



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CITY OF ELY COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY,
7TH NOVEMBER 2022 AT THE MALTINGS, SHIP LANE, ELY**

PRESENT: Mrs T Coulson – Clerk to the Council

Cllr R Morgan, Mayor

Cllr R Denness

Cllr V Ganivet

County Cllr P Coutts

3 Parishioners

Cllr C Phillips

Cllr I Lindsay

Cllr P Harris

Cllr E Every

Cllr R Pitt

1. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr A Whelan, Cllr C Whelan, Cllr M Wade, Cllr S Austen, Cllr D Warman and Cllr S Bellow and their reasons were accepted.

2. COUNCILLOR REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

The Chairman proposed a dispensation be granted to Cllr Bellow, due to her personal circumstances for 6 months. This was seconded by Cllr Lindsay and unanimously approved.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 27TH SEPTEMBER 2022 AND
MATTERS ARISING**

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 27th September 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record. They were signed by the Chairman. Pages 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1995 refer. Matters arising:- Page 1990, item 12 (ii) - Cllr Lindsay asked if the memorial bench for the late Cllr Mike Rouse had progressed. The Clerk thought that Cllr Lindsay had agreed to see if he could get any donations towards the cost of this. Cllr Lindsay did not think this was the case but did agree to undertake this.

**5. SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE OUR BUS SERVICES WITHIN ELY AND
THE SURROUNDING VILLAGES**

Cllr Every introduced Mr Hughes and Mr Eden and thanked these residents, who were working on the Council's behalf to produce these proposals. Mr Hughes gave the presentation and answered questions from members. Cllr Every proposed the Council formally supports this proposal and does what it can to move it forward. The next stage would be to have discussions with the Combined Authority Mayor. This was seconded by the Chairman and unanimously agreed. A paper copy of the full proposal was provided to all councillors. The Mayor thanked Mr Hughes and Mr Eden for all their hard work in preparing such a marvellous report and proposals. It was greatly appreciated.

Mr Hughes and Mr Eden left the meeting at 7.38 pm.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman said he had been approached by the Editor of the Ely Standard and asked if he would like to have a monthly column. He had agreed to do this as he thought it might be a way of publicising the Council's meetings. He reminded members of the two services this week for Armistice and Remembrance Sunday. He also informed members of the planned staff party in December.

7. QUESTION TIME

A parishioner thanked the Council for the free summer entertainment that it provided. The summer band concerts are attended by many and people come from a far to enjoy. The Chairman said it was good to receive appreciation for these events. Mr Holden, a representative of the City of Ely Allotments and Gardens Association informed the Council a cabinet had now been sourced and as a space has been identified for this, they will be moving forward with the installation of this to allow the display of their trophies. They would also like to install an information board to give detailed information on the trophies. Cllr Every thanked the Association for providing such wonderful flowerbeds at St Mary's Green. Another parishioner asked three questions with regard to a recent Active Travel consultation, with answers provided by members.

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. Written reports from District Councillors Every and C Whelan were also received. A copy of these will be attached to the minutes. Cllr Austen had asked the Clerk to report, in her absence that she had nothing further to add to Cllr Every's report. County Cllr Coutts had asked for advice on how to communicate the 20 mph scheme consultation for Ely. Suggestions of putting in Elyi, Council's Facebook and other social media, Council's website, doing a SurveyMonkey were suggested. He also informed councillors that the restoration work to St Mary's Church was nearing completion and invitations will be sent out for the grand re-opening shortly. Cllr Every informed councillors that she had been involved in the applications for the District Council's Growth and Infrastructure Fund. Applicants had to show that consultation had been done with parishioners and reminded councillors that the Council needs to improve the consultation that it undertakes. She also informed councillors of the Careers and Schools Fair being held at the Cathedral on the 8th November.

9. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS & REPORT

The Mayor had attended the cinematic presentation of 'Fisherman's Friends: One and All', the first film to be screened on the new retractable seating at the Maltings. He attended the welcome party for the Ely Ribe Tour Guides at OCH; the launch of Ely Fireworks at OCH; the Pantomime Press Launch; a ghost tour with Ribe Tour Guides; the Apple & Harvest Fayre on Palace Green; the 107th annual dinner of the Old Eleans' Club; Godmanchester Civic Service; March Civic Service; Amy Wormald's 'Land Cover' painting exhibition at Babylon Gallery; The High Sheriff's Justice Service at the Cathedral; a concert performed by Sing! Choirs at West Road Concert Hall in Cambridge; a Trafalgar Day Supper at King's Lynn Town Hall; a concert of Petite Messe Solennelle by Rossini, performed by Ely Choral Society and judged the best Guy on Guy Fawkes Night.

The Deputy Mayor had taken part in the sight awareness day in Ely organised by Ely Lions. He had been blindfolded and led around the Market Place to understand how partially sighted and blind people cope with the obstacles in our high streets. Members of the public were also able to undertake this experience. Something that was raised was how unsteady the barriers are that are erected on Market day. If a blind person was to steady themselves on one of these they toppled forward. The Clerk will raise this with the Markets. He also undertook a talk to the Inner Wheel about the cemetery.

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:- Stour Green, Ely – 5 - 16.12.22; Queen Adelaide level crossing, Ely Road – 29.01.2023; Bridge Road, Ely – 7 – 8.11.2022

Thank you letter for grant given to CamSAR

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) **PERSONNEL, FINANCE & GOVERNANCE** – The Chairman presented a report of a meeting held on the 31st October, which was approved. The Chairman proposed the draft budget for 2023/24 with a proposed precept of £726,000, which would be an approximate increase on a Council tax band D property of 7.87% be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Pitt and unanimously approved. The Clerk will produce an explanation for the increase, which will be put on the Council's website. The Chairman proposed approval of the application received for a new parish noticeboard at Sessions House. This was seconded by Cllr Ganivet and unanimously approved.

(ii) **CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT** – Cllr Denness presented a report of a meeting held on the 3rd October 2022, which was approved. The Highways reports were noted. The Outdoor Sport and Leisure Working Group had met and Cllr Every proposed that as agreed that the Chairman of the Council be requested to write to the Commercial Director at East Cambs District Council, confirming that as requested by them, that the City of Ely Council has worked with the Splashpad Group to find a suitable venue and that two possible sites around the Hive had been identified. Permission in principle is therefore sought to pursue one of the sites for the Ely Splashpad. This was seconded by Cllr Pitt and unanimously agreed. Cllr Every will write the letter for the Chairman to sign. Cllr Lindsay informed members he was meeting with the Cathedral to discuss their plans for carbon neutralising as this may be helpful to the Council. Cllr Wade and Cllr Ganivet are looking at costs with regards to surveys for this.

(iii) **ASSETS** – Cllr Phillips presented a report of a meeting held on the 18th October 2022, which was approved. The request for lighting at the skate park on St John's Road was referred to the Climate & Environment Committee for consideration. A CIL application will be made for the replacement of the climbing tower/slide unit at St John's Road play area, a self-closing gate at the Paradise play area and picnic tables for Paradise and High Barns play areas. It was necessary to recruit new volunteers to help with the erection of the Christmas lights. A poster will be put on Facebook by Cllr C Whelan. A grant application had been submitted to ECDC's Growth and Infrastructure Fund for replacement windows at the Maltings.

(iv) **TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE** – Cllr Every presented a report of the meeting held on the 17th October 2022 which was approved. The report from the Tourism and Town Centre Manager was noted. The work is expected to commence on the digital signage boards in December. Cllr Every asked if any dates had been set for the presentation of the Freedom of the City. She had hoped that this would not be a rushed presentation and would be undertaken as soon as possible.

The parishioner left the meeting at 8.06 pm.

13. REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL MEETINGS

City of Ely Allotments and Gardens Association – minutes of meetings held on the 21st September 2022 were noted.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC 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 Phillips and unanimously agreed by councillors. There were no members of the press or public present.

14. TO CONSIDER REPORT WITH REGARD TO OVERTIME/TOIL REVIEW

Cllr Lindsay proposed that this report should go back to Personnel, Finance & Governance for a full discussion and recommendations to Full Council on each point of the report. This was seconded by Cllr Every and unanimously agreed.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC Cllr Morgan proposed to resolve that the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Phillips and unanimously agreed by councillors. There were no press or public to readmit.

Item 15 was taken before item 14. All members of the public left the meeting at 8.32 pm.

15. FINANCE

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

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
British Telecommunications	264.97	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	264.67	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	105.14	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	229.12	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	118.81	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	97.87	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	152.53	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	309.19	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	114.98	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	119.93	Paid by direct debit
FuelGenie	322.49	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
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1134.04	Paid by direct debit
Drax Energy Solutions Ltd	35.57	Paid by direct debit
Cybertill Ltd	70.12	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	3862.79	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	372.04	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	256.33	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	346.90	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	564.40	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	64.80	Paid by direct debit

15. FINANCE CONTINUED

Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	3034.82	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	971.15	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
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	115.05	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	3324.34	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	12.82	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power	46.48	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	140.90	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1103.82	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	250.00	Paid by direct debit
Human Capital Department Ltd	178.80	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	237.04	Paid by BACS
Shefs	3856.70	Paid by BACS
Core Surveys Ltd	1692.00	Paid by BACS
E L Long	125.80	Paid by BACS
Zurich	199.63	Paid by BACS
Ely Central Heating	90.00	Paid by BACS
The Prince Albert	500.00	Paid by BACS
J Peck	212.00	Paid by BACS
King's Lynn Mayor's Charity Fund	70.00	Paid by BACS
D Holt	75.00	Paid by BACS
Littleport Band	250.00	Paid by BACS
Enchanted Flowers	55.00	Paid by BACS
L E Enterprices	58.32	Paid by BACS
Gem Heating Solutions Ltd	204.00	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	24.00	Paid by BACS
S Blake	811.50	Paid by BACS
March Stationery & Print	113.88	Paid by BACS
Human Capital Department Ltd	178.80	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage	234.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	100.80	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	181.08	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	405.61	Paid by BACS
Cambridge Mobility Ltd	249.12	Paid by BACS
Cranbrook Plants	2037.52	Paid by BACS
Godmanchester Town Council	60.00	Paid by BACS
M J Grace	490.70	Paid by BACS
Prickwillow Village Council	2500.00	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo	871.22	Paid by BACS
Avatravel (Leyland) Ltd	13.40	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	230.40	Paid by BACS
Ely Hampers	626.50	Paid by BACS
Cambridge Mobility Ltd	455.52	Paid by BACS
DEMAT	42.00	Paid by BACS
English Eden	565.00	Paid by BACS

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MAYOR
29th November 2022

15. FINANCE CONTINUED

Bewilderbeest Ltd	70.08	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	76.80	Paid by BACS
Heightsafe Systems Ltd	660.00	Paid by BACS
L Rouse	35.00	Paid by BACS
We Are Blueshed Ltd	480.00	Paid by BACS
VisitEngland	290.75	Paid by BACS
House of Marbles	243.84	Paid by BACS
H C Electrical	1793.10	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	24.00	Paid by BACS
Local Media Publishing Ltd	180.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	201.60	Paid by BACS
L E Enterprices	349.92	Paid by BACS
S Blake	330.50	Paid by BACS

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

Ellgia Ltd	20.16	114198
Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	355.20	114199
HMRC	4236.20	114200
Grocer's Brokers Ltd	360.12	114201
City Cycle Centre	105.55	114202
G & J Peck Ltd	64.99	114203
C De Boar	200.00	114204
J Kendall	44.81	114205
Thomas Ridley & Son Ltd	899.13	114206
Pen & Sword Books Ltd	464.57	114207
Newsquest Media Group Ltd	210.00	114208
Fen Farm Supplies	558.00	114209
Mrs A J Morgan	21.15	114210
David J Richards Ltd	220.50	114211
DTP Southfield	425.66	114212
CoolerAid Ltd	12.10	114213
Millennium Pest Control Ltd	72.00	114214
ESPO	63.42	114215
Two Bad Mice Publishing Ltd	189.94	114216
CamAlarms Ltd	394.80	114217
Warren Access	263.10	114218
ECDC	14887.82	114219
Soham Pest Control	99.00	114220
CamSAR	750.00	114221
Cambs Artistic Roller Skating Club	1000.00	114222
Magpas Air Ambulance	500.00	114223
EARTH	1000.00	Paid by BACS
A Bennett	94.61	114225
M Routledge	95.70	114226
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	72.44	114227
Mr J Hannaford	200.00	114229
City of Ely Allotments & Gardens Association	298.50	114230
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	96.00	114231

15. FINANCE CONTINUED

Festive Lights Ltd	3517.27	114232
Two Bad Mice Publishing Ltd	131.61	114234

The following invoices had not been paid prior to the meeting

Mrs A J Morgan	71.55	114228
Simpson's Nurseries Ltd	49.01	114235
Jewson Ltd	12.52	114236
Ely Tool Hire Ltd	100.52	Paid by BACS
March Stationery & Print	182.50	Paid by BACS
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	216.59	Paid by BACS
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	27.50	114239
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	12.95	114242
Warren Access	2359.08	Paid by BACS
Fenland Leisure Products Ltd	184.80	Paid by BACS
Bacon Lightning Protection & Maintenance Ltd	528.00	114237
Allens Skip Hire Ltd	220.00	114238
CoolerAid Ltd	18.03	114240
D Holt	75.00	Paid by BACS
M Chinery-Colyer	198.05	Paid by BACS
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	29.59	114242
A Bennett	59.35	114241
British Telecommunications	266.00	Paid by direct debit
Fuel Genie	545.60	Paid by direct debit
Eel & Sedge	88.00	Paid by BACS
Nunton Christmas Trees	1950.00	Paid by BACS
City Cycle Centre	33.65	114243
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	250.00	Paid by direct debit
Festival Lights Ltd	125.93	114244
Drax Energy Solutions Ltd	35.69	Paid by direct debit
ATS Heritage Ltd	234.00	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	202.34	Paid by BACS

Payments relating to staff since meeting on the 27th September 2022

Salaries and wages	£30,368.72
Inland Revenue (tax & NI)	£9,681.72
Pension fund payments	£9,980.32

Members noted and approved the bank reconciliation against the accounts for the periods ending 31st August 2022 and 30th September 2022

The meeting closed at 8.47 pm

Cllrs Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2022

STRATEGY & RESOURCES

Financial crisis

The financial crisis we thought we were experiencing a month ago as a result of energy prices was as nothing compared to the turmoil following the 'budget that wasn't a budget' announced by Prime Minister Liz Truss and Chancellor of the Exchequer Kwasi Kwarteng on Friday 23 September.

Even with the change of PM and series of policy U-turns we face uncertain times as individuals, communities, and as a country. This includes local authorities for whom inflation and interest rate rises seriously disrupt financial plans.

Current year—small overspend

The Council's total service budgets for the current year are:

- Revenue: £456 million (net)
- Capital: £164 million (with a total programme of over £1 billion)

In setting the current year's budget in February 2022, the Council provided for significant budget growth between the previous year and the current year. It allowed for:

- Inflation £9.991 million
- Demand growth £9.615 million
- Pressures (e.g. increased costs or reduced income) £16.236 million
- Investments £7.253 million

This increased spending was met through this year's council tax increase, savings, and Government funding.

In June, the Council allocated additional resources to meet expected inflationary pressures in the current year. These are mainly due to energy prices and to some of the Council's large contracts which are linked to national inflation figures. The Council also created a reserve to meet unexpected inflationary pressures. Apart from pay inflation, the Council therefore expects to be able to meet the costs of inflation in its revenue budgets this financial year.

Even so, the Council is currently forecasting a small (£2.368 million or 0.5 per cent) overspend for 2022/23, mainly due to the effects of the expected level of public sector pay inflation for this year, which exceeds the estimates used in budgeting. Inflation is also impacting on the Council's capital programme, alongside international supply chain disruption.

Next year and onwards—it gets much worse

2023/24 onwards however is another story. Inflation remains a significant concern in looking ahead to setting the Council's medium-term financial plan for the next five years. When the Council set its Medium Term Financial Plan in February 2022, the budget gaps it expected in future years were as follows.

ALL FIGURES FROM FEB 2022, in £000s	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Budget Gap	16,700	19,626	23,127	15,006	18,731
Ongoing grant funding changes from settlement	-6,823	-1,851	0	2,162	0
4.99 per cent increase in Council Tax, versus 2 per cent increase already assumed	-9,877	-379	-390	-386	-394
Remaining Budget Gap	0	17,396	22,737	16,782	18,337

Budget planning is still ongoing, but instead of £17.396 million the remaining budget gap for the coming year 2023/24 is now looking to be over £28.6 million. This will again need to be filled by council tax, savings, and any Government funding awarded between now and February 2023. These were the assumptions made even before the economic announcement on 23 September.

Central government has so far given no indication of further funding to councils to meet pressures, and indeed since the change of PM it is talking of reductions in public spending to pay for its unfunded tax cuts to high earners. The Council is therefore planning on the basis of needing to close this budget gap almost entirely through decisions within the Council's control.

In highways the cost of materials is rising, while Government capital allocations have not been increased for inflation, reducing the amount of maintenance it is possible to do.

Several of the Council's large contracts (such as for waste disposal) have inflationary uplifts included in contracts pegged to national indices—on a very large contract the difference between a 2 per cent rise and an 8 per cent rise can be very significant. The Council also purchases a large amount of electricity, with around two thirds of its electricity bill spent on powering street lights.

The Council also needs power for its public-facing buildings such as libraries, registration offices, highway depots and offices. Keeping these buildings open and warm may be even more important for individuals and communities during the colder months.

It is currently estimated that energy costs will double from October 2022. This projection is based on the information currently available, and given the volatility of the market there is increasing uncertainty as to how forecast inflation will settle over future years. There are also potential risks to energy supply which could result in energy shortages.

In September 2022 the government announced some relief from energy price increases for public sector organisations. The Council is considering the detail of this announcement and its impact, if any, on price projections. If the relief is for only six months, it will not necessarily provide any reduction in prices faced over the medium-term.

Changes in energy prices affect the Council beyond costs such as simply heating buildings or running street lights. The Council is engaged in a number of energy projects, including retrofitting its own buildings with clean energy, building solar farms, installing solar panels on park and ride sites, and the flagship community heating project at Swaffham Prior. The business cases for all these projects change very significantly as a result of changing expectations for the costs of the oil and gas they are replacing.

Support for residents in coping with the cost of living

The Council is continuing to collate information about the various sources of help for individuals and households struggling with the cost of living crisis.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities-localism/support-with-the-cost-of-living>

BUSES

Buses have been the main talking point for residents and politicians alike, since Stagecoach announced that despite taking Government money to sustain local bus routes still affected by the Covid passenger downturn, they were going to close large numbers of local routes anyway.

Combined Authority

With these services due to cease on 30 October (all the notice Stagecoach have to give) the Mayor's Combined Authority—which is the public transport authority for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough—launched a procurement with £1.7 million on offer to fill as many of the gaps as possible from the date on which Stagecoach leaves them until the end of March 2023. As a result of this nearly all these services have been saved, at least until March 2023.

Beyond March 2023, the Combined Authority will be making decisions on bus services as part of its annual budget and business planning process.

The actions of Stagecoach have shown that the current system—in place since the mid 1980s—where commercial operators compete for money-making routes, leaving local authorities to fund the loss-making but socially necessary routes, is unsustainable. It is therefore vital that the Combined Authority moves forward at pace with proposals to develop a reliable public transport network for Cambridgeshire. Ideally this would include franchising of bus routes, where profitable and unprofitable routes are bundled together to avoid the current cherry-picking. However, to do this requires a steady stream of income.

County Council

At Cambridgeshire County Council's Strategy & Resources Committee on Friday 30 September, councillors on all sides joined to condemn Stagecoach for its actions, calling them 'appalling', 'scandalous' and even 'diabolical'.

But a premature proposal to allocate £1.7M of the Council's own reserves to a bus subsidy pot was not supported at this stage, given that there was an ongoing re-tendering process whose results were not yet known.

Council Leader Cllr Nethsingha is writing to Government, specifically to Lucy Frazer MP as Minister of State for Transport, to ask that the Government urgently review the current regulations which allow bus companies to simply cancel routes at such short notice, and which give Bus Improvement money direct to bus operators rather than the local authorities responsible for them.

Greater Cambridge Partnership

Meanwhile, the Greater Cambridge Partnership Board has agreed to go to public consultation on its proposals for significant bus expansion over the next four years, paid for by a charge on driving in Cambridge from 2027. A set of exemptions, discounts, and refunds is also proposed in a number of circumstances. It is extremely important that residents in East Cambridgeshire are fully enabled to take part in the forthcoming consultation, and are provided with all the information they need to do so. An information and consultation session was held in Ely Library on Saturday 29 October. Piers attended this and spent an hour explaining to the project team the concerns about the proposals which had been raised by Ely residents.

ADULTS & HEALTH

Winter infections

Nationally and locally the public health services are gearing up for resurgences of Covid, and of flu and other outbreaks. No additional Covid-specific funding has been provided in the Government's public health grant to local authorities this year, though locally a small Covid team is funded until March 2023 from remaining resources.

To address the risk of a surge in infections, the Council is preparing to establish a Winter Infection Management Team, with an Amber plan for an extremely difficult winter, and a Red plan in the event of a major incident. Autumn Covid boosters are currently being delivered to those aged 50+ and some who are at higher risk, with flu jabs also being given at the same time.

Health care waste

Following the debate at January's Full Council meeting about the Envar application for a medical waste incinerator at Woodhurst, a report came to the Adults & Health Committee on Wednesday 5 October on how the NHS locally is tackling waste and promoting carbon reduction.

The report said, "All trusts aim to maximise recycling of domestic mixed recycling wastes through sustainable waste management, including for example specialist recycling of certain types of waste, such as toner cartridges, batteries and reuse of items such as furniture and walking aids. The remaining general/DMR [domestic mixed recycling] waste is processed via contracted services. Each trust has their own contract to dispose of this waste."

It went on, "The Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CUH) incinerator provides disposal for 7- 8 tonnes of healthcare waste per day. This waste is generated from CUH and Royal Papworth Hospital (RPH). On-site incineration of healthcare waste is subject to constant emissions monitoring and very tight permit controls whilst significantly reducing the carbon emissions that would arise from waste road haulage and providing heat recovery to directly warm the hospital campus premises (15% of total)."

Examples were given from the various local NHS Trusts of their action plans to reduce waste and plastics. The new Integrated Care System for health and care in Cambridgeshire has a Green Plan for sustainability and carbon reduction.

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION

Help with water bills

The County Council's COSMIC committee has agreed to use money from the Household Support Fund to give a 'payment holiday' to pensioners in arrears with their water bills—often an early sign of financial distress. At least one third of the Household Support Fund must be allocated to pensioners, and the fund had to be spent or committed by 30 September.

Anglian Water has approximately 2,800 customers of pensionable age in Cambridgeshire who are in arrears with their water bills, and were early to agree this scheme in principle. Since the committee made its decision, Cambridge Water has also come on board.

Communities Capital Fund

The committee also received the findings of a working party set up to consider the eight 'red rated' capital projects offered money by the previous administration's Communities Capital Fund. Seven of these eight projects were found to be sufficiently well advanced that they could proceed to completion.

The eighth however, a new community building at Stretham whose costs had ballooned and which had neither planning consent nor firm commitments of additional funding to match the £500,000 offered by the council, was agreed by a majority of the committee to be non-viable and was terminated.

HIGHWAYS

Local Highways Improvements

The Council's Highways & Transport Committee approved a new way of managing Local Highways Improvements, developed by a councillor working group.

Applications will be divided into non-complex and complex schemes. Non-complex applications will attract a maximum of £10,000 in council contribution, with complex proposals will be able to seek up to £25,000. The overall council budget for Local Highways Improvement bids will remain the same.

Non-complex projects will be scored by council officers using an agreed matrix, and a councillor working group will review the scores before they are submitted to Highways & Transport Committee for approval. This should speed up the process for all applicants, and mean fewer applications for the councillor panel to interview in depth.

For the coming year, the application window opened on Monday 31 October and close on Friday 6 January, with panel meetings in May.

HGV policy

The Council's Highways & Transport Committee also approved a new HGV policy drafted by a working group.

The policy seeks to address how the Council will fulfil its responsibilities for HGV movements throughout Cambridgeshire, and how it will work with partners to reconcile several key aspects of this issue, in particular the contribution of freight to the local economy, the effects of HGV traffic on the environment, and local concerns about residential amenity.

The policy also sets out how communities can take action to address the issue of HGV movements and how they can seek advice, support, and action from the Council if locally brokered solutions are unsuccessful.

The Council's Advisory Freight Route Map, which is currently on the Council's website, will go live on the one.network website, hopefully towards the end of this calendar year.

Highways Asset Management System

The Council is going out to tender for a new Highways Asset Management System. This will enable different parts of the highways service to work together properly, enable mobile working, directly share information with other council systems, and be hosted in the cloud. It will replace the current outdated Insight system, including the limited public facing Report It tool, and provide a much more satisfactory and coordinated way of working.

Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The Highways & Transport Committee also approved a new Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan, which highlights key corridors where it is possible to increase walking and cycling and reduce short car trips. The LCWIP will sit under the Active Travel Strategy for Cambridgeshire which is currently under consultation, and this in turn sits under the Combined Authority's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan, currently being refreshed.

Consultation on the LCWIP took place in June and July 2021. A number of key cycling routes have been identified, and walking zones in the larger settlements. These have been mapped, and general approaches and interventions proposed.

In East Cambridgeshire, the walking maps are confined within the urban settlements such as Ely. However, the cycling maps include some of the villages, including options for cycling routes between Ely and Little Downham; from Sutton west along the A142 towards Mepal; and north of Witchford between the new developments and the A142.

These proposals are currently unfunded, but having an LCWIP in place increases the likelihood of getting active travel funding from central government.

A 20mph scheme for Ely

At the start of November County officers shared an updated proposal plan. This was largely as discussed with a few minor changes, including a couple of locations where traffic calming in the form of speed cushions has been included where they feel achieving 20 was unlikely. The plans show the locations of signs and roundels which will be painted on the carriageway. The next step will be to get the plans out for consultation; advice would be welcome on how best to do this to cover all of Ely would be appreciated as it would be a very large letter drop, however, this still may be the best option.

They are working on a cost estimate to implement what has been proposed on these plans, which should be completed over the next week or so.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Fens reservoir consultation to launch in autumn

Consultation on proposals for a new reservoir in the Fens has now been launched, with the water companies' preferred site north of Chatteris being announced. The project aims to provide significant additional resilience for public water supply, agriculture and the environment across Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. <https://wre.org.uk/project/future-fens-the-south-lincolnshire-and-fenland-reservoirs/>

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

When the Combined Authority is not considering buses, the vast majority of its time is spent on the Improvement work that has been ongoing ever since a report from the auditors on the unsatisfactory state of affairs there. The Improvement framework presented to the Combined Authority's Audit & Governance Committee sets out six 'key priority areas of focus':

1. Establish clarity on the scale of political ambition and develop an overarching strategy for the remainder of this mayoral term, and to chart the next steps on that journey. This needs to include defining the purpose and role of the CPCA and in particular where the CPCA can add value.
2. Implement a comprehensive reset of ways of working and align the policy development and pre-Board processes to support this.
3. Prioritise work to establish a long-term strategy for transport, an urgent development of a bus strategy and review the role and functioning of the Business Board.
4. Undertake a strategic review of income projections, including options, to secure sustainability and the possibility of taking a more strategic approach to the application of funds for identified priorities.
5. Design and implement an organisation for today's performance, and with the agility to act on emerging demands and opportunities.
6. Map the approach, capacity and arrangements needed to build an effective public relations and influencing delivery operation.

Meanwhile, the Housing Committee is to receive a report on its outstanding loans. As previously reported, the largest loan made by the Combined Authority for housing is £24.4M to East Cambs Trading Company, a company owned by East Cambridgeshire District Council, for its scheme to refurbish the former MOD homes in Ely. The balance of this loan as at 16 August was £11M. The loan falls due in March 2023, and the most recent monitoring report advises that the cash flow is behind forecast. The Trading Company says it has 'access to a facility' in the event that it cannot repay the loan in full.

Cllrs Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

County Councillors for Ely North and Ely South

East Cambridgeshire District Council report for City of Ely Council 07-11-22

Full council meeting was held on 20th October at 7pm.

A reminder that all these meetings are live streamed and can be viewed via East Cambs District Council website.

<https://youtu.be/ckROctZlum0lf>

An update report was given regarding the traffic enforcement by Superintendent Sutherland. The process is ongoing and has taken longer than anticipated due to the processes of vetting, training of the volunteers, it was not known when this scheme would be implemented.

There were 2 motions submitted and amended one by the current administration.

Cost of Living motion

This can be found in the draft minutes. What was disappointing was that in the motion there was support for the government on maximising energy through North Sea oil and gas as well as nuclear renewables.

‘East Cambridgeshire District Council welcomes the plans by Government to secure long term energy independence for the country by maximising domestic energy production through North Sea oil and gas, as well as nuclear and renewables.’

See the full motion on <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/council-20102022>

This motion was resolved

The 2nd motion was submitted by the Liberal Democrat group. This was a

Cost of Living Emergency motion. Again, found on

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/council-20102022>

This was lost.

Haddenham and Aldreth neighbourhood plan was adopted.

Operational Services meeting to be held on Monday 14th November the agenda is on the East Cambs website.

CLlr Christine Whelan

CITY OF ELY COUNCIL

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL UPDATE. 7.11.22

East Cambridgeshire District Councillor, Ely East – Cllr Lis Every

Growth and Infrastructure Fund

This new fund of £2m secured for the District Council will be used for projects supporting sustainable growth in local communities, eg cycleways, community and sports facilities and increasing biodiversity and space for nature. The funds had to be used for capital projects. The bidding process came to a conclusion last week and a group of cross party members scored the projects that had been submitted. The standard of the bids was really high with requests from Parish Councils, organisations and a charity who run community centres, energy efficiency schemes, cycleways etc. All had to be supported by matched funding and evidence of community need through surveys and consultations. The recommendations for payment of the successful bids have to be agreed at the next District's Finance and Assets Committee. It is interesting to note with our own scheme for the North Ely Community Hub that once the building is completed, funded by Section 106, we might well be able to bid for future development from similar types of funding. It was also interesting to note that some community hub projects had already received other types of funding through the County's previous Capital Fund and Innovate and Cultivate Fund, so hopefully other such funds will be become available in the future which the City of Ely Council can successfully bid for.

Operational Services Committee

The previously scheduled meeting had been postponed and will now take place with the scheduled on 14 November meeting. .

Community Safety Partnership Board (CSP)

The CSP has received funding through a bid for the very successful Court Experience which is being organised for all our secondary schools, held individually in the Sessions House. Students are selected by the individual school and they engage in a role play trial on the subject 'Is taking a knife into school an offence?'. Individual students take roles supported by professionals, including a judge, police, court clerks, solicitors, youth workers etc all giving up their time to volunteer. The jury (of young people) decides on the guilt or otherwise of the defendant and suggests the sentence if appropriate. The rest of the morning is spent learning about and discussing the dangers of county lines and young people exploitation and we use their voices to inform our future sessions and feed into the ECDC youth strategy. Finishing with pizzas is undoubtedly a highlight!

Sunnica Planning Consultation

ECDC Planning Committee Councillors, which is a cross party non political group of members, unanimously agreed not to support the Sunnica Solar Farm development, the largest ever planned in this country, at a special hearing last week. This was not a meeting to make a decision on a planning application. The District Council is only one of a number of consultees who form part of the overall process. The decision will be taken

by the Secretary of State. We travelled the site the day before in order to look the venues that would be affected by this development.

The open meeting which took place at Mandeville Hall in Burwell considered the installation of solar photovoltaic generating panels and electrical battery storage technology (the scale of which has not yet been identified) on Sunnica East and Sunnica West sites which will stretch across four locations, including the East Cambridgeshire villages of Isleham, Chippenham, Kennett and Snailwell; and Freckenham and Worlington in Suffolk.

It also took into account the associated infrastructure necessary for connection to the national grid at Burwell.

Councillors heard representations against the application from Rt Hon Lucy Frazer, MP for South East Cambridgeshire, who represents constituents in Isleham, Snailwell, Chippenham, Kennett, Fordham and Burwell.

Five objectors also spoke about issues relating to the safety of battery storage facilities, and the impact on the horseracing industry at Newmarket and on local farmers. A representative from Chippenham Parish Council also spoke on behalf of residents who were against the scheme.

Presentations in support of the application were given by the applicant, Sunnica Ltd, and a member of the public who lives in Burwell, who spoke about the climate crisis.

While noting a desire to support renewable energy development, councillors unanimously voted to refuse the application. They agreed with the officer's report that the negative impact of the development would outweigh the benefits of generating renewable energy.

7.11.22