



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CITY OF ELY COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY,
15TH AUGUST 2022 AT THE MALTINGS, SHIP LANE, ELY**

PRESENT: Mrs T Coulson – Clerk to the Council

Cllr R Morgan, Mayor

Cllr R Denness

Cllr I Lindsay

Cllr V Ganivet

Cllr D Warman

County Cllr P Coutts

Cllr C Phillips

Cllr S Bellow

Cllr A Whelan

Cllr P Harris

6 Parishioners

Cllr C Whelan

Cllr E Every

Cllr D Edge

Cllr S Austen

1. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Pitt and the reasons accepted.

2. COUNCILLOR REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr Lindsay and Cllr Every declared an interest in item 14 as they were both Trustees for Ely Museum. They took no part in the discussion of this item.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 4TH JULY 2022 AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 4th July 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record, subject to the deletion of the minute for item 5. The accuracy of this was disputed by Cllr A Whelan. It was agreed the minutes would be approved and signed subject to the deletion of the minute under this item and this being rewritten and approved at the next Full Council meeting. They were signed by the Chairman. Pages 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979 refer. There were no matters arising. The new wording for item 5 to be approved at the next Full Council meeting through these minutes will be as follows:-

The Chairman announced that the Kings School Headmaster had put the use of the school at his disposal for events. The deadline for the next edition of the Ely is 22nd August 2022 - Cllrs Denness, Lindsay and Every will write a piece to raise the profile of the Climate and Environment Committee. The Chairman intends to hold monthly surgeries by appointment. He advised members about their attendance at the recent Planning Committee and presentation by Bellway had been disappointing. He said that Councillors need to give apologies and respond to emails.

Cllr A Whelan raised a point of personal explanation that she and Cllr C Whelan had met previously with Bellway homes and that neither were aware of the planned Council meeting.

Cllr A Whelan said that by sending an email this does not guarantee that it has been received by the recipient. The Chairman advised that an attendance graph is in place and that he wanted to implement a graph that measures response times to emails. Cllr A Whelan advised that the Chairman cannot decide this, and the matter should go to the Governance Working Group.

5. PRESENTATION BY SALLY BONNETT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND STRATEGY MANAGER, ECDC REGARDING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

Sally Bonnett explained what a Neighbourhood Plan was, the process for undertaking them and the financial implications. The process will take a minimum of 2 years. She agreed to forward the information in written format to the Clerk and provide links to other Councils that had already gone through the process and produced and adopted a Neighbourhood Plan. She would also try and ascertain the possible cost of undertaking this.

The Chairman thanked Sally Bonnett for attending.

Sally Bonnett left the meeting at 7.18 pm.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that the Council had recently had two elections for the East and North ward and welcomed the two new councillors, Daniel Edge and Mary Wade. He also thanked all those that had stood, but not been successful as it had ensured the result had been democratic.

7. QUESTION TIME

A parishioner raised a question they had asked in February regarding the way the Council communicates with its parish. It had been agreed that the Communications and PR Working Group would discuss this. The Clerk informed the resident that unfortunately the Working Group had not met, but the Group will meet shortly and this will be discussed. Another resident raised their concerns about the recent elections and that they had been unable to vote and felt that the Council should have put information out to the parishioners about how to have done this. The Clerk explained that the elections are administered by ECDC and the Council has no involvement in these. Another parishioner also raised the same concerns. It was agreed the Clerk would write to ECDC and inform them that some parishioners in the East ward did not receive polling cards.

8. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A written report was received from County Cllrs Coutts and A Whelan. A copy of which will be attached to the minutes. Cllrs Every and C Whelan had no report due to being on holiday. Cllr Austen informed members she had attended the Licensing Committee meeting where taxi fares and charges had been discussed.

2 parishioners left the meeting at 7.43 pm.

9. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS & REPORT

The Mayor had attended:- Riverside Arts 2022 Open Studio at Little Ouse; Ely Choral Society Summer Serenade; Visit Ely Guide of OCH with Lucy Frazer MP; Ely Pride; Cambridge & District Classic Car Club on Palace Green; welcomed members of the local chapter of the Guild of All Souls to St Peter's Church for Vespers and Benediction and also attended a welcome reception for Ukrainian refugees at the Hayward Theatre with Lucy Frazer MP.

The Deputy Mayor had attended the Rich Tea Club and a reception at USAF Mildenhall.

10. PLANNING

Cllr Lindsay gave a report on the last planning meeting.

11. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

The following information only items were received and noted:-

Notification of Road Closures:- A1101 Mildenhall Road, Ely – 13.2.23 – 31.3.23

Notification of Street Naming and Numbering:- 20 Old Bank, Prickwillow; 207 Lancaster Way Business Park, Ely; 4 & 5 The Bungalow, Orwell Pit Farm, Downham Road, Ely; 1-14 Bens Yard, Stuntney, Ely
Letter from Zurich informing that they are transferring parts of Zurich UK general insurance business, from Zurich Insurance plc (ZIP) to Zurich Insurance Company Ltd (ZIC)

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) **PERSONNEL, FINANCE & GOVERNANCE** – Cllr Bellow presented a report of a meeting held on the 18th July, which was approved. It was unanimously agreed that all Committee meetings should return to Sessions House. Full Council will however remain at the Maltings. The Council had a stall at Pride on the 6th August, which was a very successful event. The Clerk will sort the submission from the Council for the next edition of the Elyi. Cllr Morgan proposed to Full Council the formal appointment of 2 new staff members, Mr Matthew Routledge as the Sales and Events Officer and Ms Emma Grey as part-time Tourist Information Centre Assistant and to pass a resolution that both Mr Matthew Routledge and Ms Emma Grey be specified as pensionable employees under regulation b1(5) of the local government regulations 1986 (as amended). This was seconded by Cllr Bellow and unanimously approved. The item regarding the overtime/toil review and ex-gratia payment was discussed in committee at the end of the meeting, due to the sensitive information being discussed.

(ii) **CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT** – Cllr Denness presented a report of a meeting held on the 11th July 2022, which was approved. Cllr Ganivet had booked a stall for the Council for the Green Fair to be held on Cross Green on the 10th September. Cllrs Lindsay, Every and Denness agreed to help her man the stall. Cllr Denness agreed to amend the draft Highways Three Point Plan, which had been discussed at the meeting and will then resend to councillors. Cllr Denness agreed to contact the office of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mayor for an update on the aims for the regions transport issues. The 2 new MVAs have now been installed in Prickwillow. It is hoped that these will help reduce speeding vehicles.

(iii) **ASSETS** – Cllr Phillips presented a report of a meeting held on the 12th July 2022, which was approved. The Chapel floor will be professionally cleaned at a cost of £1078.12, which will then allow the Estates Manager to repair the floor. New Christmas lights have been ordered and the Christmas shopping event will be held on the 27th November. Two new members were co-opted on to the Christmas Lights Sub-Committee, Mr T DesChane and Mr C Lockwood. It was unanimously agreed to additional expenditure of £1643.04 for extra wheels for the new seating units, which will reduce the load of the units on the floor. Cllr Phillips and the Clerk will be meeting with the second highest scoring applicant in the previous tender process with regard to the Maltings Cottage to discuss their interest in the cottage and whether it will be possible to work with them.

(iv) **TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE** – Cllr Warman presented a report of the meeting held on the 25th July 2022 which was approved. The report from the Tourism and Town Centre Manager was noted and plans are underway for the Harvest and Apple Fayre on the 8th October. A meeting will be held between Cllrs Warman, Every, the Tourism and Town Centre Manager and the Clerk. This will be to discuss budget presentation and how best to analyse the profits. The update on the digital signal project was noted. The total number of totems has been reduced to 10.

13. REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Ely/Ribe Association – minutes of a meeting held on the 13th July 2022 were noted by members.

City of Ely Allotments and Gardens Association – minutes of meetings held on the 27th April 2022, 18th May 2022 and 15th June 2022 were noted.

14. TO AGREE THE SIGNING OF THE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH ELY MUSEUM

The Clerk explained the need for the Service Level Agreement with Ely Museum as the Council provides a large annual revenue grant to them. Cllr Morgan proposed this be approved and signed by the Clerk. This was seconded by Cllr A Whelan and unanimously approved. Cllrs Every and Lindsay took no part in the discussion of this item as they had declared an interest due to them being Trustees of the Museum.

Items 15 and 16 were discussed in Committee at the end of the meeting due to the confidential/commercially sensitive information that was being discussed. Cllr Morgan proposed to resolve that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the Meeting. This proposal was seconded by Cllr A Whelan and unanimously agreed by members. There were no members of the Press or Public present as they had all been asked to leave at 8.15 pm.

15. TO DECIDE ON WHICH COST OPTION TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE STAFF TOIL/OVERTIME REVIEW AS AGREED AT THE LAST FULL COUNCIL MEETING

This item was discussed in Committee at the end of the meeting due to its confidential nature. Cllr A Whelan proposed that the Council move forward with a Service Agreement with Human Capital Development to enable the staff toil/overtime review. This was seconded by Cllr Every and unanimously approved. Members also discussed the proposal from the Personnel, Finance and Governance Committee to make a one-off ex-gratia payment for the extra hours worked for the Jubilee weekend by some OCH staff. Cllr A Whelan proposed that this be approved, which was seconded by Cllr Morgan and unanimously approved.

16. TO DISCUSS THE RENTING OUT OF THE JUDGES ROOM AT SESSIONS HOUSE ON A LONG TERM AGREEMENT

This item was discussed in Committee at the end of the meeting due to the commercial sensitivity. After a lengthy discussion, Cllr Lindsay proposed the approval of the renting out of the Judges Room on a long term agreement. This was seconded by Cllr A Whelan and unanimously agreed.

17. FINANCE

Cllr Morgan proposed these all be approved, which was seconded by Cllr Lindsay and unanimously approved.

To approve the following for payment:

Direct debit payments and BACS payments

ECDC	948.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	279.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	1821.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	923.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	499.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	948.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	279.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	1821.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	923.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	499.00	Paid by direct debit
FuelGenie	544.94	Paid by direct debit
FuelGenie	422.16	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	195.24	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	130.29	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	523.95	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1321.91	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1479.06	Paid by direct debit
Drax Energy Solutions Ltd	35.69	Paid by direct debit
Drax Energy Solutions Ltd	34.57	Paid by direct debit

17. FINANCE CONTINUED

Cybertill Ltd	65.68	Paid by direct debit
Cybertill Ltd	65.68	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	42.54	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	107.08	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	42.54	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	107.08	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	78.66	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	78.66	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	262.01	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1632.79	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	745.68	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease	383.70	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease	383.70	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease	352.06	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	103.11	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	137.11	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	3676.35	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	13.10	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	40.30	Paid by direct debit
Siemens Financial Services Ltd	452.40	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	72.00	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	250.00	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	284.55	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	327.22	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	283.77	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	328.73	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	1375.08	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	101.75	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	224.39	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	109.14	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	114.98	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	2340.04	Paid by direct debit
High Speed Training Ltd	432.00	Paid by BACS
L Villegas-Ci	65.00	Paid by BACS
NSS	14908.14	Paid by BACS
Shefs	1546.20	Paid by BACS
D Holt	50.00	Paid by BACS
Shefs	1036.80	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage	234.00	Paid by BACS
S Blake	612.50	Paid by BACS
Local Media Publishing Ltd	180.00	Paid by BACS
S Bradley	300.00	Paid by BACS
Shefs	6793.20	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	150.61	Paid by BACS
M Routledge	825.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	115.20	Paid by BACS
Minerva Publications	490.80	Paid by BACS
Breckland Brass Band	250.00	Paid by BACS
ICCM	95.00	Paid by BACS
Cambridge Art	931.20	Paid by BACS
Sterling Cleaning Services Ltd	50.40	Paid pd by BACS
The Flag Workshop	72.40	Paid by BACS

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17. FINANCE CONTINUED

Anglian High Access Ltd	350.00	Paid by BACS
S Bradley	300.00	Paid by BACS
We Are Blueshed Ltd	444.00	Paid by BACS
We Are Blueshed Ltd	444.00	Paid by BACS
Page Fine Jewellery Ltd	150.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	124.80	Paid by BACS
S Bradley	300.00	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	105.17	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage	234.00	Paid by BACS
Mr T Mead	285.00	Paid by BACS
Bright Publishing Ltd	210.00	Paid by BACS
S Blake	638.00	Paid by BACS
D Holt	50.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	307.20	Paid by BACS
Prior Associates (Soham) Ltd	100.00	Paid by BACS
Prior Associates (Soham) Ltd	500.00	Paid by BACS
We Are Blueshed Ltd	660.00	Paid by BACS
H C Electrical	652.80	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	197.11	Paid by BACS
S Bradley	300.00	Paid by BACS
P Sadgrove	40.00	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	25.90	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	76.80	Paid by BACS

The following invoices have already been paid prior to the Full Council, due to due date of payment with the approval of the Chairman

Kevin Robinson	24.00	114139
Bright Publishing Ltd	210.00	114138
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	158.29	114437
Aztek Services Ltd	1056.00	114136
Gordon Harrison	975.86	114135
Amazon Payments (UK) Ltd	129.92	114134
Star Editions Ltd	725.29	114133
Caterfix Ltd	162.00	114132
Anglia Sprayers Ltd	35.84	114131
Jewson Ltd	132.12	114130
Thomas Ridley & Son Ltd	507.97	114129
ECDC	12032.19	114128
G & J Peck Ltd	71.91	114127
CoolerAid Ltd	76.02	114126
Simpson's Nurseries Ltd	69.98	114125
City Cycle Centre	101.32	114124
Eden Farm Hulley's	573.06	114123
Verve Digital Ltd	120.00	114122
R Morgan	18.00	114121
Millennium Pest Control Ltd	72.00	114120
ESPO	554.43	114120
Millennium Pest Control Ltd	72.00	114119

The following invoices had not been paid prior to the meeting

ECDC	53.00	114157
Witham Oil & Paint (Soham) Ltd	47.83	114140
Jewson Ltd	100.52	114158
Eden Farm Hulley's	367.44	114141
Allens Skip Hire Ltd	440.00	114142

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17. FINANCE CONTINUED

March Stationery & Print	110.00	114143
East Anglian Wedding Services	320.00	Paid by BACS
Ely City Military Band	250.00	114144
Cambridge Wind Band	250.00	114145
A H Moran	250.00	114146
Verve Digital Ltd	120.00	114147
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	62.70	114148
East Air Conditioning Services Ltd	390.00	114149
Pen & Sword Books Ltd	455.60	114150
CoolerAid Ltd	48.85	114151
Thomas Ridley & Son Ltd	488.95	114152
1st Call (Hire & Sales) Ltd	6.60	114153
G & J Peck Ltd	9.77	114156
Anglia Sprayers Ltd	72.45	114154
ESPO	37.66	114155
Trade UK	25.99	Paid by BACS
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	393.74	Paid by BACS
F W Cook Funeral Services	47.00	Paid by BACS
R Meredith	121.25	Paid by BACS
British Telecommunications	262.93	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	266.18	Paid by direct debit
G & J Peck Ltd	8.99	114156
Waterbeach Brass	250.00	Paid by BACS
House of Marbles	466.69	Paid by BACS
The Blue Hand Press	106.54	114159
Alan Alper	18.50	Paid by BACS
Harpers Collins Publishers	240.72	114160
Securitas Security Services (UK) Ltd	651.72	Paid by BACS
NR Plumbing & Heating Ltd	7304.40	114161
S Bradley	350.00	Paid by BACS
Jewson Ltd	132.01	114158
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	73.80	Paid by direct debit

Payments relating to staff since meeting on the 4th July 2022

Salaries and wages	£31,417.28 (July)	£31,340.81 (August)
Inland Revenue (tax & NI)	£9,363.50	£9,406.26
Pension fund payments	£9,421.18	£9,814.58

Members noted and approved the bank reconciliation against the accounts for the period ending 31st March, 30th April, 31st May, 30th June 2022 and 31st July 2022

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

MONTHLY REPORT

AUGUST 2022

FULL COUNCIL

The Council's new HQ at Alconbury Weald was formally opened on Friday 8 July. The Full Council meeting on Tuesday 19 July was the first to take place in the Multi-Function Room, now called the Red Kite Room. Piers was unable to attend having tested positive for Covid and Alison was unable to attend due to annual leave.

The meeting approved, by a majority of two, the Chief Executive's proposal for a senior staff restructure. The meeting also agreed, by the same margin, to sign the Nature & Climate Declaration, a recommendation from the Environment & Green Investment Committee. Twenty-four councillors voted against this, on the hottest day on record in the UK.

Five motions were debated, four of which were passed—on advertising of junk food, 40-to-30MPH buffer zones, active travel, and pavement parking.

STRATEGY & RESOURCES

Complaint Handling

The Local Government Ombudsman upheld thirteen complaints (72 per cent) against Cambridgeshire County Council out of a total of 18 investigated in 2021/22—and has told the council to improve its responsiveness to complaints handling. All complaints upheld were in the areas of Adult Social Care, Education or Children's Services.

The percentage of upheld complaints, out of a total of 60 considered by the national local government watchdog, puts the county council only slightly above those made to similar organisations which stands at 71 per cent. But the Ombudsman's annual letter raises concerns about how the Council responds. The annual report shows that Cambridgeshire had not offered a satisfactory remedy to any of the thirteen complaints before they were escalated to the Ombudsman, but once that was done the Ombudsman was satisfied in all cases that its recommendations had been successfully implemented.

The Council has admitted that this is not good enough and the new Chief

Executive has committed to improvement.

ADULTS & HEALTH

Integrated Care System

Friday 1 July was the first official day of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System (ICS) which includes both Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council.

Integrated Care Systems (ICS) are partnerships of organisations that come together to plan and deliver joined up health and care services. There are now 42 ICSs across England. Our ICS brings together health and care organisations, local authorities, and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. More information is available on the new ICS website www.cpics.org.uk

Healthwatch annual report

Healthwatch in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have published their latest annual report, *Championing what matters to you*. It shows how the feedback that local people have shared has helped influence improvements in health and care services. <https://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/news/2022-06-30/championing-what-matters-you>

NHS Health Check service

Healthy You provide the important NHS Health Check Service to spot early signs of kidney disease, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes or dementia in the at-risk age group 40-74 years. Clinics are held at least monthly in local libraries, including Ely. To check your eligibility and to book a free NHS health check appointment call 0333 005 0093, or follow the link <https://healthyyou.org.uk/services/health-checks/>

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Education White Paper

Very significant changes to education in England are on the way according to the Government's Education White Paper. These include the intention that every school should be in a Multi Academy Trust by 2030, though councils will also be enabled to set up their own MATs. There will also be an expected 32.5 hour minimum school day, a new test of literacy and numeracy for a sample of pupils

in Y9, and new intervention powers over schools with two 'requires improvement' Ofsteds.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Council continues to need to manage the growing budget, overspend and numbers of Education Health & Care Plans (EHCPs) for children and young people with higher levels of special educational needs and disabilities. In 2016/17 3,429 Cambridgeshire pupils had EHCPs; in 2021/22 the figure was 6,100. The deficit in 'high needs' spending was £39.3M last year and this is projected to grow to £93.2M by 2025/26 if left unchecked. Government regulations mean that the Council cannot divert funding from other sources to fill this gap.

Cambridgeshire is not the only authority in this situation, and the Department for Education has introduced a 'safety valve' mechanism for those authorities most severely affected. Cambridgeshire has now been invited to participate in the third round of this 'safety valve' programme.

This involves the authority entering into an agreement with the DfE to reform its high needs systems to reduce costs and return 'high needs' spending to balance as quickly as possible. Only when the Government is satisfied that a sustainable local plan is in place to reduce the deficit will it consider any national funding support towards the deficit.

COSMIC (COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION)

Household Support Fund

The Government-funded Household Support Fund, delivered through the Council, continues into 2022/23 offering emergency pay-outs to households in immediate financial distress. However this is clearly a 'sticking-plaster' solution, and more fundamental help is needed to address the causes of financial distress experienced by increasing numbers of people.

The Council has chosen to additionally fund a 'hub' model, repurposing the Covid-19 Support Hub. Working with district councils, communities, and the voluntary sector, this works with those in need to make them aware of—and facilitate applications to—services such as free school meals, Healthy Start, free childcare, warm home discounts, Council Tax reduction schemes and more.

Communities Capital Fund

In 2020 the Council's previous administration established a one-off £5M 'Communities Capital Fund', in which up to £500K each was allocated to a range of

bids for capital projects. Eight of these projects are currently 'red-rated' for a variety of reasons, some—but not all—to do with issues such as Covid-19 or supply chain problems. COSMIC has set up a councillor working group to examine these projects in detail and make recommendations about them, which could include changing deadlines, or even termination. Any request for additional funding would have to be treated as a fresh application.

Archives

The move of the Cambridgeshire Archives from Cambridge to Ely completed at around the same time as the Covid outbreak. It has therefore been very difficult to know what underlying effect the move has had on the service. There has been a considerable increase in requests for digital copies of records, but a large drop in in-person visitor numbers and in the pool of volunteers. The service is considering ways of responding to this digital shift.

The service has applied to The National Archives for national Accredited Archive status. The team visited Ely on 8 June as part of this process, and it was announced on 30 July that national Accredited Archive status had been awarded.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Decisions

The Council's Environment & Green Investment Committee approved the recommendations we reported last month:

- To spend £2.175M on the first phase of the Council's Net Zero plans.
- To access a contract 'framework' to attract more funding for domestic energy retrofits.
- To spend £1.7M on flood and nature restoration projects.

Sunnica application delay

The timetable for consideration of the Sunnica solar farm application has been upended. The Planning Inspectorate has adjourned the Preliminary Meeting and thereby postponed the Examination. This is because the applicant has not yet submitted its change request for changes to parts of the scheme caused by the National Grid's refusal to allow an extension to the sub-station at Burwell. The Examining Authority is now inviting comments on the prospect of making sufficient progress to enable an Examination to begin in September.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

A10 / A142 BP roundabout

The Combined Authority has assigned active travel funding to the BP roundabout to make it possible to cross on foot or by cycle, after the previous changes made it much more dangerous. A high-level options analysis is being carried out over the summer. Putting right the situation left by the previous Mayor is a very welcome development.

A142 Stuntney Causeway resurfacing

The hot weather has led to significant problems with this resurfacing project, and delays to the re-lining of the carriageway.

The latest update from Highways is that the site was programmed for lining on 10th August, but due to the current hot spell this has been delayed to the coming week so that the surface can be dusted and further protected during the hot weather spell. The road markings will not adhere to the dust, and given the delay we have already had, the last thing they want is for the road markings to come off shortly after being put down.

The forecast is cooler from Monday 15th, so the site will be swept to remove any stone on 16th in preparation for the Road marking to take place on 17th or 18th.

In relation to areas where there are defects, these have been picked up on the joint inspection that is carried out with the contractors and we are now waiting for proposals from the supply chain contractor as to how they will address these.

A10 Ely to A14

The Highways & Transport Committee has accepted £4M from the Government delivered through the Combined Authority, to develop plans for changes to the A10 from Ely to Milton. A county and district councillor working group will be established to oversee this process.

No decision has yet been made on whether the eventual proposal will include any element of dualling, or whether it will consist solely of junction improvements. The Government has stipulated that a lower cost option than dualling should be assessed, and that all modes of transport should be considered. The work will also need to integrate with Greater Cambridge Partnership schemes and with infrastructure for the large development at Waterbeach. Carbon impacts will also be considered.

Public consultation is expected in early 2023, followed by selection of a preferred option, and a full preliminary design and environmental statement completed by the end of 2024.

Welney demountable flood barrier work

The full road closure at Welney is expected to continue until Thursday 25 August. From Friday 26 August to Friday 16 September there will be two-way traffic lights for footpath reinstatement works. The public footpath access at Welney to Welmore Lake Sluice will remain closed until the end of construction.

Local Transport & Connectivity Plan

The Council is finalising its comments on the Combined Authority's draft Local Transport & Connectivity Plan. It has welcomed the general direction of the Plan but wants it to be more ambitious about carbon reduction and active travel, and to become less car centric. Locally, the Council points out that the East Cambridgeshire section of the Plan starts with a description of the problem of traffic within the historic core of Ely but contains no proposals to tackle this through improvements for people walking and cycling or removing through traffic. The section on improvements to rail traffic does not include any proposals to improve active travel links to railway stations.

Local Highways Improvement updates

The LHI working group is continuing to meet to review every stage of the LHI process and will make recommendations to the Highways & Transport Committee.

Road safety schemes

Work is progressing on proposals for Wheatsheaf Crossroads at Bluntisham, scene of a fatal collision in November 2019. Installation is likely to be in 2023/24.

£100K this year will be allocated to developing a proactive Investment Plan on main A roads, using iRAP methodology to assess risks. This is the process which told us that £5M was needed to make the A142 safer between Ely and Chatteris—but nothing like that amount has so far been spent. Of course while the methodology may be excellent, the issues it flags up then need to be addressed. £94K will be allocated to small measures identified as part of ongoing investigation processes by the County Council Road Safety Team.

20MPH schemes

A working group is finalising criteria for assessment of 20MPH applications. It has already decided to remove the requirement that existing speeds in an application area should already be 24MPH or below. Fourteen 20MPH applications from this year's Local Highways Improvement applications have already been moved from the LHI process to be the first cohort of schemes to be developed under this new budget.

Work has begun in the last few days to investigate options for a city-wide 20mph scheme for Ely. We hope to be able to give further information on this at the meeting on Monday.

Active travel strategy for Cambridgeshire

Public consultation on this is expected in autumn / winter 2022 with adoption in 2023.

Transport strategy for East Cambridgeshire

The current Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire was adopted in December 2017. The Council plans to review and update this strategy in 2023, once it has finished its current work on the Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Active Travel Strategies.

PENSION FUND

Pension Fund Triannual Valuation

The Pension fund 3-yearly valuation is currently progressing well and proposals for employer contribution rates are being discussed with employers. The overall expectation is of little change for most employers at this stage, despite the turmoil in the economy and in money markets.

Net carbon zero

The Pension fund is moving its passive equity investments from the current funds to lower carbon funds. This is likely to have a significant reduction in the overall carbon impact of the Pension Fund. The new funds are anticipated to be in place later in the year.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The new Interim Chief Executive now has his feet under the table, and has been delegated considerable power to appoint interims to senior roles. All focus is on Improvement, with up to £750K allocated to this work, and a self-assessment to be reported to the Board in September. A review of Governance has also taken place, with 47 recommendations for action. A Member-Officer protocol has been drawn up to improve behaviour and relationships.

Government-funded programmes to improve the energy efficiency of low income and energy inefficient homes have run into problems nationally as well as locally. The 'net zero energy hub' for Greater South East England—including Cambridgeshire & Peterborough—was awarded £78.35M in Green Homes Grant (LAD2) money, and £118M for the Sustainable Warmth Programme. But lack of capacity in the supply chain, including surveyors and installers, means it has been impossible to spend anything like this. Extensions of time given by Government to deliver previous schemes have resulted in low take up of later schemes because available contractors are still working on earlier ones.

When considering Bus Service Improvement Plans, the Government prioritised areas with lower economic growth. As Cambridgeshire & Peterborough—as a whole—does not fall into this category, it is not surprising that its bid failed. Meanwhile the Combined Authority is preparing for the massive bus upheaval when the Government ceases Covid support to bus providers.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has agreed a programme for scrutiny of the Combined Authority's forthcoming budget setting. It has also agreed to review some of the Combined Authority's previous housing decisions, including Community Land Trusts, the relationship with Laragh Homes, and the Statement of Community Benefit issued by the previous Mayor in favour of the proposed CLT development at Wilburton.

The Housing & Communities Committee has considered and recommended the residual role for the Combined Authority in housing now that it has no money for this purpose. This includes overseeing the buildout of its remaining projects, retaining some more limited housing expertise in-house.

The Combined Authority has also been developing an Alternative Fuels Strategy to go out for six weeks of public consultation.

Cllrs Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

County Councillors for Ely North and South