

County Council: Minutes

Please note the meeting can be viewed here:
[Recording of the County Council Meeting](#)

Date: Tuesday 13th October 2020

Time: 10:30am – 12:45pm

Present:

Councillor M McGuire (Chairman)

Councillor L Every (Vice-Chairwoman)

D Ambrose Smith	L Harford	C Richards
B Ashwood	N Harrison	T Rogers
A Bailey	A Hay	T Sanderson
H Batchelor	R Hickford	J Schumann
C Boden	M Howell	J Scutt
A Bradnam	S Hoy	M Shellens
S Bywater	P Hudson	M Shuter
A Costello	B Hunt	M Smith
S Count	D Jenkins	A Taylor
S Crawford	L Jones	S Taylor
P Downes	N Kavanagh	S Tierney
L Dupré	S Kindersley	S van de Ven
J French	S King	J Whitehead
R Fuller	I Manning	J Williams
I Gardener	E Meschini	G Wilson
D Giles	L Nethsingha	J Wisson
M Goldsack	L Nieto	T Wotherspoon
J Gowing	K Reynolds	

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Councillors Ian Bates, David Connor, Steve Criswell, Kevin Cuffley, Peter McDonald, and David Wells

235. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 21st July 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2020 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman when the Council returned to its offices.

236. Chairman's Announcements

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

237. Declarations of Interest

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

238. Public Question Time

The Chairman reported that no questions had been received from members of the public.

239. Petitions

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

240. Section 85 Local Government Act 1972 – Recommendation to Extend Six Month Rule

The Chairman withdrew the motion with the consent of the meeting.

241. Reports of the Pension Fund Committee

The Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee, Councillor Rogers, moved receipt of the annual report of the Committee for 2019-20.

Council noted the report.

242. Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure 10

Five motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

(a) Motion from Councillor Lucy Nethsingha

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Nethsingha and seconded by Councillor Whitehead:

This Council notes:

- That the recent school shut down is likely to have had a particularly bad impact on the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- That there is expected to be a deficit of up to £28m million in the high needs block for Cambridgeshire at the end of the financial year and this remains an unfunded issue.

- That meetings with government have failed to provide any additional funding to meet this funding gap.
- That Cambridgeshire's schools funding remains low, particularly for the many secondary schools in Cambridgeshire who have sixth forms as part of the school, as was indicated by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) report on school funding published 18th September.
- That in the absence of government funding the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) deficit will have to be met by reducing the support available to schools and children with SEND in current cohorts, who are already suffering from a disrupted education as a result of the pandemic.

This Council therefore asks that:

- The Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, to request that he look again at the funding for Special Educational Needs and Disability, and in particular at the impact for children currently in education for those councils carrying large deficits, and find alternative funding, so that the costs of past care do not have to be met by those currently in need of support in education.
- A letter be sent to parents of SEND children in Cambridgeshire drawing the issue to their attention, and asking for their support in bringing this matter to the attention of the government and MPs.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Bywater and seconded by Councillor Hoy (additions in bold and deletions in strikethrough):

This Council notes:

- That the recent school shut down is likely to have had a particularly bad impact on the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- That there is expected to be a deficit of up to £28m million in the high needs block for Cambridgeshire at the end of the financial year and this remains an unfunded issue.
- That meetings with government **have secured significant extra funding, however it is insufficient in Cambridgeshire** ~~have failed to provide any additional funding~~ to meet an **increasing** ~~this~~ funding gap.
- That Cambridgeshire's schools funding remains low, particularly for the many secondary schools in Cambridgeshire who have sixth forms as part of the school, as was indicated by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) report on school funding published 18th September.
- That in the absence of government funding the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) deficit will **either continue to increase until the**

Government indicates how this deficit will be met, which is the current situation, or the Government mandates that the deficit is not allowed to increase. Should that change in position be the case, then the deficit would have to be met by reducing the support available to schools and children with SEND in current cohorts, who are already suffering from a disrupted education as a result of the pandemic.

This Council therefore asks that:

- The Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, to request that he look again at the funding for Special Educational Needs and Disability, and in particular at the impact for children currently in education for those councils carrying large deficits, and find alternative funding, so that the costs of past care do not have to be met by those currently in need of support in education.
- A letter be sent to ~~parents of SEND children in Cambridgeshire drawing the issue to their attention, and asking for their support in bringing this matter to the attention of the government and~~ **Cambridgeshire MPs asking for their support.**

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

[Voting pattern: Conservatives, Independents, 2 Liberal Democrats and 1 Labour in favour; 13 Liberal Democrats and 3 Labour against; 3 Labour abstained.]

[Councillors Bradnam and A Taylor asked to have it recorded in the minutes that they voted in favour of the amendment in error, when they intended to vote against]

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

(b) Motion from Councillor Peter McDonald

In Councillor McDonald's absence, Councillor Nethsingha withdrew the motion with the consent of the meeting.

(c) Motion from Councillor Joan Whitehead

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Whitehead and seconded by Councillor Downes:

The Council welcomes the increase in funding for schools in the latest figures from the Department for Education (DFE). However the funding formula means that the increase is not evenly distributed between schools – there are winners and losers. For Cambridgeshire the winners are large rural secondary schools and the losers are small rural primary schools some of which may be under threat of closure, as they will no longer be financially viable. Should schools be forced to close this will not only be a loss to community but it can potentially

involve the County in greater expense as it will have to transport primary school children to other schools, which in itself is undesirable.

The problem is further exacerbated by the rigidity of the national funding formula which leaves little or no room for local adjustments to protect small rural primary schools as most of the discretion previously allowed local authorities to make such adjustments has been largely removed.

This council calls on the DFE to:-

- To look again at the funding formula in order to ensure that funds are more equitably distributed so that there are no losers.
- Restore the ability of Local Authorities to make adjustments to the funding allocated via the formula to meet specific local needs and protect vulnerable but vital schools.

To achieve this end council requests the Director for Education and the Chief Executive to make representation to the DFE.

Following discussion, the motion was carried unanimously.

(d) Motion from Councillor Ian Manning

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

Council notes:

- The recent overspend and delays to the Fendon Road roundabout project, caused by utility providers being unable to notify this Council of the location of their cabling.
- That identifying the location of such underground infrastructure which is not the responsibility of this authority has caused delays in multiple other Highways projects.
- The motion to this Council from Cllr Bailey on 20th March 2018, listed on the agenda as item 10b.

Council believes that:

- The public perception is that this Council is responsible for mismanaging these projects.
- ~~At least in part T~~this is incorrect as the underground infrastructure locations should be a responsibility of the utility providers.
- The number of delays, minor and major, caused by missing or incomplete and inaccurate information about underground infrastructure and the costs of protecting it add up to a significant overall cost to this Council.
- Accurate data is available, but spread across multiple data sources, which urgently need bringing together.
- ~~If this belief is accurate~~ Government should support **all Councils** ~~us~~ in working with the utility providers to improve the accuracy of the information.

Council resolves to:

- Ask officers to publish the response from UK Power Networks (UKPN) at the time to Councillor Bailey's motion, and detail what, if anything has changed since then, including any actions outstanding from this Council.
- **Ask officers to prepare a paper for Highways and Transport Committee within three months of this motion to report on the extent to which there are significant time and/or cost delays as a result of Utility company information and to recommend whether a meeting should be held with the relevant Government minister and utilities companies to discuss ways in which the issues can be improved and resolved.**
- ~~— Ask officers to prepare an audit of the last three years of minor and major infrastructure projects which involved requests for information on underground infrastructure from utility companies and the eventual accuracy of that information and the costs of protecting that apparatus. This audit should include, for each project:~~
 - ~~— A basic classification of the accuracy of the information provided (accurate, partially accurate, inaccurate, no response).~~
 - ~~— Measured by time and cost, any delays due to partially accurate, inaccurate or no response to requests for information.~~
- ~~— Present this audit to the Highways & Transport Committee, with the intention that, if it shows significant time and/or cost delays, committee should call a meeting with the relevant Government minister and utilities companies to discuss ways in which the issues can be improved and resolved.~~

Following discussion, the motion was carried unanimously.

(e) Motion from Councillor Joshua Schumann

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Schumann and seconded by Councillor Nieto:

Cambridgeshire County Council notes:

- That Cambridgeshire is a County that embraces a multi-cultural and tolerant society and that this Council desires to enhance that reputation. The recent antiracism motion and actions which we supported in July 2020, which called for "...an actively anti-racist outlook within areas we have influence" demonstrated, in principle, our role in this regard. However, we recognise that we need to mobilise practical action to send a clear and explicit message of support and solidarity to anyone suffering persecution because of race, religion, gender, sexuality or any other form of discrimination.
- That, whilst there has been an increase across the UK, Europe and Worldwide, in incidents of racism, including antisemitism, and hate crime it is acknowledged that incidents in Cambridgeshire are not as high as in some other areas. We are determined to work together with our communities and partners to ensure such incidents are not tolerated in our County, despite the current pandemic and rising tensions regarding international migration and those seeking asylum unwittingly contributing to these.
- The UK Government's support of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which states that "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."
- The vital role all of our communities have played thus far during the pandemic, including helpful translations of key Coronavirus messages into 27 different languages, practical support and assistance provided to vulnerable residents with for example access to food and essential supplies, and the support provided to people who are isolated or anxious through befriending and pastoral care.
- The work of the cross-party Improving Social Mobility working group of the Communities and Partnership Committee, which is focussed on ensuring equality of opportunity for all of our residents, regardless of their background.
- The opportunity we now have to further extend and formalise our combined efforts to continue to ensure our county is a tolerant one, through the key leadership role the County Council can take via our ongoing commitment to working with communities and partners through our Think Communities unified approach, demonstrated in the investment recently approved at General Purpose Committee.

Cambridgeshire County Council therefore resolves to take the following steps:

- Ask the Communities and Partnership Committee, through its work on the Think Communities unified approach and the development of our community strategy, to assess the impact of our policies and service delivery on all of our residents, regardless of their backgrounds, bringing forward any recommendations to improve and update them.
- As part of this work, adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, and, as part of the work of the Communities and Partnership Committee, describe how that recognition will manifest itself across the business of the council.
- Ask the Chief Executive to approach the various faith and community leaders in Cambridgeshire, and other bodies representative of those with recognised discriminatory factors, to work with us to send out a co-ordinated multi faith message of support, solidarity and harmony on the theme of communities united, supporting and living together through this winter, whilst still dealing with a pandemic. Further, ensure this leads to an inaugural countywide event in 2021 that brings partners together to celebrate achievements and agree further work and priorities.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Williams and seconded by Councillor Manning (additions in bold and deletions in strikethrough):

Cambridgeshire County Council notes:

- That Cambridgeshire is a County that embraces a multi-cultural ~~and tolerant~~ society **which values difference** and that this Council desires to enhance that reputation. The recent ~~antiracism~~ **Black Lives Matter** motion and actions which we supported in July 2020, which called for "...an actively anti-racist outlook within areas we have influence" demonstrated, in principle, our role in this regard. However, we recognise that we need to mobilise practical action to send a clear and explicit message of support and solidarity to anyone suffering persecution because of race, religion, gender, sexuality or any other form of discrimination.
- That, whilst there has been an increase across the UK, Europe and ~~worldwide~~, in incidents of racism, including antisemitism, and hate crime it is acknowledged that incidents in ~~Cambridgeshire are not as high as in some other areas~~ **while evidence shows a black person is 6 times more likely to be subject to stop and search than a white person in Cambridgeshire, incidents of antisemitism are less widely reported.** We are determined to work together with our communities and partners to ensure such incidents are not tolerated in our County, ~~despite the current pandemic and rising tensions regarding international migration and those seeking asylum unwittingly contributing to these.~~ **and ensure our asylum seekers are welcomed to our county and appreciated for the valuable role they play economically and socially.**
- The UK Government's support of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which states that "Antisemitism is

a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

- The vital role all of our communities have played thus far during the pandemic, including helpful translations of key Coronavirus messages into 27 different languages, practical support and assistance provided to vulnerable residents with for example access to food and essential supplies, and the support provided to people who are isolated or anxious through befriending and pastoral care.
- The work of the cross-party Improving Social Mobility working group of the Communities and Partnership Committee, which is focussed on ensuring equality of opportunity for all of our residents, regardless of their background.
- The opportunity we now have to further extend and formalise our combined efforts to continue to ensure our county is a ~~tolerant~~ **welcoming** one, through the key leadership role the County Council can take via our ongoing commitment to working with communities and partners through our Think Communities unified approach, demonstrated in the investment recently approved at General Purpose Committee.
- **The enormous value immigrants bring to the economy of our area, bringing both specialist knowledge needed in the tech and biomedical sectors around Cambridge, and the skilled labour on which the agricultural sector in the north of the county depends. Immigrant workers have been crucial in keeping our public services and food chains going throughout the pandemic and we thank them for the crucial role they play in our communities.**
- **That many EU nationals who came to offer their skills and work to this country, feel their contribution here has not been valued, and that this sense of being rejected is exacerbated by the refusal of the current Conservative government to provide paper documentation to those who have the right to remain under the EU-UK withdrawal agreement.**
- **The responsibilities of the Country for upholding the rule of law, not just in tackling racism here in Cambridgeshire, but also in upholding human rights, and the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights in all our dealings, both here in Cambridgeshire and nationally.**
- **That recognising human rights and fighting racism includes recognising and fighting to support the rights of those fleeing persecution and serious human rights violations, including asylum seekers, seeking sanctuary in this Country.**
- **The excellent work being done by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council in resettling 125 Syrian refugees under**

the government resettlement scheme, and providing support for asylum seekers and refugees who were not eligible for this scheme.

- **That tackling racism means looking across all Council policies, and those of partner organisations where this Council, or councillors who sit on this Council, are represented, and ensuring that all our policies are blind to colour or religion in the support we or partner organisations offer to those wishing to settle in Cambridgeshire.**

Cambridgeshire County Council therefore resolves to take the following steps:

- Ask the Communities and Partnership Committee, through its work on the Think Communities unified approach and the development of our community strategy, to assess the impact of our policies and service delivery on all of our residents, regardless of their backgrounds, bringing forward any recommendations to improve and update them, **including within this the policies of the Combined Authority on affordable housing, where this Council is a key partner, in particular the £100k homes policy, and any other policies which offer particular benefits to those who have family in a given area.**
- As part of this work, adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, and, as part of the work of the Communities and Partnership Committee, describe how that recognition will manifest itself across the business of the council.
- Ask the Chief Executive to approach the various faith, **non-faith** and community leaders in Cambridgeshire, and other bodies representative of those with recognised discriminatory factors, **including the LBGTQ and Trans communities** to work with us to send out a coordinated ~~multi-faith~~ message of support, solidarity and harmony on the theme of communities united, supporting and living together through this winter, whilst still dealing with a pandemic. Further, ensure this leads to an inaugural countywide event in 2021 that brings partners together to celebrate achievements and agree further work and priorities.
- **Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister asking him to introduce physical documentation for those who have leave to remain as EU nationals resident in this country.**
- **Offer to take part in the relocation program for asylum seeking children and young people, taking the pressure off Councils such as Kent, who already have large numbers of asylum seeker children to support.**
- **Work with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council to enable them to extend their current refugee resettlement scheme and develop a partnership to leverage the powers of all Cambridgeshire councils to ensure we can relocate the maximum number of vulnerable people.”**

- **Work with all district councils and government to ensure the levels of support for asylum seeker families which are offered in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire following their participation in the government resettlement scheme, which was paused in March, are extended for the future and across more of Cambridgeshire.**

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

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour and 1 Independent in favour; Conservatives against; 1 Independent abstained.]

A further amendment was proposed by Councillor Crawford and seconded by Councillor Meschini (additions in bold and deletions in strikethrough):

Cambridgeshire County Council notes:

- That Cambridgeshire is a County that embraces a multi-cultural and tolerant society and that this Council desires to enhance that reputation. The recent anti-racism motion and actions which we supported in July 2020, which called for "...an actively anti-racist outlook within areas we have influence" demonstrated, in principle, our role in this regard. However, we recognise that we need to mobilise practical action to send a clear and explicit message of support and solidarity to anyone suffering persecution because of race, religion, gender, sexuality or any other form of discrimination.
- That, whilst there has been an increase across the UK, Europe and Worldwide, in incidents of racism, including antisemitism, and hate crime it is acknowledged that incidents in Cambridgeshire are not as high as in some other areas. We are determined to work together with our communities and partners to ensure such incidents are not tolerated in our County, despite the current pandemic and rising tensions regarding international migration and those seeking asylum unwittingly contributing to these.
- The UK Government's support of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which states that "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."
- The vital role all of our communities have played thus far during the pandemic, including helpful translations of key Coronavirus messages into 27 different languages, practical support and assistance provided to vulnerable residents with for example access to food and essential supplies, and the support provided to people who are isolated or anxious through befriending and pastoral care.
- The work of the cross-party Improving Social Mobility working group of the Communities and Partnership Committee, which is focussed on ensuring equality of opportunity for all of our residents, regardless of their background.

- The opportunity we now have to further extend and formalise our combined efforts to continue to ensure our county is a tolerant one, through the key leadership role the County Council can take via our ongoing commitment to working with communities and partners through our Think Communities unified approach, demonstrated in the investment recently approved at General Purpose Committee.

Cambridgeshire County Council therefore resolves to take the following steps:

- Ask the Communities and Partnership Committee, through its work on the Think Communities unified approach and the development of our community strategy, to assess the impact of our policies and service delivery on all of our residents, regardless of their backgrounds, bringing forward any recommendations to improve and update them.
- As part of this work, adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, and, as part of the work of the Communities and Partnership Committee, describe how that recognition will manifest itself across the business of the council.
- **As part of this work, we should recognise that Black lives matter, and we should challenge the forces that show discrimination, and show humanity and caring to all those who suffer discrimination, including those of the Windrush community.**
- **As part of this work, residents who are of the travelling community should not suffer from discrimination or hate, but be helped to find suitable sites to live in peace with their neighbours.**
- **As part of this work, asylum seekers who face persecution, torture, murder or female mutilation should be helped to find a place of safety in this county.**
- **As part of this work, all forms of Islamophobia must be challenged and Muslims allowed to practise their beliefs in peace.**
- Ask the Chief Executive to approach the various faith and community leaders in Cambridgeshire, and other bodies representative of those with recognised discriminatory factors, to work with us to send out a co-ordinated multi faith message of support, solidarity and harmony on the theme of communities united, supporting and living together through this winter, whilst still dealing with a pandemic. Further, ensure this leads to an inaugural countywide event in 2021 that brings partners together to celebrate achievements and agree further work and priorities.

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

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour and 1 Independent in favour; Conservatives against; 1 Independent abstained.]

Following further discussion, the motion was carried unanimously.

243. Questions

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

One question was submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.1 of the Council's Constitution, as set out in Appendix B.

(b) Questions on Fire Authority Issues

One question was submitted, as set out in Appendix C.

(c) Written Questions (Council Procedure Rule 9.2)

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

Chairman

County Council – 13th October 2020

Chairman's Announcements

People

Chairman's Commendations awarded in August and September

Earlier this year the Chairman announced a monthly scheme to celebrate the fantastic work of those who have gone above and beyond in supporting their local communities since lockdown began in March due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The scheme will run for at least six months and Members are reminded to continue to send in their nominations, a reminder will be sent out just ahead of the deadline in October. During the first week of every month, the Chairman will issue a certificate to those nominated.

The Chairman has been delighted to issue 13 certificates during August and September to individuals, businesses and community groups who have been recognised for their excellent work throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Full details of each Member's nomination can be seen on the council's [website](#).

Awards

Ministry of Defence (MOD) Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award

The Chairman was exceptionally proud to hear that Cambridgeshire County Council jointly with Peterborough City Council have been awarded the Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award by the Ministry of Defence in recognition of the support given to the Armed Forces. Veterans, Reservists and Military Spouses form a vital part of our workforce. Cambridgeshire County Council recognises the commitment our reservist staff members make to our country by serving in the armed forces and our specific reservist policies within Cambridgeshire County Council reflect our commitment to them.

Municipal Journal Awards

Cambridgeshire's work to respond to the climate change emergency has been commended nationally in the 2020 MJ Awards, which were held 'virtually' earlier this month.

The work, championed by our council Leader Steve Count and involving many Members and Officers to develop and promote the County Council's Climate Change and Environment strategy – was underpinned by evidence from PhD students at the University of Cambridge. The Chairman was delighted that it was 'highly commended' in the category 'Leadership in responding to the Climate Emergency'.

Messages

VJ Day – 15 August 2020

On Saturday 15th August, virtual celebrations were held across the county to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day (Victory over Japan). The Chairman, who is also Chairman of the Armed Forces Covenant Board, recorded a special video sharing his memories of serving in the Armed Forces, and encouraged everyone to set aside some time to reflect, and to honour those who fought to end the Second World War.

County Council – 13th October 2020

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Questions under Council Procedure Rule 9.1

Question to the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority – Councillor Count

Question from Councillor Nethsingha:

My letter to Cllr Count is: Following the letter of the Secretary of State to the Combined authority expressing concern at the management of the Combined Authority, and in particular the situation with the Chief Executives, along with the very large amounts of money which have been spent on consultants' fees for projects that have subsequently been abandoned or needed several subsequent consultants' reports, such projects include the St Neots cycle bridge, Hunts third river crossing, Cam Metro and the Cambourne to Cambridge Busway, combined with his own concerns expressed at the most recent meeting of the Board about financial papers which were put before the Board without him having seen them, what level of confidence does the Leader have in the financial controls of the Combined Authority? Can he give us a single example of a transport project that the Combined Authority has taken forward to delivery, on time and on budget, and does he feel that a cost of £5.5m a year, rather than the £0.8m the Mayor originally promised, that given that funding the CPCA is delivering Value For Money for the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough?

Response from Councillor Count:

The question you've just asked me is an all-encompassing question, quite detailed and covering quite a large wingspan, whereas the rights and rules of this Council are that questions are on the papers that are actually in front of us. Now I won't dodge the question but I don't think I'm going to go in some detail on something that is not acceptable under the County Council Constitution at the moment, so what I intend to do is if you can send it through to me, you did mention it as a letter, but I haven't seen it, if you send that through to me, and I'll actually give you a written response, and in that written response I will be happy to circulate for the public to see.

Supplementary question from Councillor Nethsingha:

So I can quote the sections of the paper that this refers to, they're on pages 52 and 54 and 63 but the main question was about Cllr Count's opinion, which I hope he doesn't need to go away and read the papers to give me, my question is about his opinion of the financial controls at the Combined Authority, so I hope he can give me his opinion without having to go back.

Response from Councillor Count:

I appreciate that some of the elements of your question were in the papers, but some of the elements weren't, so I was hoping to give you an all-encompassing opinion on all of the points you raise.

My opinion is on the financial management of the Combined Authority is that it is accurately maintained financially, you know, I work closely with the S73 officer and we present regular management budget reports to the Combined Authority, which are also examined by the internal Audit & Accounts and the external auditing bodies, so of course, yes it is financially well managed.

County Council – 13th October 2020

Questions to the Chairman of the Fire Authority

Question from Councillor Dupré:

One of the effects of the current pandemic, and the rules about social gatherings, will be that professional or large community fireworks celebrations and bonfires on 5 November will be prohibited. This may well mean many more smaller family firework events being held in people's gardens. As one of the reasons for encouraging attendance at larger communal events in previous years is that this is safer than large numbers of enthusiastic amateurs handling fireworks, what plans is the Fire Authority putting in place to (a) advise the Cambridgeshire public in the coming weeks, (b) try to minimise the risk of harm to people and property, and (c) liaise with other blue light services in advance of 5 November?

Response by Councillor Reynolds, Chairman of the Fire Authority:

Thank you Chairman and thank you Cllr Dupré for the question and for giving me prior notice, it's appreciated.

Of course we're well geared up for the firework displays, or fireworks night, should I say, as it is an annual event. This year our messaging will change from previous years to reflect the new rules in place and that organised displays have been cancelled.

We have news releases planned asking the public to show respect and encouraging them not to have their own displays. We cannot prevent them, but asking them not to. It not only presents them with a personal risk, but it places additional strain on the emergency services. We've been working with the national Fire Chiefs' Council, other fire and rescue services' communications team, and the local resilience forum 'Warm and Inform' group, to plan coordinated activity, including a TV campaign which should be done on a nationwide basis. That hasn't been finalised yet, but there is work going on.

We have our first news release which will be sent later this week, with further releases planned to tie in with the annual children's burns charity day, as well as when fireworks go on general sale and in the lead up to the night.

The key messages from the releases are to encourage the public to *not* hold their own displays, and urging them to avoid having bonfires. In addition to the news releases, we are planning on safety videos reiterating the key messages.

We do however, realise that people may well have their own displays, and many will do so safely, although we have included some general safety tips for having a display, mainly around buying from licensed vendors, and using the Firework Code safely, and as always we support the RSPCA Bang Out of Order campaign which discourages the use of fireworks due to their impact on animals.

We're working with other partners to see if unauthorised displays are being planned to take place in the county. As and when we find out about any unauthorised displays, which we of course hope there won't be, we will manage that accordingly.

We've got graphics that will be shared on our social media channels. We use social media quite a lot to get the message across to the public, and of course we have leaflets to distribute as we do most years, on current themes, for our fire safety teams, as needed.

That is a quick canter through, we do spend a lot of time with our Comms department, working up towards this date and getting the safety message across, and particularly about having respect for the wider community, and of course those who have pets close by. I'm not sure if there's anything else you would like me to add, Cllr Dupré?

Supplementary Question by Councillor Dupré:

If I could just very briefly, Chairman, I'm grateful for Cllr Reynolds' explanation of the plans of the fire authority, and I think that's helpful. What I would want to ask is that given that so much for the last six months or so people have been told what we *can't* do, until we are all quite fed up with it, even for those of us who fully support the work of Public Health to try to keep us safe, it has been a very wearing six months, it would be very good to know that there would be positive messages about alternative ways of marking the occasion, and what they can do positively to keep themselves and their families safe, and maybe as I say, different ideas for celebrating and marking the event.

Response by Councillor Reynolds, Chairman of the Fire Authority:

From a fire perspective, that's quite a difficult balancing act, because on one hand saying that people should not have their own private displays, because of the dangers of fireworks and bonfires. We can't stop them, and equally we're bound to give them proper advice, because we know however much we give the strongest advice not to do something, they will do. So on one hand we're giving advice on having a display safely at home, and on the other hand, we're suggesting quite strongly that they shouldn't. We obviously can't stop people from doing that. Hopefully people will listen to our advice, we'll continue with the strong PR campaign, as we do every year, to minimise risk. It is a difficult balancing act, we will get the message out there as strongly as we can. As I said, we are liaising with other fire authorities around the country in case anyone's got better ideas at tackling it than what we have.

County Council – 13 October 2020

Written Question under Council Procedure Rule 9.2

1. Question from Councillor Susan van de Ven

Cambridgeshire's two universities are reopening at a time of considerable concern over a rise in the number of Covid-19 cases particularly among young people aged 18-30, as well as a strain on the capacity to process lab tests, a responsibility of central government and supplemented by the University of Cambridge for its staff and students, a unique and welcome arrangement but with finite resource.

While government guidance has been published on Covid-19 public health protocols and protections for the reopening of institutions of higher education, there is some ambiguity about responsibilities at national versus local level. A further realm of ambiguity exists where protocols are recommended but not required.

Arrangements for meeting and then monitoring standards by the multitude of individual organisations and settings that make up a university, such as individual colleges and various other accommodation arrangements, is a complex operation, and a matter of public concern.

How will the Cambridgeshire County Council Public Health directorate and its district council and university partners demonstrate assurance around meeting Covid-19 protections in our university settings? Equally, what are their channels for voicing concern, whether local or relating to national support, as they strive to deliver an unprecedented brief? And within the assessment of county infection control, will the ongoing results from Cambridge University testing be shared with the local public health team throughout the coming months?

Response from Councillor Peter Hudson, Chairman of Health Committee

Cambridgeshire County Council Public Health Directorate and Cambridge City Council have been working very closely with our colleagues from the regional Public Health England (PHE) Health Protection team in partnership with both the University of Cambridge and Anglia Ruskin since the summer on the issue of the safe return of students.

Key aspects of this work have included providing support on questions of COVID prevention, setting up new pathways to deal with single and multiple COVID cases and putting together COVID outbreak plans in both universities. Whilst the Local Authority (LA) and PHE Health Protection team have been acting in an advisory capacity on the universities' plans to make the environments COVID secure, there has been a greater degree of oversight and assurance provided in terms of the outbreak management plan. These plans were drafted in collaboration with the Local Authority and PHE and required sign off by the Director of Public Health. As a result both universities have very clear processes whereby:

- There is agreement that every positive result from a staff or student will be notified to the Local Authority.
- Both the LA and university will track numbers and patterns to identify any evidence of outbreaks
- There are clear steps, defined in a Standard Operating Procedure, to take in the case of an outbreak. These steps will be decided by an outbreak control team made up of Local Authority, PHE and university partners. An outbreak is defined by PHE as "two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 among students or staff who are direct close contacts, proximity contacts or in the same cohort in the university or halls of residence within 14 days. A cohort might be a tutorial group, lecture group, lab session, social club, or other defined group within the school".

A high level summary of the work that has been put in place can be seen below:

	University of Cambridge	Anglia Ruskin
Governance	A COVID-19 Outbreak Management University Working Group (CUWG) has been set up including members from the County Council Public Health Directorate, Environmental Health Cambridge City Council. This sits within the Education Cell of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Outbreak Control Plan and reports into the daily Outbreak Management Team and into the weekly Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health Protection Board.	
Weekly meetings	The Upper and Lower Tier LAs sit on the UoC COVID-19 Management Team, the Rapid Response Group, and both of the UoC incident management teams - Gold for strategic decision-making, Silver for operational response.	The Upper and Lower Tier LA sits on the ARU COVID-19 Advisory Group would partner with ARU to inform strategic decision making in any COVID-19 outbreaks.

	University of Cambridge	Anglia Ruskin
Codes of conduct	Both universities have drawn up codes of conduct for students that include complying with the COVID-19 protective measures, taking a COVID-19 test if symptomatic and informing the university Single Point of Contact of any positive result. For ARU this is presented as Covid-19 Safe Behaviours Community Pledge . For UoC this is the COVID Community Statement .	
Social distancing	Social distancing is a key component of the Universities' plans. They have put in place measures to reduce social contact and maintain social distance keeping people 2m apart from those they do not live with wherever possible.	
Face coverings	Staff, students and visitors are expected to wear a face-covering, unless exempt, where it is not possible to maintain social distancing of at least two metres on university campuses. For education activities, face-coverings will be needed if consistent two metre distancing is not possible and other control measures such as physical shielding are not possible.	
Attendance registers	Attendance registers are kept for any teaching space to facilitate rapid identification of possible close contacts if needed.	
Infection control measures	Enhanced infection control protective measures being put in place in both universities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhanced cleaning measures, especially for frequently used areas, surfaces, touchpoints and washrooms; increased availability of handwashing and hand sanitisation facilities; reducing congestion through measures such as changes to timetables to stagger arrival or departure times or reduce attendance on site utilising outdoor space; managing entrance to, exit from and movement around buildings, as well as signage with such measures as one way entrances, exits and staircases. Air handling and ventilation arrangements have been fully reviewed to ensure continued supply of fresh air in the workplace. 	
Segmentation of students	Segmentation (such as, the creation of small, sub-networks of students and staff) is one of the suite of possible measures to manage and mitigate risks, and to make it easier to identify and limit those who need to take action in the event of a case or outbreak. ARU and UoC have tried as far as possible to segment students and	

	University of Cambridge	Anglia Ruskin
	staff by course, year group, accommodation in teaching and accommodation situations in order to support easier detection of linked cases and enable more targeted closure or quarantine if necessary. Use of segments means that certain classes or student households could be quarantined instead of wider groups.	
	UoC has created household bubbles for those students resident in colleges. These bubbles will be part of the regular asymptomatic testing programme being run by the university.	ARU has created household bubbles for those students living in our owned and managed accommodation.
Staff	University staff will continue to work from home where possible, reducing the number of people on campus and helping to ensure social distancing.	
Teaching	Both universities are taking a blended approach to teaching, in which large lectures for the 2020/21 academic year will be delivered online, with small group teaching, lab and practical work delivered in person in a safe and secure manner.	
Events	It has been agreed that any events planned will be subject to the advice of a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meeting convened by the District Local Authority. It was in consultation with the SAG that ARU significantly curtailed its face to face fresher week social events and put them online instead.	
International students	Measures are in place in both universities to ensure international students that are required to self-isolate on arrival into the country are safe and well looked after.	
Single point of contact	Both universities have established a 7 day a week COVID-19 Helpdesk function to provide advice and oversight of COVID-19 related support and act as a single point of contact for positive cases and information sharing between the Local Authority and PHE.	
Testing	UoC have their own pathway for rapid testing for all staff and students with symptoms. In addition the UoC are rolling out a	ARU will use the NHS national testing system. To enhance access for students the LA has been working to get macro-level approval to have a Local Testing Site (walk-in site) in Cambridge City in an area that is accessible to Anglia Ruskin students.

	University of Cambridge	Anglia Ruskin
	weekly asymptomatic testing programme for all students resident in College accommodation.	
Surveillance	Both universities have procedures in place to notify the LA of every positive student and staff case, whether it comes from the symptomatic testing or the asymptomatic testing programme in the UoC. These cases will be monitored by the LA Surveillance Cell to identify changes in rates of infection over time with increases flagged if necessary to the LA Outbreak Management Team and Health Protection Board.	
Identifying outbreaks	<p>An outbreak is defined by Public Health England as two or more confirmed cases of COVID-19 among students or staff who are direct close contacts, proximity contacts or in the same cohort in the university or halls of residence within 14 days. A cohort might be a tutorial group, lecture group, lab session, social club, or other defined group within the school.</p> <p>The LA surveillance cell and both universities are keeping a record of every positive case to enable them to proactively identify the signs of an outbreak in order to take immediately action. This information is passed to the Environmental Health Team to have an overview of the wider community issues.</p>	
Outbreak management	<p>Outbreak Management plans have been written by both universities in close collaboration with the LA and PHE and signed off by the LA Director of Public Health. There are clear protocols in place for actions on identification of an outbreak with roles and responsibilities agreed. The Local Authority and PHE sit on the highest decision making bodies relating to COVID-19 in both universities. Scenario planning exercise have been carried out with both universities to test the processes in place on identification of single cases and outbreaks. More complex scenario testing has been carried in the UoC and is planned with ARU to look at situations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased prevalence of infection locally that requires interventions on the whole community, including students and staff; a large-scale outbreak that may result in substantial restrictions implemented at a local level that impact on the activities of the university; a localised outbreak in student accommodation; 	

	University of Cambridge	Anglia Ruskin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a localised outbreak involving a particular student or staff member, faculty or department. 	
Off campus work with EHOs	<p>In partnership with Public Health, Environmental Health at the Cambridge City Council have been working with businesses to ensure that they are COVID-19 safe. Environmental Health have been proactively visiting businesses, in particular licensed premises such as bars, restaurants and pubs, to give advice and support for them to remain open safely and to ensure customers, including students, can have a safe experience of the City. Environmental Health have been working with the accommodation services at both ARU and UoC to ensure that the accommodation provided meets all the necessary requirements. Private housing providers have been given advice on how they should support students who need to self-isolate if necessary and on deep cleaning required with any positive cases found living in off-campus accommodation.</p>	
Comms	<p>Both universities recognise that clear and timely communications are key to managing the spread of the virus and dealing with outbreaks. They have set up websites (below) and are working with the LA to develop communications plans for returning students and to refine a campaign aimed at 18-30 year olds when they are off campus. The LA have supplied scripts for the universities to turn into their own video material warning about people's behaviour in their free time not being COVID-Safe, including translations and shared communications materials highlighting issues to do with living in houses in mass occupation. Supportive quotes from the Director of Public Health and the Leader of the City Council have been given to the universities for their press releases and all general campaign messages and materials shared. The LA have launched and continued to promote the harder hitting campaign #Cancel COVID aimed at people aged 18 – 30 which concentrates on avoiding the risk of a local lockdown. This is a mix of physical posters, social media posts using council channels - including Instagram and tiktok, both organic and paid for. It also includes personal messages from advocates designed to resonate with the target audience, which have so far included popstar, DJ and Love Island contestant Marcel Somerville, the members of Cambridge university elite boat squad, contestants from RuPaul's Drag Race, and actress Miriam Margoyles of Harry Potter and Call The Midwife fame whose video was viewed 12,000 times in its first two days. The next iteration of the campaign – along with a continued emphasis on advocate endorsements – will be to focus on symptoms, self-isolation and support.</p>	
	University of Cambridge Guidance	https://aru.ac.uk/study/september2020/COVID-19-secure-campuses

The close partnership working between the universities, PHE and the LA with regular weekly meetings have allowed for clear and transparent communications, including highlighting areas of concern. The LA is part of a regional educational network brought together by PHE colleagues where issues can be raised on a regional level and request for national support escalated.

2. Question from Councillor Lucy Nethsingha

Following the convictions this summer of Keiran Burton and Guy Delph from Downham Market, and Lee Calder, from Whittlesey for extremely serious sexual abuse, will Cambridgeshire County Council be referring this case to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Safeguarding Children's Board for a serious case review? If so when will the review take place and the results be published. Given that these children were previously known to Cambridgeshire Social Services, if the case is not to be referred to the Safeguarding Board, what reasons are given for not referring the case for review?

Please could the membership of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Group be listed here, along with how to access any reviews carried out by the group.

Response from Councillor Simon Bywater, Chairman of Children and Young People Committee

There has not been and will not be a Serious Case Review in this matter. While the offences committed are very clearly abhorrent, and I welcome the lengthy jail sentences for the offenders, Serious Case Reviews [now referred to as Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews] are only undertaken where it is clear that there have been clear missed opportunities to safeguard children from serious harm, and where the completion of a multi-agency review would result in learning for the future.

Children's services had been supporting the family for a period of time owing to the impact of the mother's mental ill-health. There was never any indication from any agency working with the family that the children were being sexually abused. All indications were that positive progress was being made. The children have made no disclosures of abuse to this day.

Our Quality Assurance Service continually reviews the effectiveness of our children's services, providing an on-going programme of learning and reflection. Actions by children's services were reviewed by the quality assurance service at the time the offending came to light, and found no indications of any missed opportunities to safeguard the children from sexual abuse.

Children's services can only act where there is evidence that harm is taking place. As soon as it became clear from police information that the children were being harmed, we acted immediately to safeguard them.

You also enquired about the membership of the Case Review Sub Committee. This is a multi-agency meeting that is administered through the Children's Safeguarding Partnership Board and chaired by an Independent person. I have detailed the membership below;

- Head of Safeguarding People (Incorporating Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Designated Doctor (Safeguarding Children) Cambridgeshire & Peterborough CCG (NHS)
- Detective Inspector, Protecting Vulnerable People Dept, Cambridgeshire Constabulary
- Assistant Director, Safeguarding & Quality Assurance, Children's Services, Cambridgeshire County & Peterborough City Councils
- Assistant Director, Early Help, Assessment & Family Safeguarding, Children's Services, Cambridgeshire County & Peterborough City Councils
- Service Manager, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)
- Probation Officer, National Probation Service
- Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children, Cambridge Children and Young People's Services, Children's Community Services (CCS)
- Named Nurse (Safeguarding Children), Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT) (NHS)
- Specialist Nurse (Children) Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH), NHS
- Named Doctor (Safeguarding Children) Peterborough City Hospital (North West Anglia Foundation Trust NWAFT) (NHS)
- Senior Adviser for Leadership, School Improvement Service, Education Directorate, Cambridgeshire County Council
- Legal Services, Peterborough City Council
- Head of Youth Offender Services, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
- Head of Service, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board (Adults & Children)

Information about child safeguarding practice reviews, including links to those reviews that have been published, can be found on the safeguarding partnership boards website.

[Serious Case Reviews](#)