deliver the 'Mode Shift Stars' and 'Junior Travel Ambassador Schemes'.

Where poor driver behaviour is witnessed outside schools or elsewhere, this should be reported to the police. The Council works in partnership with the Cambridgeshire Constabulary to steer and influence police activity around road safety. The police focus their efforts on those roads, locations and activities that have the potential to cause the most harm.

**5. Question from Mrs Sarah Hughes to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:**

Cambridgeshire Sustainable Travel Alliance is an alliance of 31 organisations active in the areas of transport, environment and health.

Cambridgeshire Sustainable Travel Alliance believes that everyone should be able to choose to make every day journeys in a way that promotes health for all. Two motions at today's meeting – those that address DFT guidance on the introduction of 20mph zones and the reduction in funding for air quality monitoring – are relevant in this regard.

The speed at which people drive is the most important factor affecting whether a collision occurs and the extent to which people are injured. Reducing speed limits to 20mph reduces deaths and injuries for all road users. The 20mph schemes in London, for example, have reduced death or serious injuries by 25% and collisions involving people walking decreased by nearly two-thirds, a very large percentage.

20mph zones also promote health by encouraging more people to walk, wheel or cycle and people who travel actively have lower levels of serious long-term health conditions and better mental health and wellbeing. A recent Sustrans' survey showed that upwards of two-fifths of people want to walk, wheel or cycle more across the UK. The same survey explored what people thought would help them to do this. Around half said they would find streets with 20mph speed limits useful to help them to walk, wheel or cycle more.

Lastly, everyone benefits from better air quality. Levels of major air pollutants reduce when more people are able to walk, wheel and cycle, rather than drive. Levels of particulate emissions drop in 20mph zones when driving is smoother. So, monitoring is central to any air quality improvement strategy, and therefore the withdrawal in funding for air quality monitoring is disappointing.

Cambridgeshire Sustainable Travel Alliance would like to see authorities working to create streets and places that promote healthy lives for everyone. What steps will this Council take with respect to transport to achieve this goal?

Response from the Chair of Highways and Transport Committee,  
Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you very much Sarah. I want to actually start personally by saying as a father that regularly bikes his daughter to school down a 30mph road which is dangerous, I really fully understand this problem. Only last week she nearly got taken out by a lorry and I recognise the tears that she was in and how it really put her off cycling from that point forward. I really do understand the issues this causes and the safety concerns for all of our children and young people.

The Council has a strong commitment to road safety and sustainable travel. There are already established programmes for rolling out 20mph zones in Cambridgeshire, with a report to Highways and Transport Committee in October 2023 setting out the priorities and investments for the current period. Our Strategic Framework sets out clearly our commitments to net-zero, healthy communities and sustainable travel, and we continue to work with partners at the Greater Cambridge Partnership and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to develop proposals across the County as our resources allow. Within Cambridge, as I mentioned earlier, we are also looking at rolling out a much wider 20mph programme and consultations on that will commence later in the year. Thank you.

6. Question from Ms Claire Coates to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Good morning. I am the former principal of Cambourne Village College and we have been campaigning for the eleven years that the school has been opened to improve safe access for pupils, very high proportion of whom cycle to school. So, my question is a plan is in progress to create a full-length cycle lane along Swansley Lane, Cambourne to improve access to Cambourne Village College and Hardwick & Cambourne Primary School for cyclists and pedestrians. This plan is supported by the schools, the developer, and the Town and District Councils. Tam Parry of the County Council Assessment Team, has written to Highways England to request approval for redirection of funds from the S106 Cambourne Development to enable this. If this approval is received, will the County Council confirm that the identified funds will be redirected to the afore-mentioned improvements?

Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you for that. I was about to answer part A and part B all in one. Thank you for your question, Claire.

Should the confirmation from National Highways be received, the Council can confirm that the funds can be used for the purpose of creating a full-length cycle lane along Swansley Lane, Cambourne. And personally, I would say I do think that that would be a good idea, but it obviously will be down to the County Council to prioritise and make sure it is the best project for that money.

Supplementary question from Ms Claire Coates:

I am sorry I didn't quite understand the answer. [Chair: Councillor Beckett will have an opportunity to clarify, so if you'd like to move to your part B.]

Will the County Council's Highways team accept that the proposed improvements offer great benefit to school pupils, and assuming the approval is received, look flexibly at the implementation of the latest County Council specifications for cycle lanes, to enable the proposed path to be built as quickly as possible?

Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you very much and I'm glad that after this one you won't have to hear from me for a while, Sebastian.

So, for the second part, the County Council agrees that the proposals offer great benefit to the local community and encourage safe and sustainable travel to schools. The Council will work as expediently as possible to secure delivery of the works but must also ensure that the infrastructure is fit for purpose. The Council has a duty of care to ensure that the works are safe and compliant with the relevant legislation, policy, and guidance.

With regards to the first part, I understand that the Council has not yet received confirmation from National Highways that the money will be received but it is once that confirmation has been received, that the Council can confirm that those funds could be used for the purpose of

building a full-length cycle lane along Swansley Lane in Cambourne. So, should those funds be received, yes it is definitely something we will be looking at with that funds.

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

Questions to the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board, Councillor Nethsingha, and the Council's Appointees on the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Bradnam and Councillor Goldsack.

### Question from Councillor S King to the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board, Councillor Nethsingha:

Thank you, Chair. Yes, Councillor Nethsingha, is it true that the Combined Authority lacks the capacity to conduct consultation with the villages in my division in the north of Fenland, as to what bus service they would like to see in the future?

### Response from Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board, Councillor Nethsingha:

It seems quite surprising; I think I would have needed further information in order to be able to answer you very clearly on it. What I will say about the consultation on bus services is that there was a consultation that was carried out and available to Members and residents and all across Cambridgeshire much earlier in the year, around January, that anybody could have contributed to. So, I believe consultation was carried out, whether there is a capacity issue, I would need to find out. If Councillor King would like to write to me, I'm happy to investigate.

### Supplementary Question from Councillor S King:

Thank you very much and thank you for that response, Councillor Nethsingha. Very happy to write to you but I would like to follow this up with a further question as to would you be willing to support further discussions with the parishes, particularly in my division but not uniquely to my division, in terms of asking them what bus services they would like to see in the future? Thank you.

### Response from the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board, Councillor Nethsingha:

I would be very happy to come and visit the parishes in your division to discuss bus services and many other issues if you would like to invite me, I will be delighted to attend.

### Question from Councillor French to the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board, Councillor Nethsingha:

Thank you, Chairman. For information I attended a meeting subbing for Councillor Boden at the Strategy of the Combined Authority last week and I asked that very question: why were the towns and villages not consulted? And I was informed by the Mayor that it would be up to the person who sat on the Transport Committee at Fenland to deal with that because they didn't have capacity. We have not been consulted, the towns have not been consulted and neither have the rural and that was made crystal clear at the meeting, at the Strategy meeting, last week.



Question to the Leader, can you confirm that Lucy, you were at the meeting?

Response from the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board, Councillor Nethsingha:

I refer to my previous answer that my understanding is that there was an ability for any individual or organisation to contribute to a consultation which was carried out in January and February.

Supplementary Question from Councillor French:

No, my understanding and my interpretation is totally different.

Question from Councillor S King to the Council's Appointees on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Bradnam and Councillor Goldsack:

Yes, Chair. I am going to make the same request to Councillor Bradnam and Councillor Goldsack that I made to Councillor Nethsingha in their capacity on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Will they do all they can to ensure that the parishes in my division and other parishes are properly consulted as to what bus services they wish in the future? Thank you.

Response from the Council's Appointee on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Bradnam:

Thank you, Chair. Yes, absolutely we make sure that we are accountable to the people who we are providing services to. But, it is my understanding that it is within the power of the Combined Authority to conduct their consultation processes as they see fit, we hold them to account about that and yes of course I will ask that they take into account the views of the residents of your parish in the same way that I will ask them to take account of the views of the residents in my parish and any others. Thank you.

Response from the Council's Appointee on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Goldsack:

Yes.