



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CITY OF ELY COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY,
30TH OCTOBER 2023 AT THE MALTINGS, SHIP LANE, ELY**

PRESENT: Mrs T Coulson – Clerk to the Council

Cllr C Phillips, Mayor

Cllr C Ní Dhónaill

Cllr K Holtzmann

County Cllr P Coutts

District Cllr C Colbert

1 parishioner

Cllr R Morgan

Cllr L Fox

Cllr R Trent

Cllr R Denness

Cllr R Moss-Eccardt

Cllr P Gardner

1. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Warman, Pitt, Ward, Banyard, Wade and Austen. The reasons for their absences were accepted.

2. COUNCILLOR REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 11TH SEPTEMBER 2023 AND
MATTERS ARISING**

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 11th September 2023 were proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill that these be agreed and signed as a true record subject to the correction of Cllr Warman amended to Cllr Gardner under those present. This was unanimously agreed. They were signed by the Chairman. Pages 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062 and 2063 refer. There were no matters arising.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported that at the by-election in Ely North, held on the 21st September 2023, Ross Trent had been elected as the ward's new councillor. He welcomed Cllr Trent to his first Full Council meeting and wished him well as he began his work in this new role. He thanked the Council for its support of the Mayor's Quiz Night and said that nearly £1,700 had been raised for the Mayor's Charity and NSPCC Ely. He reminded colleagues of the events of Armistice Day (11th November) and Remembrance Sunday (12th November) and hoped that both ceremonies would be well attended by councillors as representatives of the local community. He also updated councillors on the arson attack at the skate park at St John's Road. He had been in contact with the police and been informed that one case would be going to court and the others were being dealt with outside the court, through the police system. He and the Clerk had met with a member of the Restorative Justice Service regarding this and he will keep councillors informed as to how this proceeds.

6. QUESTION TIME

A member of the public asked for an update on the progress of discussions between councillors and the tourist service with regards to the opening of the courthouse to the public. The Clerk responded in the absence of Cllr Warman and would ensure that Cllr Warman emailed them on her return from holiday with an update on this matter.

7. 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. Cllr Holtzmann asked about light pollution with regards to the proposal for the County's street lights to have LED bulbs. He agreed to raise this query with the County officers. A written report was also received from District Cllr C Whelan. A copy of which will be attached to the minutes.

8. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS & REPORT

The Mayor had attended a meeting with C Horobin of the Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce; a charity event at Wisbech Castle; Ely Symphonia Concert at Cathedral; the launch of the Rotary Fireworks programme; Ely Ribe Association AGM and the Icení Botanical Artists' exhibition at Cathedral. He was the quizmaster for the Friends of Ely Library Quiz; attended the Apple Fayre; the launch of the 2023/24 pantomime, Robin Hood at Poets House; charity event at Fenland House, March; spoke at St Mary's church to the Monday Club and spoke at Probus on the history and work of the cemetery.

9. PLANNING

Cllr Morgan gave a report on the last planning meeting.

10. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

The following information only items were received and noted:-

Street Naming & Numbering:- Downham Road Farm, Downham Road, Ely

Notification of Street Closures:- Egremont Street, Ely – 1.11.23; Prickwillow Road, Ely – 7-9.11.23

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) PERSONNEL, FINANCE & GOVERNANCE – Cllr Ní Dhónaill presented a report of a meeting held on the 9th October, which was noted and approved. The recommendations from the Governance Working Group were discussed at great length. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed the use of substitute councillors be ended with immediate effect and the Mayor to become an ex-officio member on all committees, with immediate effect. This was seconded by Cllr Denness and unanimously approved subject to the Clerk producing the new standing orders in relation to these for ratification at the next Personnel, Finance & Governance Committee meeting. The recommendations from the CIL Sub-Committee for upgrade to fencing at the Park - £15,000, fitness equipment - £21,273 and repair of lamp columns at the Cathedral - £7266.69 were all proposed by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and seconded by Cllr Moss-Eccardt. These were unanimously approved. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed the further grant applications for 2023/24 recommendations be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Fox and unanimously approved. Cllr Gardner did not take part in the vote due to having previously declared a pecuniary interest when the grants were considered. It was unanimously agreed to appoint two Council Ambassadors who will attend functions or events which the Chairman or Vice-Chairman are unable to attend. One would be the immediate past Chairman and a possible newer councillor. Cllrs Morgan and Banyard were appointed to work with the Clerk to look at the Council's reserves with regard to the Council's Investment Strategy and propose options for investment. Members noted the annual review of the Council's Risk Assessments for 2023/24 had now been completed.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS CONTINUED

- (ii) CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT – Cllr Denness presented a report of a meeting held on the 23rd October 2023, which was noted and approved. The proposed budget for 2024/25 had been agreed. Two LHI bids would be submitted this year – A142 speed reduction and improvements and the repair or removal of the speed bumps on the Gallery in Ely. Cllr Denness informed members that new information had been provided with regard to the proposed road crossing on Cam Drive and she would now be going back to the Committee for further consideration of the bids to be submitted. Councillors noted the update with regard to the CCTV project. The information requested would be provided by the Clerk. Mr I Lindsay and Mrs E Every were unanimously agreed to be co-opted onto the CCTV Working Group. Cllr Moss-Eccardt asked the Clerk about the contract for the CCTV project, particularly with regard to Schedule 9. The Clerk will provide a copy of the contract to him. The floral planting contract is due to end this winter and quotations for the new, three year contract will be sent out imminently.
- (iii) ASSETS – Cllr Morgan presented a report of a meeting held on the 17th October 2023, which was noted and approved. Cllr Morgan proposed the Licence to Occupy relating to the land between West Fen Road and St John’s Road, Ely for the fitness equipment be signed and sealed. This was seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and unanimously approved. The Chairman signed the Licence. After the consideration of three quotes and acceptance of quote from Wicksteed Leisure, Cllr Morgan proposed the revised quote for the fitness equipment, which now included the additional piece of a hand wheeled inclusive bike and post installation inspection of £10,821.46 be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Fox and unanimously agreed.
- (iv) TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE – The report of a meeting held on the 16th October 2023 was noted and approved. The updates on the service, digital signage and Visit Ely App were all noted.

12. REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Executive Review Meeting – notes of a meeting held on the 17th October 2023 were noted by councillors.

13. TO CONSIDER NOMINATIONS FOR DEPUTY MAYOR

Although there had been two nominations when the agenda had been sent out, Cllr Wade had since withdrawn her nomination. Cllr Morgan proposed Cllr Rebecca Denness as the new Deputy Mayor. This was seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and unanimously approved by a vote. Cllr Denness signed the declaration of office for Deputy Mayor and thanked everyone for their support.

14. GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE

The Clerk explained the criteria for the Council being able to adopt the General Power of Competence and what this meant for the Council. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed that as the Council now meet the criteria that it should formally adopt the General Power of Competence. This was seconded by Cllr Gardner and unanimously approved.

15. TO NOTE THE COMPLETION OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023 FROM PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

Members noted the completion of the limited assurance review of the Council's annual return for the year ended 31st March 2022 by the external auditors, PKF Littlejohn LLP. On the basis of their review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in their opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR were in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met. With regard to other matters not affecting their opinion they have drawn to the attention of the Council: They note that the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2023/24 for the exercise of public rights, since the approval date was after the start of the period for the exercise of public rights. As a result, the smaller authority must answer 'No' to Assertion 4 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 and ensure that it makes proper provision for the exercise of public rights during 2024/25.

16. TO CONSIDER ECDC'S CONSULTATION ON THE POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW

Members agreed the Council would respond to this consultation as per the comments outlined in Cllr Moss-Eccardt's email provided to all councillors.

17. TO CONSIDER ECDC'S CONSULTATION ON THE HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING POLICY

Members agreed that they did not wish to make any comments on this consultation.

18. TO CONSIDER A MOTION PUT FORWARD BY CLLR HOLTZMANN ON THE CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY BILL

Members considered the motion proposed by Cllr Holtzmann on the Climate and Ecology Bill. This was seconded by Cllr Fox. A vote was taken with 7 votes for and 2 abstentions. The motion was therefore approved. Cllr Holtzmann and Cllr Fox will draft the wordings for the proposed actions from this motion and circulate to all councillors for approval.

19. FINANCE

Cllr Morgan proposed these all be approved, which was seconded by Cllr Moss-Eccardt and unanimously approved.

Direct debit payments and BACS payments

ECDC	200.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	293.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	2095.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	524.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	499.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	200.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	293.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	2095.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	524.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	499.00	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	306.25	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	261.55	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	654.96	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	26.65	Paid by direct debit

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MAYOR
4th December 2023

19. FINANCE CONTINUED

Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
EE Ltd	22.80	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	89.65	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	2801.92	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	120.89	Paid by direct debit
Liquidline Ltd	232.93	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	1598.99	Paid by direct debit
Cybertill Ltd	74.82	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	297.38	Paid by direct debit
Bidfood Ltd	1158.36	Paid by direct debit
Drax Energy Solutions Ltd	36.82	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	46.54	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	891.19	Paid by direct debit
EE Ltd	22.80	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	913.47	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1638.66	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	7666.92	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	226.58	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	103.08	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	17.07	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	432.53	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	96.02	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	278.67	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	17.29	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease	772.90	Paid by direct debit
D Holt	75.00	Paid by BACS
Miss V Pretty	27.20	Paid by BACS
KOMPAN Ltd	141.86	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	895.16	Paid by BACS
Shefs	1870.00	Paid by BACS
J Peck	245.50	Paid by BACS
David J Richards Ltd	215.30	Paid by BACS
H C Electrical	594.09	Paid by BACS
Zurich Town & Parish	112.00	Paid by BACS
Shefs	3066.00	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage	234.00	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	2151.68	Paid by BACS
Probitas Solutions Ltd	255.00	Paid by BACS
PKF Littlejohn LLP	2520.00	Paid by BACS
Kamarin Computers Ltd	252.00	Paid by BACS
KOMPAN Ltd	26573.84	Paid by BACS
N&C Glass Ltd	20.49	Paid by BACS
Warren Access	238.80	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	24.00	Paid by BACS
Gem Heating Solutions Ltd	769.20	Paid by BACS
Westair Reproductions Ltd	662.18	Paid by BACS
N Booth	296.90	Paid by BACS

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MAYOR
4th December 2023

19. FINANCE CONTINUED

Festival Lights Ltd	230.90	Paid by BACS
R Brown	97.50	Paid by BACS
K & M Lighting Services	96.00	Paid by BACS
Cheffins	152.78	Paid by BACS
Heightsafe Systems Ltd	660.00	Paid by BACS
Shefs	1500.00	Paid by BACS
Mile Tree Brewery	386.06	Paid by BACS
D Holt	50.00	Paid by BACS
Human Capital Department	178.80	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	111.00	Paid by BACS
S Bradley	350.00	Paid by BACS
L E Enterprices	500.00	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	217.69	Paid by BACS
CamAlarms Ltd	394.80	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	213.83	Paid by BACS
Shefs	5082.00	Paid by BACS
We Are Blueshed Ltd	6204.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Tool Hire Ltd	120.00	Paid by BACS
Elyi Magazine	175.00	Paid by BACS
Mr M Welch	50.00	Paid by BACS
Cambs Chamber of Commerce	332.40	Paid by BACS
Zurich Town & Parish	387.36	Paid by BACS
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	58.68	Paid by BACS
Fenland Leisure Products Ltd	11485.20	Paid by BACS
Ely Cathedral	243.00	Paid by BACS
Fullpip Ltd	318.45	Paid by BACS
M Ward	288.50	Paid by BACS
N Booth	318.40	Paid by BACS
Shefs	638.40	Paid by BACS
Thompson Media Partners Ltd	238.50	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	310.78	Paid by BACS
Mr D H Melia	310.00	Paid by BACS
SMBE Direct Ltd	420.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Museum	9474.25	Paid by BACS
Andy Grant Ltd	144.00	Paid by BACS
Heelis & Lodge	700.00	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	1202.66	Paid by BACS
E Long	97.50	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	24.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	222.00	Paid by BACS
Shefs	1638.40	Paid by BACS
S Bradley	750.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Cathedral	90.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Skip Hire Ltd	304.00	Paid by BACS
East Air Conditioning Ltd	1050.00	Paid by BACS
Gem Heating Solutions	504.00	Paid by BACS
Alpha Graphics	525.00	Paid by BACS
Mrs E Gardner	68.00	Paid by BACS

19. FINANCE CONTINUED

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

Craft4Smiles	1194.00	114497	(grant/Section 137)
Pos+ability	1018.00	114496	(grant/Section 137)
Magpas Air Ambulance	500.00	114495	(grant/Section 137)
VCAEC	1530.00	114494	(grant/Section 137)
Re-Imagine Resource Centre	1000.00	114493	(grant/Section 137)
All In Sound	1000.00	114492	(grant/Section 137)
Ely Museum	900.00	114491	(grant/Section 137)
Stained Glass Museum	600.00	114490	(grant/Section 137)
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	127.56	114512	
G & J Peck Ltd	196.05	114510	
ECDC	13007.87	114511	
Konica Minolta Bus Solutions Ltd	269.65	114509	
The Blue Hand Press	106.00	114508	
Jewson Ltd	18.40	114507	
Two Bad Mice Publishers Ltd	320.52	114506	
C Phillips	45.05	114505	
Savills	338.09	114504	
City Cycle Centre	9.76	114503	
Soham Pest Control	99.00	114502	
CoolerAid Ltd	67.23	114501	
Securitas Security Services (UK) Ltd	51.80	114500	
Eden Farm Hulley's	421.90	114499	
East Cambs Trading Co Ltd	273.53	114498	

The following invoices had not been paid prior to the meeting

S Jay	48.00	114513	
ESPO	648.72	114514	
G & J Peck Ltd	84.15	114515	
Konica Minolta Bus Solutions Ltd	163.82	114516	
A Bennett	76.50	114517	
Gordon Harrison	172.07	114518	
Mr Hannaford	200.00	114519	
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	587.14	114520	
Anglian Water	100.48	114522	
Anglian Water	823.26	114521	
Two Bad Mice Publishers Ltd	73.70	114523	
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	165.85	114507	
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	30.43	114520	
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	95.89	114524	
Black Rock Inns Ltd	424.00	Paid by BACS	
We Are Blueshed Ltd	672.00	Paid by BACS	
G & G Gallo	1362.37	Paid by BACS	
Mr R G Hughes	324.18	Paid by BACS	
Churches Fire Security Ltd	711.48	Paid by BACS	
H C Electrical Ltd	6066.69	Paid by BACS	
RGP Security Services Ltd	210.90	Paid by BACS	

19. FINANCE CONTINUED

ATS Heritage	234.00	Paid by BACS
British Telecommunications	78.66	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	238.72	Paid by direct debit
Cranbrook Plants	2037.52	Paid by BACS
Thompson Media Partners Ltd	178.80	Paid by BACS
Gem Heating Solutions Ltd	336.00	Paid by BACS
E Grey	40.50	114525
Lex Autolease	772.90	Paid by direct debit

Payments relating to staff since meeting on the 11th September 2023

Salaries and wages	£35,610.78 (Sept)	£36,521.31 (Oct)
Inland Revenue (tax & NI)	£10,920.49 (Sept)	£10,673.59 (Oct)
Pension fund payments	£10,848.27 (Sept)	£10,989.57 (Oct)

Members noted and approved the bank reconciliation against the accounts for the period ending 30th September 2023

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Cllrs Piers Coutts and Alison Whelan

MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2023

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Major planning applications update

The decision from the Secretary of State on the Sunnica solar farm application has been delayed. Instead of the expected announcement date of 28 September, the new date is now 7 December.

How do you recycle your household plastics?

To be in with the chance of winning a £50 voucher, take the Pledge2Recycle survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QBCK2XL> and share your thoughts. The survey is being conducted by RECOUP, the UK's leading independent authority and trusted voice on plastics resource efficiency and recycling. Learn more about how you can better recycle your household waste with Pledge2Recycle at <https://pledge2recycle.co.uk/>

Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023 fund

Applications are now open for the Sustainable Farming Incentive. The SFI pays farmers for taking actions that support food production, farm productivity and resilience, whilst protecting the environment. More information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-application-dates-for-sustainable-farming-incentive-2023>

Help to insulate your home

If your home has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D to G, and if you are in council tax band A-D (in England) you may qualify for cheaper (or even free) insulation.

The government has launched a £1 billion scheme to help some families insulate their homes. Families in lower council tax bands with less energy-efficient homes will be offered upgrades such as roof, loft or cavity wall insulation.

You can use an online checker for the scheme to find out if you are eligible. The tool will ask a series of questions – including how you heat your home, whether your home has solid or cavity walls, and if you are receiving any benefits. You can be a homeowner, landlord or tenant (either renting privately or from a housing association). If you're a tenant, speak to your landlord before you apply. You'll need their permission before any insulation can be installed.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme>

A separate online checker has also been launched for the Home Upgrade Grant, which will help people in off-gas-grid homes with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D to G. The grant provides energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating to households in England.

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-home-upgrade-grant>

If you use the online checkers you will then be referred to either your energy supplier, for support from the Energy Company Obligation programme and Great British Insulation Scheme, or your council for the Home Upgrade Grant.

Flood action conference

Community flood groups, local authorities from across the Great Ouse catchment and surrounding areas, and industry representatives came together on Thursday 21 September for Cambridgeshire County Council's second flood action conference.

Cllr Lorna Dupre, speaking at the conference, recorded a short video about how the council is preparing for climate change, including the importance of protecting our communities from flooding, and the role community flood groups can play:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QanX6Cx5kKE&ab_channel=CambridgeshireCountyCouncil

A14 and Northstowe archaeological finds display

Cambridgeshire County Council has decided a way forward to display archaeological finds from recent digs at Northstowe and the new A14 construction, after a project funded by National Highways and Homes England was put in jeopardy when the contractor went into administration.

The Council has decided to find alternative venues to deliver an exhibition and will be considering different accessible venues in parts of the county linked to the areas where the artefacts may have originated.

Smart street lamps

Cambridgeshire is one of six areas to be granted funding to test smart street lamps that can house EV charging hubs and boost wireless coverage including 5G. The County Council has been awarded £220,000 to install 'smart poles' on which to host various smart city infrastructure.

Open Radio Access Network

Cambridgeshire County Council has also been awarded £6,523,645, plus £2,699,740 of commercial funding—a total funding amount of £9,223,385—to trial new mobile technology to improve mobile connectivity in busy locations where many people are trying to use mobile devices at the same time.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Weeds and street sweeping

At the County Council's Highways & Transport Committee meeting on 3 October the issue of the relationship between weeds and street sweeping was raised. Residents have complained about debris from unswept streets (district council) being caught up in weeds from uncleared gutters and gulleys (county council). We were pleased to be reassured that county council officers were entering into discussions with district council officers about how better to align management of our streets, kerbs, gullies and gutters. The issue of the trial policy of stopping most weed spraying was discussed at the full council meeting on 17 October. It is accepted that this has not worked well, District and Parish councils have been asked for their views, and the Highways & Transport Committee will decide at its meeting in January on changes to this policy for next year.

More 20MPH schemes get the green light

Twenty more 20MPH schemes across East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire have been given the go-ahead in the latest round of funding from the County Council.

In East Cambridgeshire, Burwell and Wicken were successful in their bids for village-wide schemes. Witchford, Isleham, Upware, Sutton, Chippenham, Stuntney and Wilburton missed out this time.

As I write we are still awaiting the results of the consultation on the proposed Ely-wide 20mph scheme, for which funding is in place as long as it can be completed by the end of March 2024. Hopefully by the time of your meeting I will be able to bring news of the next steps here.

The County Council is keen to find additional funding to increase the number of applications it can support. With eighty-eight applications received, it is clear that road safety measures are very popular with residents and local communities.

Free vehicle checks

A series of free vehicle checking events is being organised around the county throughout October, in support of the national campaign for safer vehicles.

Members of the public are invited to attend a free vehicle check session, where they will be taught how to conduct a simple check on their own vehicle and spot potentially dangerous problems. The check consists of examining tyre condition and tread depth, ensuring correctly working external lights and correct washer fluid levels. To assist members of the public, a free top-up of screen wash will be offered to every participating vehicle, as well as free resources to help with subsequent checking.

The events are being delivered by the Vision Zero Road Safety Partnership, of which Cambridgeshire County Council is an active member. The partnership aims to reduce the number of road traffic collisions across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and for zero deaths on the county's roads by 2040.

More information on Facebook at [**www.facebook.com/CambsRoadSafety**](https://www.facebook.com/CambsRoadSafety)

Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)

At its Board meeting on 28 September, the Greater Cambridge Partnership decided not to proceed with the revised Making Connections proposals, as they clearly did not have sufficient public or political support.

The following statement expresses your Ely County Councillors' position on what now needs to be done.

"Cambridgeshire is a fantastic place to live and work, but not always so fantastic to get around. The Greater Cambridge Partnership's proposals were a sincere attempt to improve that situation and were rightly explored fully in consultation, but they have become counter-productive. It is clear that they would negatively impact too many people whilst bringing too little benefit to others.

It's time to find new ways forward, building on those elements of the GCP's work that have clear public support: better public transport and better cycling and walking; cleaner air and a safer, less congested Cambridge; a city accessible to all. For these improvements to take place, our roads do need to be less congested and we do need to find sustainable sources of funding.

Doing nothing is not an option. We need to work with partners to find those new ways forward. We give our strong support to the work being done at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority on bus reform, and will work with partners to push for improvements to our local bus services to move ahead as swiftly as possible. We owe our young and older people the commitment to ensuring that they have access to the same educational and work opportunities and health services, whether they live in our villages, towns or cities. We must reduce the level of car dependency in our county, not only for environmental reasons, but also to tackle the unequal access for those living in rural areas who do not have access to a car.

In the immediate term, there are also many ways to improve active travel by providing safer walking and cycling routes, sustainable solutions to last-mile deliveries and behaviour change programmes to support

individual and business transitions to greater use of active travel and public transport.

Looking further ahead we emphasise the need for a long term and ambitious transport vision. This would include better buses, trams, light rail and trains; transport hubs where people can safely transfer between buses, trams etc and from bikes or cars; and combined tickets for our journeys.

We welcome the government's announcement that it intends to fund the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements which can transform train services to the east and north, spreading opportunities to those in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland, and will work together to put pressure on them to ensure this happens. We will continue to encourage East West Rail to work with communities to ensure a strong business case for excellent, electrified rail links towards Cambourne, St Neots and Bedford. We will work with the Combined Authority to find solutions to link Wisbech into rail services, whether these be via heavy rail, light rail or trams.

Our area is one of enormous opportunities, we are determined that those opportunities are available to more residents, young or old, wherever they live in our amazing county."

LEDs in street lights

A programme to replace the lighting in the County Council's street lights with LEDs is hoped to repay itself over six to eight years and reducing the council's energy consumption.

Roadworks and repairs

The A141 Fenland Way in Chatteris has been resurfaced, with works now completed after starting in August. As part of the council's pledge to create a greener Cambridgeshire, materials used in the project helped to reduce the impact on the environment—in this case cutting carbon emissions by approximately 9.5 tonnes.

The resurfacing of Fenland Way is just one of four major projects under way across the county. Work on the A141 Warboys Bypass is due to finish this month. The last two projects will be in South Cambridgeshire (A10 at Milton) from October to December, and East Cambridgeshire (A1101 Bates Drove in Littleport) in March 2024.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The long-awaited revision of the Combined Authority's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough was vetoed at the September meeting of the Combined Authority Board.

Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald, leader of Peterborough City Council, exercised his right of veto to scupper the plan—apparently to the complete surprise of his own council Chief Executive, and without speaking in the meeting to explain why. The Plan had already been delayed from the July meeting of the Board, when Cllr Fitzgerald had threatened to veto it.

After the September meeting, Cllr Fitzgerald suggested that his vote had something to do with Combined Authority plans to force congestion charging and low traffic neighbourhoods onto Peterborough. However, this would be impossible even if anyone wished to, as Peterborough City Council is the highways authority for the city and thus responsible for any such decisions.

Meanwhile, the Board decided to approve the extension of 51 bus service contracts to March 2025, and of the Ting 'demand responsive transport' contract in Huntingdonshire to March 2024. These 51 services include the Ely Zipper, the Zipper 2, and the 125 from Little Downham. Services recommended for further review include the 8A from March to Cottenham.

The Board also agreed to commission a review by an independent auditor of the bus franchising assessment—a step forward towards the aim of improving bus services across Cambridgeshire.

Cllrs Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

County Councillors for Ely North and Ely South

October 30th 2023

ECDC REPORT FOR CITY OF ELY COUNCIL by Cllr Christine Whelan

All members were present for this meeting.

The meeting started with a minute's silence in respect from a former member of the council James Fitch who had recently died.

There was one question from the public.

East Cambridgeshire Growth and Infrastructure Fund

The East Cambridgeshire Growth and Infrastructure Fund has reopened for applications.

The scheme will provide capital funding towards the delivery of local infrastructure (including but not limited to transport, health care, social, cultural, education and recreational facilities) to assist, promote, encourage, develop and secure sustainable growth and enable people to live and/or work in East Cambridgeshire. Examples could include cycle and footpath improvements, or new community facilities such as village halls and public open spaces.

The deadline for applications is 5:00PM on Friday 8 December 2023.

More information about the scheme and the application form can be found at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/business/east-cambridgeshire-growth-and-infrastructure-fund>

If you have any queries, please telephone 01353 665555 or email gandifund@eastcambs.gov.uk

Crematorium at Mepal

We have now been told that a business case for the administration's crematorium at Mepal will be presented to the council's Finance & Assets Committee on Thursday 25 January, and then to Full Council at the Budget meeting on Tuesday 20 February.

Empty Homes

At the October meeting of Full Council, Cllr Christine Whelan (Ely West) noted the growing number of properties let by Sanctuary housing that are empty and have been so for over a year.

The Council's leadership rejected a request from Cllr Whelan to ask Sanctuary Housing to attend a meeting of the Council's Operational Services Committee to answer questions from members about its empty properties. They propose to organise a member's seminar instead, which is disappointing given the high level of public interest in the shortage of social housing in the district.

East Cambs Street Scene

Following a report from the Council's Chief Executive into the Council's own in-house company East Cambs Street Scene, changes have been made to the composition of the company Board to address the most obvious failures of governance at the company.

These amendments include a requirement to put in place a formal escalation process to oblige ECSS to report in-year overspends or underspends to the Council's Operational Services Committee within an agreed parameter; and revised Key Performance Indicators.

Cllr Charlotte Cane (Bottisham) proposed an amendment to these proposals, on the grounds that:

- The proposed escalation process contradicts the Shareholder Agreement, which requires that the Company will maintain effective and appropriate control systems in relation to the financial, accounting and record-keeping functions of the Company, and provide to the Shareholder full details of any actual or prospective material change in the Business or the financial position or affairs of the Company, as soon as such details are available.
- The revised Key Performance Indicators should be reviewed by the council's Operational Services Committee.
The revised Risk Register is a cause for concern, with a high risk of ECSS failing to deliver on its business plan or to deliver a cost effective, sustainable and high-quality domestic waste collection and street cleansing service.
The Chief Executive should be instructed to commission a fully independent review of the governance of ECSS.
- **This amendment was defeated.**

Local Plan single issue review

At its Full Council meeting in October, the district council approved the 'single issue review of its local plan. The review was commissioned three years ago and has now completed its examination by a Planning Inspector. It is a very limited review, with a number of 'take it or leave it' recommendations.

This Council's Local Plan is now eight and a half years old. The Liberal Democrats have consistently argued that this Council should have embarked on a more significant update of the Plan a long time ago. The current Plan has failed to protect residents from inappropriate development in several locations across the district, and it is now hopelessly out of date in the face of the threat of climate change.

The introduction of a standard national method to determine a local housing need gives a housing requirement of 5,398 for the nine years from 2022 to 2031. Added to the approximately 3,600 dwellings completed in the eleven years from 2011 to 2022, this will mean a total figure of around 9,000 new dwellings in East Cambridgeshire between 2011 and 2031.

In order to achieve this, the rate of house building completions will need to increase very significantly indeed, from an average 419 a year over the past twenty years, to 600 a year for the next nine years. The Planning Inspector said:

"There is under delivery of 2,688 dwellings in the plan period to date against the adopted housing requirement. Despite the Council identifying a potential housing land supply (untested in this examination) of 7,371 dwellings to 2031, the delivery of the housing requirement in full for the plan period as a whole, including the under provision, would require a significant increase in the annual delivery of dwellings from historic levels, and over a prolonged period."

At least as important as the number of homes is their affordability. The Inspector says: "The evidence suggests that there would have to be a significant uplift in housing provision for the identified affordable housing need to be met in full."

As the cost-of-living crisis continues to squeeze thousands of local households, the news from this limited review is that East Cambridgeshire residents should prepare for an increase of around fifty per cent in the rate of house building, which will fail to meet the needs of our area for affordable homes. That is a challenge the council needs to face up to in the remaining years of the Plan.

Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Once again, the leadership of the District Council voted down a proposal from Cllr Alison Whelan (Ely North) and seconded by Cllr Mark Inskip, to reduce to zero the level of council tax paid by the very worst-off households in East Cambridgeshire. This was voted down at a previous Finance and Assets Meeting. While the cost-of-living crisis continues to push more and more families into poverty, a temporary respite from council tax bills would have been a welcome help, and a sign of support from the council in difficult times. Furthermore, the cost to the Council of £24,345.76 to adopt a minimum contribution of zero could be less than the cost of pursuing irrecoverable debts for council tax.

Motions to Council

Two motions were put forward by the Conservative group.

The first motion was to oppose road charging throughout the whole of Cambridgeshire.

There were no plans of action for this to be implemented despite the Government's plans to introduce road charging throughout the country at some point in the future.

This motion was passed with 15 FOR and 13 ABSTENTIONS

The second motion was to oppose a 4-day working week, for anyone who wants to work a 4-day working week.

Again, this motion was passed with 15 FOR and 13 ABSTENTIONS

The agenda, motions, questions and reports are on the website at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/council-191023>

This meeting can be viewed on

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAVDSnnPuTQ>