

County Council – Minutes

Please note the meeting can be viewed on YouTube at the following link: [Cambridgeshire County Council Full Meeting - YouTube](#)

Date: Tuesday 9 November 2021

Time: 10.30 a.m. – 14:21 p.m.

Present:

Chaired by Councillor S Kindersley (Vice-Chair)

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

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Councillors C Boden, J French, R Fuller, D Giles, S Hoy, J King, M Smith and S Tierney.

Councillor D Schuman sent apologies for lateness and arrived at Agenda Item 10.e)
Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure 10.

25. Minutes – 20th July 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chair.

26. Chair's Announcements

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

27. Declarations of Interest

The Vice-Chair reported that the Monitoring Officer had exercised her discretion to grant a dispensation to all elected members of Cambridgeshire County Council taking part in the debate on Minute 31 b) Parental Leave Policy for Councillors.

There were no other declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct.

28. Public Question Time

The Vice-Chair reported that one question had been received from a member of the public, as set out in Appendix B.

29. Petitions

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

30. Report of the Staffing and Appeals Committee – Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

The Vice-Chair reported that the Staffing and Appeals Committee had only met on 5 November 2021 to interview candidates and make its recommendation to Council, the proposed candidate had not had sufficient time to notify their current employer. Therefore, he informed the Council that he was moving the item to the end of the agenda so that it could be taken in confidential session.

31. Reports of the Constitution and Ethics Committee

(a) Proposed Changes to the Constitution

It was moved by the Chair of the Constitution and Ethics Committee and Vice-Chair of Council, 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 on the Council agenda, be approved.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- (i) Amend the Terms of Reference of the Children and Young People Committee set out in bold in Section 2.1.4 and append the guidance attached at Appendix 1 to the Constitution;
- (ii) Amend the Terms of Reference of the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee set out in Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2;
- (iii) Amend the Rules of Procedure for the Pension Fund Board as set out in Section 2.3.1;

- (v) Reposition the substitute procedure rules and additional wording to clarify the role of a substitute when substituting for a Chair or Vice-Chair of a committee as set out in Section 2.5.1;
- (vi) Change the motions and amendments procedure in the Council Procedure Rules set out in Sections 2.6.4 and 2.7.4;
- (vii) Change the amendments procedure in the Procedure Rules for Committee and Sub-Committee meetings as set out in Section 2.8.2;
- (viii) Approve the requirement for meetings to adjourn every two hours as set out in Sections 2.9.2 and 2.9.3;
- (ix) Amend the Officer Employment Procedure Rules as set out in Section 2.10.2;
- (x) Approve amendments to the Media Protocol as set out in Appendix 2;
- (xi) Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to carry out any constitutional amendments required by changes to LGSS; and
- (xii) Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to make any other minor or consequential amendments to the Constitution necessary for, or incidental to, the implementation of these proposals.

It was resolved by a majority to:

- (iv) Amend the procedure for changes in committee membership as set out in Sections 2.4.5 and 2.4.6.

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

(b) Parental Leave Policy for Councillors

It was moved by the Chair of the Constitution Committee and Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, 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 on the Council agenda, be approved.

In response to a request from some members of Council to review the policy to take into account best practice and to involve the Staffing and Appeals Committee to ensure that it was aligned with the employee parental leave policy, the Vice-Chair, in his role as Chair of Constitution and Ethics Committee, acknowledged that these issues were worthy of review.

It was resolved by a majority to:

- a) Adopt the proposed Parental Leave Policy for Councillors attached at Appendix 1; and
- b) Authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to make any other minor or consequential amendments to

the Constitution necessary for, or incidental to, the implementation of these proposals.

[Voting pattern: the majority of Conservatives, Liberal Democrat, Labour and Independents in favour; 1 Conservative against; 3 Conservatives abstained.]

32. Pension Fund Committee Annual Report 2020-21

The Chair of the Pension Fund Committee, Councillor Whelan, moved receipt of the annual report of the Pension Fund Committee for 2020-21.

Council noted the content of the report.

33. Cambridgeshire Local Pension Fund Board Annual Report 2020-21

The Vice-Chair of the Council, Councillor Kindersley, moved receipt of the annual report of the Local Pension Fund Board for 2020-21.

Council noted the content of the report.

34. Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure 10

Five motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

a) Motion from Councillor Mark Goldsack

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

A motion to protect homes and property from unnecessary surface water.

This motion seeks to ensure that residents homes and property is afforded the maximum protection from surface water particularly. Other water issues exist but this motion seeks urgent attention and action to address known surface water problems across our County.

The Council notes that:

- in my home division of Soham we are constantly struggling to deal with surface rainwater in an effective and non-damaging manner, which is probably mirrored throughout the County.
- excessive and long-standing deep puddles result in water ingress to many properties in the vicinity of such drains and puddle areas.
- the same poor occupants of those properties will inevitably find it increasingly difficult if not impossible to attain household insurance for their homes and property, due to the

inability of current drainage systems to effectively handle surface water run-off from heavy storms.

The Council further notes three likely reasons for this.

- Climate: We have a climate status that is now resulting in weather extremes across the globe. In the UK and our county, we are being often hit with extreme rainfall that over burdens the existing system such that extreme puddling occurs, on roads, streets, footpaths and into property, causing localised flooding and highways impairment.
- Development: In the last five decades we have seen exponential growth of development on green and brown field sites, flood plains and more. Such fields were the routes for surface water taking excess from the highway and these too have been built with historically acceptable but increasingly stressed minimal bore pipework for surface water run-off.
- Highways: We have road surface issues, road construction concerns and hidden infrastructure maintenance and design issues that simply are not coping with today's needs. Aged and narrow surface water pipework is failing to handle the volume of water that now collects in the same places time after time. The gullies and drains are cleared but even when 100% clear the bore of the pipe loses against the battle of the incoming surface water.

The Council has a duty to protect the property and lives of those within our county, it therefore resolves to commit to the following actions:

- i. undertake a full audit of known issues with underground highways assets to identify narrow bore piping issues and determine, under present conditions and stresses, whether they can be expected to cope with the regular and anticipated deluges and subsequent surface water of the like now regularly seen.
- ii. to use the audit and local plans to predict which systems will be overwhelmed and to incorporate that into planning discussions with local planning authorities.
- iii. ~~expedite in full the last winter flood review report, taken 9 months thus far, to capture the main causes and actions as a result of the review and integrate these into the requested review. It would appear that the section for surface water management in the current draft report is seriously lacking and does not recognise this as an area of concern with any proposed resolution.~~ **ensure the findings of the Section 19 reviews of the Winter 2020 flooding are reflected as soon as possible in the forthcoming Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to address surface water management, and consider incorporation of these issues in future highways asset management system procurements.**
- iv. commit to **the people of Cambridgeshire that anywhere small bore pipework is causing an issue it will be addressed by carrying out an assessment of the a fully costed of a programme of works to either replace the small-bore soak away pipework, with appropriate higher bore pipe work solutions that bring immediate relief and also future proof as predicted or supply full details of alternative solutions in those areas with fully costed plans of actions that will mitigate and protect property in areas of known puddling. Consideration of solutions and costs for addressing surface water flooding issues to go through the Council's ongoing business planning process.**

- v. **to note the ongoing work by the HDM Team to review drainage strategies for new developments in line with Local Lead Flood Authority advice, and ask the Chief Executive to write to all planning authority chairs, along with Internal Drainage Boards, water companies, and other relevant agencies to seek their input on these strategies, highlighting our concerns about how we can** ~~request an immediate~~ **future proof the** installation of larger bore pipework to all new developments to avoid surface water run off on highways and other areas as a result of development.

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

b) Motion from Councillor Tom Sanderson

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Sanderson and seconded by Councillor Cox Condron.

This Council notes that:

- as a result of the tragic events in Afghanistan, there are many thousands of Afghan citizens and their families who are now at significant risk of harm as a result of them working alongside our armed forces in recent years;
- alongside this, several more thousand Afghan citizens are at risk of persecution and harm for other reasons, including their gender, religion, political beliefs, or sexuality;
- several thousand Afghan citizens were supported to leave their home country as part of the evacuation operations delivered by international armed forces and governments, with many arriving into the UK and temporarily housed in bridging accommodation including hotels;
- the Government has announced two schemes to support Afghan citizens to resettle in the UK: the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (for Afghan citizens who were locally employed by the British Government in Afghanistan); and the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme (for Afghan citizens at risk of persecution for other reasons).

This Council recognises:

- its role in ensuring that Afghan citizens know they are welcome in Cambridgeshire;
- that an offer to resettle Afghan citizens in Cambridgeshire is dependent on the availability of suitable, self-contained housing;
- that district and city Councils across Cambridgeshire have all confirmed that they will resettle Afghan citizens in their area, or will work with their neighbouring Council to provide direct support;
- its role in supporting our district and city Council colleagues to resettle and integrate Afghan citizens, and in providing expertise and support from vital services such as education and social care, and that County and District/City Council officers are in open dialogue about the ways in which we can achieve this.

This Council therefore resolves to:

- (i) sustain, for as long as is necessary, an open, practical, creative and solutions0020focussed dialogue with each district and city Council in Cambridgeshire, to identify and deliver joint solutions and create joint opportunities to successfully resettle Afghan citizens in our county;
- (ii) use our best endeavours to help facilitate the identification of suitable housing for Afghan citizens, working closely with but not duplicating the work of our local housing authorities, including engaging with developers and private sector landlords;
- (iii) deliver training for frontline officers as well as managers to help increase their awareness of the context and circumstances within which new Afghan citizens are arriving in Cambridgeshire to help ensure we can best meet their needs;
- (iv) ensure all of our services, but especially education, social care and public health, stand ready to support Afghan citizens arriving in Cambridgeshire, with both immediate and emerging needs as necessary;
- (v) direct the work of our libraries to welcoming and supporting Afghan citizens, as well as other new arrivals, through the creation and delivery of a Libraries of Sanctuary programme;
- (vi) proactively identify employment (including apprenticeship) opportunities for Afghan citizens within the Council; vii ensure our adult skills service, Cambridgeshire Skills, develops bespoke English-language courses to meet the needs of new arrivals where the national offer falls short, or where more specialist language training is necessary, and to deliver it in ways that are accessible to our new residents;
- (vii) mobilise the county's Community Resilience Group to share the responsibility to welcome new arrivals and support their integration into society.

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

c) Motion from Councillor Richard Howitt

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

This Council expresses its deep concern that the Social Care Plan announced nationally on 7 September, will not meet its stated ambition to fix the social care crisis, once and for all.

Council is asked to note that:

- the method chosen to provide the funding places undue burden on people living on low pay and on families in poverty, and that an additional burden of £1million will be directly imposed on Cambridgeshire County Council itself.
- less than 20 per cent of the funding announced will actually go to social care until 2026, that improvements in NHS capacity will increase pressure on social care, Page 5 of 130 without providing the resources to meet them and that plans for the NHS to release funding in three years' time are not realistic.

- there is no provision for continuation after 2020/21 of around £15million Government grant to the NHS in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to meet additional costs from Covid, and that the consequences of Covid are already placing high levels of uncertainty and financial pressure on Cambridgeshire County Council. This includes higher numbers of adult safeguarding enquiries, of adult early help referrals, more Mental Health Act assessments and greater acuity of need.
- the number of elderly persons in Cambridgeshire will increase by more than 30,000 or 25 per cent by 2033. The Council disagrees with the national plan's intention that increased social care costs arising from these demographic pressures will have to be met from the Council Tax and attests that any additional resources provided through the annual Spending Review, can never provide the long-term, sustainable solution promised.
- whilst acknowledging the case for a cap on care fees for individuals, the consequence will be to increase the demand for care packages from the Council and that the Government has not announced any additional resources for the Council and other local authorities to undertake the additional costs arising from new obligations to record care costs of individuals and to assist self-funding persons to find care places.
- Cambridgeshire has relatively higher numbers of self-funders in care compared to many other counties and that this aspect is likely to impose additional cost in particular on the County Council.
- the plan does not address the continuing financial pressures in the independent care sector, or address this authority's concerns for better pay and quality of employment for care workers and to facilitate a more equitable balance between independent and directly provided services within the care sector.
- there is grave concern for the one-in-seven elderly people living with unmet care need, around 24,000 people in our county, who will fail to receive support under the Government's proposals.

The Council therefore:

- (i) commits to making representations to Government and with partners through the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, the County Councils Network and the Local Government Association, to call for an alternative plan which genuinely secures reform and funding to enable our authority to meet current pressure, growing demand and unmet need, to provide social care to the people of Cambridgeshire in the long-term.
- (ii) asks the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to call for resources to be provided by Government to fully compensate Cambridgeshire County Council for the additional costs arising from its plan in an enduring way and to raise funds for social care based on principles of fairness, sufficiency and sustainability.
- (iii) asks the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to call for a plan which genuinely fixes the crisis on social care.

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

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrat, Labour and Independents in favour; 19 Conservatives against; 2 Conservatives abstained.]

It was proposed by the Vice-Chair, and agreed unanimously, to suspend standing orders for Section 19.1 – Standing to Speak, Part 4.1, Council Procedure Rules, Part 4 Rules of Procedure to enable Members to sit while speaking so that their voices could be picked up by the microphone system.

d) Motion from Councillor Lucy Nethsingha

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

This Council notes:

- the increase in the number of children eligible for Free School Meals, and the increase in the number of families on Universal Credit in Cambridgeshire following the pandemic. With the number of children receiving Free Schools Meals increasing from 12,870 eligible pupils in March 2020 to 16,498 eligible pupils in May 2021.
- that in order to be eligible for Free School Meals a family must have a net annual income of no more than £7,400, if in receipt of Universal Credit or have a gross annual income of £16,190, if in receipt of Child Tax Credits (and not be eligible for Working Tax Credits) and that this reflects a very low income, and one likely to have a major impact on the ability of such children to access activities available to most of their peer group.
- the severe impact of poverty on educational outcomes and subsequent life chances for children as demonstrated by numerous studies.
- the pressures which are mounting on family incomes through an increase in National Insurance, and rises in the cost of living, with the costs of petrol, diesel and gas all rising fast and a likely knock on increase in the costs of other goods as a result.

Taking into account the circumstances above this Council resolves to:

- (i) work with partners to set up a funding scheme to support children and young people whose families are on Universal Credit or free school meals to have reduced cost access to out of school activities, in order to support them to reach their educational and personal potential.
- (ii) write to the Secretary of State for Education and Secretary of State for Works and Pensions to express this Council's grave concern at the impact that the cut of £20 a week to Universal Credit will have on many families in Cambridgeshire, and the potential impact of such a reduction on the lives of a large number of children and young people.

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

[Voting pattern: 1 Conservative, Liberal Democrat, Labour and Independents in favour; the remaining Conservatives abstained.]

e) Motion from Councillor Lorna Dupré

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Dupré and seconded by Councillor Gay.

A Land Use Framework for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

This Council welcomes the work being undertaken by the Food, Farming & Countryside Commission to develop a Land Use Framework for the UK, and locally to spearhead this approach here in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Low input farming can simultaneously improve profit margins, increase productivity, and provide environmental benefits. Forestry and agroforestry can support sustainable food and timber production, nature restoration and carbon sequestration.

Current approaches to land use policy inhibit the potential for land to deliver multiple benefits. Governance of land is highly fragmented; and siloed systems encourage tensions between initiatives, with differing governing bodies, schemes and targets often directly clashing in their policy goals. Failure to capitalise on synergies in land usage has resulted in land not fully delivering on its potential to offer a range of public needs. A more strategic approach to land use would enable it to play a better role in delivering key social, economic and environmental objectives and aligning resources for public value.

Like the rest of the UK, Cambridgeshire is faced with burgeoning climate, nature and health crises. Land is our most valuable asset. From farming for healthy food and enabling carbon sequestration to supporting habitat creation, a large part of the solution to these crises is to be found on and in the land.

This Council shares the goals of the Food, Farming & Countryside Commission in wanting to see a common vision for land shaped through the introduction of a land use framework. This framework would:

- Support government goals of transformational change in sectors such as housing, farming and climate change;
- Alleviate pressures and tensions currently experienced within land disputes; and
- Facilitate multifunctionality to use land to its full potential.

This Council therefore formally registers its support for the work beginning to be undertaken by partners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to:

- Convene senior civil servants, policy makers, planners, landowners, environmentalists, and leaders from farming and other rural organisations to progress this work;
- Consolidate the broad principles of such a framework, including its vision, operation and implementation;
- Pilot a land use framework here in our county; and
- Develop detailed policy recommendations for implementation of a framework.

Furthermore, this Council undertakes to:

- (i) Engage with partners bringing together a county-wide group with the necessary skills and approaches who will design, advise and lead this process;

- (ii) Share information about relevant initiatives that are already happening in Cambridgeshire, especially at local level;
- (iii) Consider where it might lend support and in-house expertise to processes for gathering and mapping data to enable this project to progress; and
- (iv) Work with partners in an engagement and listening process, particularly to ensure that marginalised and less-heard voices are included.

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

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

35. Questions

- (a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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

- (b) Questions on Fire Authority Issues

One question was received on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority report, as set out in Appendix C.

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

Four questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2, as set out in Appendix D.

36. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was resolved unanimously that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following item contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed (information relating an individual).

37. Report of the Staffing and Appeals Committee – Appointment of Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service

It was moved by the Chair of the Staffing and Appeals Committee, Councillor Murphy, and seconded by the Vice-Chair of the Staffing and Appeals Committee, Councillor Shailer, that the recommendation from the Staffing and Appeals Committee, as set out on the Council agenda, including the name of the recommended candidate in the confidential appendix circulated on 8 November 2021, be approved.

Following discussion, the Monitoring Officer proposed an amendment to recommendation a), which was agreed unanimously, to add subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.: It was also agreed to notify Members when the appointment would be made public.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) ratify the appointment of the new Chief Executive, subject to satisfactory references being received; and
- b) delegate authority to the Assistant Director of HR Services and the Monitoring Officer to take any further action necessary to give effect to the contents of this report.

The Council took the opportunity to thank the current Chief Executive, Gillian Beasley, for her exceptional service to the Council.

Chair

Chair's Announcements – 9 November 2021

People

New Director of Highways and Transport

The Council is delighted to welcome its new Director of Highways and Transport, Sue Procter, who started work on 1 November 2021. Sue joins from Kirklees Council, and prior to that she directed many key frontline services at Lancashire County Council.

Awards

King's Dyke

The Council is pleased to have won three awards at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations East Anglia awards, with Jones Bros, for King's Dyke which recognises great community involvement in a landmark project. The Council won gold for both construction, property and infrastructure campaign and integrated campaign and silver for best publication – the King's Dyke newsletter.

The virtual awards ceremony was held on Tuesday (5 October) and hosted by Jason Mohammad – the BBC 1 Final Score and Radio 2 Good Morning Sunday presenter.

Local Government Chronicle Awards 2021

The Council had two projects shortlisted for the national LGC Awards 2021. Be Part of the Solution – a campaign delivered by the communications and youth engagement team in partnership with Peterborough and Cambridge City Council was shortlisted for Campaign of the Year. Technology Enabled Care Services which is part of Cambridgeshire County Council's Prevention and Early Intervention Services, was shortlisted in the category of best use of technology and achieved highly commended at the event on 4 November.

Service Developments

YOUnited

A new service jointly commissioned by Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and the local Clinical Commissioning Group has launched to support children and young people with their emotional wellbeing and mental health. The YOUnited service is a partnership including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT), Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust (CCS), Centre 33, and Ormiston Families. Young people have been instrumental in helping co-design the service which is available to those up to the age of 25 and offers a range of support including therapies, counselling and guided self-help. The service is available to children and young people registered with a GP in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and referrals can be made to YOUnited by a GP or any professional working with children or young people by phoning: 0300 3000 830 or emailing: younited@cpft.nhs.uk.

Further details [Referral information | CPFT NHS Trust](#)

Messages

Vice-Chair's Announcements

Citizen ceremonies

The ceremonies are still being held without dignitaries due to Covid-19.

23rd September 2021: Queens Award for Enterprise and Innovation – Featurespace

On behalf of the Chair, the Vice-Chair attended a presentation of The Queens Award for Enterprise and Innovation at Featurespace in Cambridge by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Julie Spence.

10th October 2021: Godmanchester Civic Service

On behalf of the Chair, the Vice-Chair attended Godmanchester Civic Service at St. Mary's Church at the invitation of the Mayor and Mayoress of Godmanchester Councillor Clifford Thomas and Mrs Ann Thomas.

11th October 2021: The Queen's Green Canopy - Tree planting ceremony at Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery school in Ely

On behalf of the Chair, the Vice-Chair attended a tree planting ceremony at Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery school in Ely with the Mayor of Ely and Deputy Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire Lady de Ramsey. The tree planting is part of The Queen's Green Canopy. The initiative began in May 2021 in honour of the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth in 2022. Spring Meadow Infant and Nursery School was one of the chosen schools to receive a gifted tree.

14th October 2021: The Queen's Green Canopy - Tree planting ceremony at St Philip's Church of England Primary School in Cambridge

On behalf of the Chair, the Vice-Chair attended the tree planting ceremony at St Philip's Church of England School in Cambridge. The event was attended by The Major of Cambridge, Councillor Russ McPherson and Deputy Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire, Tim Breitmeyer.

24th October 2021: Whittlesey Mayor Civic Service

On behalf of the Chair the Vice-Chair attended The Mayor's Civic Service at St. Mary's Church hosted by the Mayor and Mayoress of Whittlesey, Councillor David Mason and Mrs Ann Mason.

5th November 2021: Official opening of the March Community Centre

On behalf of the Leader of Council, the Vice Chair attended the official opening of the March Community Centre with the Combined Authority Mayor and the Right Hon Steven Barclay MP.

Public Question Time

Question from Dr William Harrold to Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Peter McDonald:

The controversial Central Section of the East West Railway (EWR) will have a significant impact on transport and other plans for the county which fall under the responsibility of the county Council. I imagine that it is important for you to know about the status of the EWR project. The recent government [spending review](#) (SR21) for the next 3 years (see Section 4.63) from the chancellor makes explicit reference to the A428 improvements and to other railways, but there is no mention of the EWR.

The [East West Rail Mainline Partnership](#) have questioned why there is no mention of EWR in SR21. England's Economic Heartland have made a [similar statement](#).

As an interested party please could Cambridgeshire County Council write to the department of transport to find out the funding status of the EWR central section and how the lack of commitment in SR21 will affect their plans for it?

Response from Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor McDonald to Dr William Harold:

Chair, firstly I'd like to thank Dr Harold for his question today. I'm sorry that I'm speaking with my back to Members. And I'd like to thank Dr Harold for his input to our Committee in June which was very valuable.

At our Committee in June, we provided our feedback as a County Council on East West Rail – especially that central section - as part of the non-statutory consultation. East West Rail is of course a National Government infrastructure project. We were also surprised to see it was not in the Spending Review 21, as many other national infrastructure projects were.

We are members of the East West Rail Mainline Partnership and England's Second Economic Heartland. We are therefore contributors to their position. We raised the question with the Department for Transport yesterday and we will follow up, as Dr Harold has requested in writing, and will feedback to him. Thank you, Chair.

Thank you.

(b) Questions on Fire Authority Issues

Question from Councillor Anna Bradnam to Chair of the Fire Authority, Councillor Edna Murphy

I'm just being naughty here. I want to ask what a hot debrief is, page 128, 2.1?

Response from Chair of the Fire Authority, Councillor Edna Murphy to Councillor Anna Bradnam

I'll venture and explanation, if I may Chair.

Yes - it probably sounds a bit more exciting when it's put that way, than the reality. The slightly boring fact is that it is an informal briefing following the inspection. It is an opportunity to - without giving a full view of the inspection - it's an opportunity to raise any critical matters and matters of concern that really can't wait until the final report is out. People need to know if there is something seriously wrong. And I am delighted to say that not only was there nothing highlighted as wrong, but also there were many positive points.

Written Questions under Council Procedure Rule 9.2

Question 1

Question from Councillor Samantha Hoy

At the October meeting of Children and Young People Committee, the Service Director: Education, Jonathan Lewis, confirmed it was his decision for Cambridgeshire County Council not to build the new Wisbech Secondary School which had £38m allocated towards it in the budget. The following question comes in two parts and goes to each and every post holder named individually below.

1. Were you consulted by the Service Director: Education, Jonathan Lewis, before making the final decision to abandon the proposal to self-deliver the new Wisbech Secondary School?
2. If consulted, were you informed that the Department for Education would consider looking for a new site, the delays associated with that decision and that no new timetable was agreed for them to deliver a school.

Cllrs:

Lucy Nethsingha (Liberal Democrat) Leader of the Council
Bryony Goodliffe (Labour) Chair of the Children and Young People Committee
Maria King (Liberal Democrat) Deputy Chair of the Children and Young People Committee
Elisa Meschini (Labour) deputy leader of the Council
Lorna Dupre (Liberal Democrat) Deputy leader of the Liberal Democrats
Richard Howitt (Labour) Deputy leader of the Labour group
Tom Sanderson (Independent) Leader of the Independent group

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

Question 1:

Officers did not decide to abandon delivery but instead stated in a letter on the 18th June that the cost envelope outlined by the DfE was insufficient. The Officer sought assurance that the costs would be met by the DfE. This was covered in the briefing with members in August about the fact the decision on our business case to self-deliver was not yet agreed.

On the 16th July 2021, the following response was received from the DfE –

With thanks for your recent letter regarding the design and delivery of Wisbech Free School, it is unfortunate that we have got to this position and that DfE are unable to offer the level of comfort you require to self-deliver the Free School. We understand your position and appreciate the support we have had received from Cambridgeshire County Council to date, we look forward to working with you to deliver a Free School in Wisbech and will be touch to discuss how we plan to move forward with delivering Wisbech Free School

Question 2:

The DfE decision to look at alternative sites did not come until September, over two months after the Council challenged on the cost basis. At the time of the letter, there was only one site under consideration. We have had further conversations with the DfE who are keen to progress the building for September 2024 and we have asked them to provide an update for members prior to the CYP Committee in November. As outlined in the October CYP Committee meeting, we retain a statutory responsibility for school places and if there is a cancellation of the Free School in Wisbech, we would reassume our programmed for the build of a 4FE secondary school and submit a business case to the Capital Programmed Board for this funding.

Question 2

Question from Councilor Susan van de Ven

Following the Peer Review Recommendation to 'Take action to recalibrate member roles, behaviours and conduct,' please outline meaningful progress achieved thus far?

Response from Councilor Lucy Nethsingha, Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee

Since the Peer Review Recommendation was published in September, work with members on behaviour and conduct has progressed as follows:

- We have secured external support through the LGA for member development focused on the role of statutory officers and member behaviour. We have worked with the LGA to design a development workshop led by the [Centre for Scrutiny and Governance](#) and supported by lead political peers from the Peer Review team. The workshop is scheduled for the beginning of December and all members will be invited to attend.
- Where issues are raised relating to the conduct or behaviours of members, they continue to be addressed through the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive, in accordance with the members code of conduct.
- Service committees have developed training plans to ensure that all members have development appropriate to their committee subject matter to ensure that committee specific roles are well understood.
- The member induction programme and member training seminars are open to all members and are regularly reviewed. This programme is designed to strengthen understanding of the roles and responsibilities of members in key areas of the Council's work.

Member behaviour and conduct, as well as strong understanding of member and officer roles, is vital to the Council and we will continue to review and report on progress in this area through the Peer Review Action Plan.

Question 3

Question from Councilor Steve Count

Anglian water has concluded their survey of March, identifying where surface water run-off is connected into the foul only sewer. Picture below. When we see excess rain, as occurred in December 2020 the resultant overwhelming of the system, meant there was some property flooding and included some raw sewage, was seen coming out on the streets of March. From the picture and the sheer volume of connections, it is easy to see that this will be the inevitable outcome until this issue is addressed. Now that Cambridgeshire County Council has this vital information what immediate steps will it take to address this issue and what is the timescale they estimate to resolve this.



Response from Councillor Lorna Dupré, Chair of Environment and Green Investment Committee

We recognise the importance of working closely with Anglian Water to address the issue of surface water connections into the foul system. We understand this has contributed to flooding across parts of the town and we can report the following actions are underway or imminent:

1. Jointly funding (with Anglian Water) a dedicated resource from the National Flood Forum to work on the ground with communities in March. This has been successfully used in other parts of East Anglia and will include developing social media campaigns, door knocking and engaging through Anglian Water's 'Make Rain Happy' campaign. The campaign will include the installation of rain gardens and water butts at the property level to remove water from the foul network. This is scheduled to commence before the end of 2021.
2. Investigating how parts of the highway can be either disconnected from the foul network or have flows reduced e.g. through the use of attenuation storage beneath the highway.
3. Continuing to engage with Fenland District Council on their future high street fund work for March. We will work jointly with Anglian Water and provide support on what measures can be integrated within the proposals to provide flood risk betterment for the town centre.

4. Continuing to work with Anglian Water on an integrated flood model for March to inform future projects within the town. This work has already commenced and where any schemes are identified, we will look to bid for and utilise partnership funding from Anglian Water and the Environment Agency.

Question 4

Question from Councillor Lorna Dupré

In light of the decision of the Government to agree Enhanced Response Area status for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, what can local members do to support the effort to reduce Covid cases, hospitalisations and deaths, and increase vaccination rates?

Response from Councillor Richard Howitt, Chair of Adults and Health Committee

Thank you so much for asking the question and your support is much appreciated.

There are a number of ways that local members can support the effort to reduce Covid cases, hospitalisations and deaths as well as increasing vaccination rates. Here are some suggestions:

- Our communications team will produce a toolkit to support you to get messages out through your channels
- We will be drawing down some resource through the Surge Rapid Response Team to target areas/communities where there is low uptake, member support for this drive would be welcome, we can share the targeted areas with relevant members
- Role modelling the protective behaviours would also be a helpful contribution, such as wearing face coverings and maintaining social distancing

If you have any further suggestions of how local members can help the efforts, please do let us know.