



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CITY OF ELY COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY,
26TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT THE MALTINGS, SHIP LANE, ELY**

PRESENT: Mrs T Coulson – Clerk to the Council

Cllr C Phillips, Mayor

Cllr M Banyard

Cllr D Warman

Cllr K Holtzmann

County Cllr P Coutts

1 member of the public

Mr D Boden, Stagecoach

Cllr R Denness

Cllr S Austen

Cllr R Moss-Eccardt

Cllr R Ward (arrived at 7.16 pm)

Cllr C Ní Dhónaill

Cllr R Trent

Cllr R Morgan

1. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Fox, Gardner and Wade. 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 15TH JANUARY 2024 AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 15th January 2024 were proposed by Cllr Banyard and seconded by Cllr Moss-Eccardt as a correct record. This was unanimously agreed and signed as a true record subject to the correction of the spelling of A Heffernan. They were signed by the Chairman. Pages 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083 and 2084 refer. Matters arising:- Page 2080, item 10 – Cllr Morgan informed councillors that the applications for the open space at Holly Walk and Birch Close, Ely to be listed as an asset of community value (ACV) had failed. Residents are therefore putting together further applications with better evidence. Page 2080, item 7 – Cllr Moss-Eccardt informed councillors that the meeting with Barclays had been very helpful and they had stated they were making arrangements to have a Barclays Local in Ely.

5. PRESENTATION ON BUS SERVICE 9 FROM MR DAVID BODEN, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, STAGECOACH

Mr David Boden gave a presentation to the Council with regard to the proposed changes to the No 9 bus service, which will come into effect on the 14th April 2024. He outlined what was changing, the reasons for the changes, and if there were alternatives. He also offered to attend Full Council to give a yearly update on the bus service. The Chairman thanked Mr Boden for such a full presentation.

Mr Boden left the meeting at 7.39 pm.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman gave an update to Councillors on the final meeting with the Restorative Justice Service regarding the damage to the skate park. He also informed councillors of his Gala night on the 12th April at the Maltings and his Civic Service on the 28th April at the Cathedral. He hoped councillors would be able to attend both events.

7. QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the members of the public present.

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. District Cllr Holtzmann informed members that the District's new Local Plan would be more ambitious in terms of energy regulations and hopes to reduce energy usage in new homes. Further guidance from Local Government is awaited before this can be finalised. The Council approved their annual budget and the new bereavement centre, which will be funded from £9 million of their CIL funds.

County Cllr Coutts left the meeting at 7.48 pm.

9. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS & REPORT

The Mayor had met with the Dean; had attended the Holocaust Memorial at Huntingdon; attended a cheque presentation by ACT from Lisa's Fund; attended a Teams meeting with Barclays and the Clerk and Cllr Moss-Eccardt re Barclays Bank closure; gave a talk to Ely '41 Club'; attended USAF at Lakenheath to present certificates to those that had volunteered to erect the Christmas Lights in Ely; meet with LGBTQ+ group re LGBTQ+ History month and attended a RAF Cadets dinner. The Deputy Mayor had attended the Mayor of Cambridge's Charity Concert.

10. PLANNING

The Planning Chairman gave a report on the planning meeting prior to Full Council.

11. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

The following information only items were received and noted:-

Street Naming & Numbering:- The Old Grainstore, 5A Main Street, Prickwillow, Ely; 7, 8, 9, 10 Central Hall, 54 Market Street, Ely; 1-31 Westmill Close, Ely

Notification of Street Closures:- Chettisham MCB Level Crossing, Lynn Road, Chettisham, Ely – 24.3.24; Debden Green Ely – 4.3 – 15.3.24; Lumley Close, Williams Close, Fitzgerald Close, Morton Close, Ely – 1-3.24 – 30.9.25; Back Hill, Ely – 10-12.04.24

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) PERSONNEL, FINANCE & GOVERNANCE - Cllr Ní Dhónaill presented a report of a meeting held on the 29th January 2024, which was unanimously approved. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed the recommendations from the CIL Sub-Committee be approved. These being funding for refurbishment of solar light pathway in the Park and at the Riverside - £8582.70 and Ely Youth Artwork in Leisure Village Underpass - £5,257.82. This was seconded by Cllr Denness and unanimously approved. The Clerk confirmed that as long as CIL funding has been allocated to a project, it does not need to be spent before the year end. It was agreed the Communications and PR Working Group would consider how the Council should consult with the community and consider how the Council informs as to what the Council undertakes and what other tiers

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS CONTINUED

of councils are responsible for. They were also going to look at undertaking councillor drop-ins. Councillors who agreed to review the Council's policies and procedures will be allocated these shortly. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed the Dignity at Work Policy be approved and adopted. This was seconded by Cllr Banyard and unanimously approved. The Chairman signed the policy. Following the resignation of the Town Crier, Visit Ely will be requested to arrange a Town Crier Competition to find a replacement.

(ii) CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT – Cllr Denness presented a report of a meeting held on the 12th February 2024, which was unanimously approved. Work on the Climate Action Plan was still continuing. The Council will be releasing a press statement expressing the Council's support for the 20 mph scheme. A bus shelter maintenance/repair audit will be undertaken by the Estates team and a programme of refurbishment organised. A draft allotments agreement between the City of Ely Council and the Ely Allotments and Gardens Association has been produced. Once this is complete it will be agreed by this Committee

(iii) ASSETS - Cllr Morgan presented a report of a meeting held on the 22nd January 2024, which was unanimously approved. Cemetery fees from the 1st April 2024 will increase by 7.18%. Three quotes had been received for the replacement fencing at the Park. Cllr Morgan proposed the lowest quote of £6250 plus VAT be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Moss-Eccardt and was unanimously approved. Cllr Morgan also proposed the approval of the purchase of 3 picnic benches and 3 benches at a cost of £2500, already approved from CIL funds. This was seconded by Cllr Moss-Eccardt and unanimously approved. Three quotes for the replacement windows to the Foyer and Kempen Room at the Maltings had been obtained. Members unanimously approved the suitable lowest quote from Everbrite at a cost of £27133.33.

(iv) TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE – Cllr Warman presented a report of a meeting held on the 5th February 2024 which was unanimously approved. An update on the services was noted. The Visitor Guide for 2024 has now been launched. Escape rooms bookings are doing very well. Many local businesses have now signed up for digital signage advertising. The Visit Ely team will be discussing working with Ely Cathedral and their event the Green Fair to make it a City recognised event.

13. REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Cllrs Phillips and Denness had attended a meeting with LGBTQ+ Group to discuss the planning for Ely Pride on the 3 August 2024. Cllr Phillips had attended meeting for Ely Trinity Dole/Needham's where the documents had been signed to transfer property to new charity. The Council will continue to be represented. Cllr Banyard had attended a Ribe Association meeting. Cllr Moss-Eccardt had attended a Cawdle Fen Internal Drainage Board meeting. He reported that the drainage pipes at the Dock/Tesco need replacing which will be very expensive.

14. NOMINATIONS FOR MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2024/2025

Councillors unanimously approved the nomination of Cllr Rebecca Denness for Mayor, proposed by Cllr C Phillips and seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill. Councillors unanimously approved the nomination of Cllr Mike Banyard for Deputy Mayor, proposed by Cllr R Denness and seconded by Cllr M Wade. The Chairman congratulated them both.

15. TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MISS CHARLOTTE HUSSEY TO FULL-TIME HOSPITALITY ASSISTANT AT THE MALTINGS

Cllr Phillips proposed the appointment of Miss Charlotte Hussey to full-time hospitality assistant at the Maltings. This was seconded by Cllr Banyard. Councillors voted with 10 in favour and 1 abstention. This was therefore approved.

16. TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE AMENDED STANDING ORDER 23 AND FINANCIAL REGULATION 11 WITH REGARD TO CHANGES TO PROCUREMENT FROM DECEMBER 2023

Cllr Holtzmann proposed Council note and approve the amended standing order 23 and financial regulation 11 with regard to the changes to procurement levels from which come in to effect from 1st January 2024. This was seconded by Cllr Moss-Eccardt and unanimously approved. The Chairman signed the amended versions of these policies.

17. TO RECEIVE UPDATE REGARDING OLIVER CROMWELL'S HOUSE AND TO CONSIDER SUSPENSION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS WITH REGARD TO THIS MATTER

The Clerk gave an update with regard to the building issues at OCH. These were discussed in detail. Specialist advice had been sought and this was still awaited. It was agreed that until this had been received and an estimate of the costs for repairs was known, Council would not consider suspending financial regulations. The Clerk was given names of specialists who may also be able to assist with advice about funding. The Clerk will email them for advice. Cllr Moss-Eccardt proposed authority be given to the Clerk to engage the services of a procurement lawyer to ensure the regulations are abided with when moving forward with a contractor and also a property lawyer if this was necessary. Cllr Ní Dhónaill seconded this and it was unanimously agreed.

18. FINANCE

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

Direct debit payments and BACS payments

Worldpay	120.02	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	520.17	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	250.00	Paid by direct debit
EE Ltd	22.80	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	626.69	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	1094.95	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	669.95	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	2803.20	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	656.77	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	358.09	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	436.09	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	46.54	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	139.50	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease	772.90	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	298.36	Paid by direct debit
FuelGenie	305.33	Paid by direct debit

18. FINANCE CONTINUED

Bidfood Ltd	1750.51	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	11886.42	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	138.52	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	19.75	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	555.68	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1240.55	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	134.86	Paid by direct debit
Worldpay	259.04	Paid by direct debit
Liquidline Ltd	245.16	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	64.80	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	1318.34	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	46.54	Paid by direct debit
SSE Energy Supply Ltd	74.46	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications Ltd	78.66	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	10482.85	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	107.95	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	24.34	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	542.21	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	630.83	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	2056.55	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	3556.44	Paid by direct debit
EE Ltd	116.08	Paid by direct debit
We Are Blushed Ltd	324.00	Paid by BACS
Minerva Publications	240.00	Paid by BACS
Cambridge Stonecraft Ltd	930.00	Paid by BACS
Fullpip Ltd	247.95	Paid by BACS
Cambridge Marketing Ltd	7427.00	Paid by BACS
Anglian Water	1622.55	Paid by BACS
Mile Tree Brewery Ltd	362.01	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage Ltd	234.00	Paid by BACS
N Booth	218.80	Paid by BACS
L E Enterprices	675.00	Paid by BACS
S R Harradine Haulage Ltd	336.00	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	36.00	Paid by BACS
Yandell Publishing Ltd	181.44	Paid by BACS
Chatteris & Manea Silver Band	250.00	Paid by BACS
S R Harradine Haulage Ltd	216.00	Paid by BACS
S Slezacek	3180.00	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	292.00	Paid by BACS
Human Capital Department	226.80	Paid by BACS
Elyi Magazine	175.00	Paid by BACS
J & A International Ltd	79.42	Paid by BACS
CAPALC	200.00	Paid by BACS
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	191.09	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	253.34	Paid by BACS
Shefs	714.00	Paid by BACS
S Slezacek	420.00	Paid by BACS
Take One Media Ltd	898.80	Paid by BACS

18. FINANCE CONTINUED

Prepared Media Ltd	240.00	Paid by BACS
Mitchell & Mayle Ltd	114.00	Paid by BACS
D Holt	50.00	Paid by BACS
We Are Blueshed Ltd	501.96	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	1181.47	Paid by BACS
Propertymasters	180.00	Paid by BACS
CTN Turf	54.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Museum	9474.25	Paid by BACS
Gem Heating Solutions Ltd	2627.26	Paid by BACS
Fenland Leisure Products Lt	130.80	Paid by BACS
Ely Cathedral	577.50	Paid by BACS

The following invoices had already been paid prior to the meeting

Gordon Harrison	172.71	114576
ESPO	1068.66	114577
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd	210.00	114578
Wicksted Leisure Ltd	12716.69	114579
City Cycle Centre	31.25	114580
Clearview Communications Ltd	474.42	114581

The following invoices had not been paid prior to the meeting

Ernest Doe & Sons Lt	181.99	114582
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	295.70	114583
Harper Collins Publishers	37.93	114584
East Cambs District Council	46.97	114585
Jewson Ltd	109.03	114586
S Thompson	12.49	114587
C Phillips	87.90	114588
A Bennett	69.30	114589
G & J Peck Ltd	122.84	114590
East Cambs Trading Co Ltd	273.53	114591
Gordon Harrison	336.18	114592
Securitas Security Services Ltd	58.80	114593
ECDC	62.00	114585
G & J Peck Ltd	161.63	114590
Public Works Loan Board	9508.08	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retailing Ltd	1005.47	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	1739.70	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	1052.82	Paid by direct debit
Ely Skip Hire Ltd	304.00	Paid by BACS
ATS Ltd	234.00	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	892.16	Paid by BACS
Liquidline Ltd	486.97	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
DB Flat Roofing Ltd	1123.20	Paid by BACS
Jewson Ltd	58.88	114586
Barclays	95.97	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease Ltd	772.90	Paid by direct debit

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MAYOR
15th April 2024

18. FINANCE CONTINUED

SSE Energy Solutions	159.26	Paid by direct debit
Siemens Financial Services Ltd	452.40	Paid by direct debit
Cybertill Ltd	74.82	Paid by direct debit

Payments relating to staff since meeting on the 15th January 2024

Salaries and wages	£36,001.42 (Jan)	£36,688.59 (Feb)
Inland Revenue (tax & NI)	£12,881.61	£10,855.03
Pension fund payments	£12,237.57	£11,246.71

Members noted and approved the bank reconciliations for the periods ending 31st December 2023 and 31st January 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm.

Cllrs Piers Coutts and Alison Whelan

MONTHLY REPORT FEBRUARY 2024

FULL COUNCIL

Changes to composition of the council

Councillors were saddened to hear the announcement at the start of the year of the death of Cllr Mac McGuire, the councillor for Yaxley & Farcet in Huntingdonshire and the longest-serving member of the County Council. Mac served on Cambridgeshire County Council from 1985 to 1992, and then again from 1997 until his death over the Christmas holidays. His long service was recognised by members at Full Council on 13 February and he was awarded the title of Honorary Alderman. An election to fill the vacancy on the council will be held in due course.

Meanwhile Cllr Ryan Fuller (St Ives North & Wyton) and the Conservative Party have parted company with one another. Cllr Fuller will remain on the council as an independent councillor. Cllr Keith Prentice (St Neots Priory Park & Little Paxton) has left the Conservative Party and has joined the Independent Group. He is now a member of the Joint Administration.

The composition of the various committees on the council will be adjusted to take account of these changes, and then readjusted once Cllr McGuire's replacement in Yaxley & Farcet is known.

STRATEGY RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE

Budget

Cambridgeshire County Council's Full Council meeting on 13 February agreed a balanced budget for 2024/25. Members prioritised funding to improve the condition of roads and footpaths, as well as anti-poverty services.

They acknowledged that this was a difficult budget process as many residents have told them that they continue to feel the squeeze from the cost-of-living pressures, but the council also faces significant cost increases.

The county council had to close a gap of £37.4m – with 75% of the Council's net spend now being funded from Council Tax.

The council has also prioritised a number of key areas, based on resident feedback through its Quality of Life survey, and are aligned to their vision to make Cambridgeshire greener, fairer and more caring:

Sustaining critical adults & children's social care (£57m). This is unfortunately not the case for many of our neighbouring councils in the East of England.

Record levels of highways funding (£23m) to strengthen and improve the standard of our roads and pavements, including tackling potholes, weeds and gulleys. Directly acting on residents' concerns – with 76% of respondents dissatisfied with the condition of Cambridgeshire's roads and footpaths.

The council is prioritising support for vulnerable communities, with £3m to continue providing holiday supermarket vouchers for those children most in need; £2.2m to deliver anti-poverty initiatives; £1.3m into more accessible libraries.

To fund this the council agreed a Council Tax rise of 4.99% (of which 2% was for Adult Social Services) – raising £17.5m of local income to help maintain and protect critical services for the most vulnerable communities. For the majority of residents in Band A-D properties that will mean between an extra 99 pence to £1.48 a week.

In addition there was an increase in the funding available for Emergency Planning, in view of the increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather leading to flooding.

ADULTS & HEALTH

Measles

Measles cases have been rising since last November, with the West Midlands seeing more than 200 confirmed cases, the largest outbreak outside London. The UK Health Security Agency declared the outbreak a national incident on 19 January 2024.

Measles is highly infectious. Nine out of ten unvaccinated children can catch measles if someone in their class has it. It can be severe, particularly in the immunosuppressed and infants, and can be more severe in pregnancy. It can be mild for some children, but one in five will require a hospital visit. At its worst it can lead to complications such as meningitis and pneumonia and can in rare cases be fatal.

In 2023 there were only eight confirmed cases across the East of England, but there is a strong likelihood that it will spread to Cambridgeshire. Uptake of childhood vaccinations has been low in Cambridge and parts of Huntingdonshire and Fenland. A target vaccination rate of 95 per cent is considered necessary to prevent outbreaks, and both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have rates lower than this.

A series of walk-in clinics have been arranged across the county this week for anyone who isn't up to date with their vaccinations. As well as the MMR vaccine, the Meningitis and HPV vaccines will be available for those who are eligible - no appointment necessary!

If the outbreak spreads to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, control measures such as isolating unvaccinated school contacts for 21 days may be necessary. This will have an impact on school staff, parents and the economy, and an outbreak of any size will stretch health care capacity at the busiest time of year.

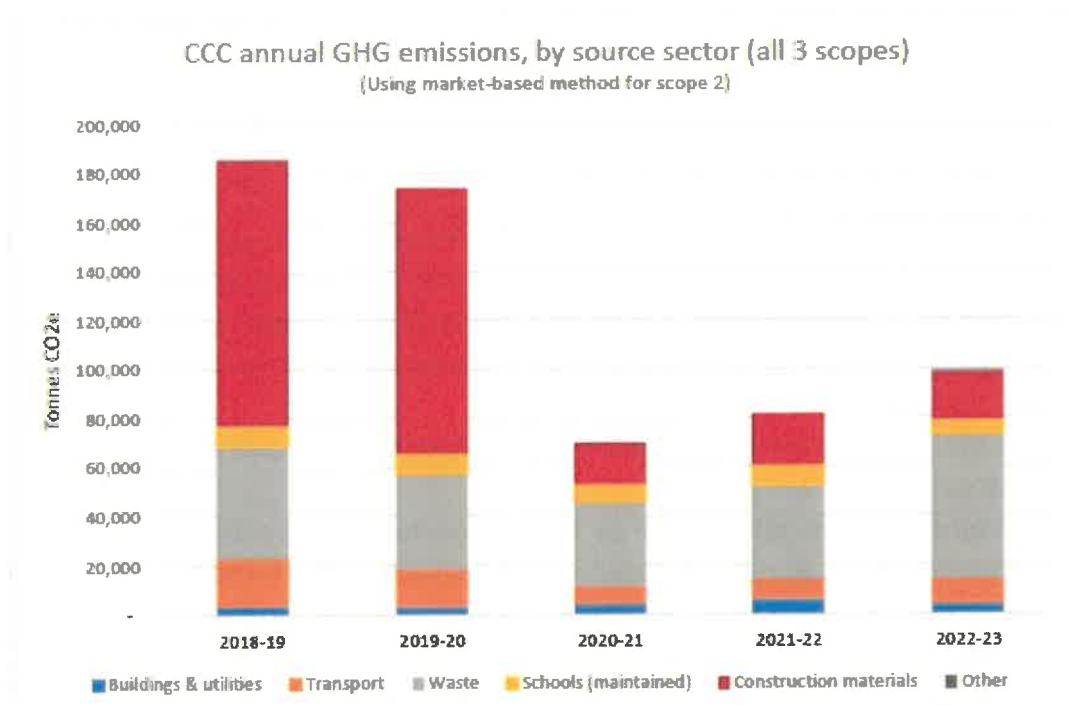
- Parents should have their children vaccinated if they have not already done so.
- Residents should call their GP or 111 if measles is suspected or if someone who is at risk has been in contact with a confirmed case. Typical symptoms include a high fever, sore red watery eyes and a blotchy red-brown rash.
- Isolating when asked to do so is important if any outbreak is to be contained.
- There are a number of measles myths—such as the idea that it is a good idea to deliberately infect children with the disease at ‘measles parties’—which should be ignored.
- Information about vaccine outreach clinics can be found at <https://www.cpics.org.uk/measles>

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

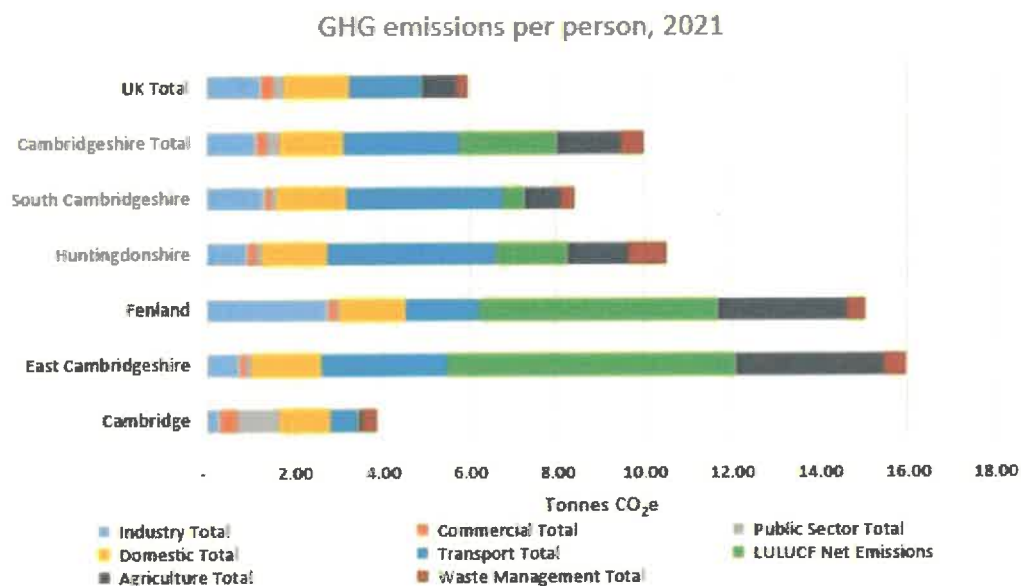
Carbon footprint

The Environment & Green Investment Committee last month received the council's carbon footprint report for 2022/23. As usual, this reports on the council's carbon emissions, and the carbon emissions of the county of Cambridgeshire as a whole.

The Council's total known greenhouse gas emissions in 2022-23 amounted to 99,104 tonnes CO₂e. The largest share, nearly sixty per cent, was from waste, with construction materials second at nineteen per cent, and transport third at ten per cent. This is 46 per cent lower than the council's baseline year of 2018/19.



For Cambridgeshire as a whole, the most recent year of data is 2021—the figures are published by Government. Total greenhouse gas emissions for Cambridgeshire that year were 6.78 million tonnes CO₂e. Transport was the highest emitting sector in the county, accounting for 27 per cent of emissions, followed by land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF), at 23 per cent.



East Cambridgeshire produced the highest volume of greenhouse gas emissions per person in the county, mostly from land use and agriculture.

There has been a twenty-five per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in Cambridgeshire between 2005 and 2021. However, there was a 6.1 per cent increase in 2021 compared to 2020, because of the effect of covid in 2020.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Weeds policy

The council's Highways & Transport Committee has changed its policy on highways weed spraying. It will now be reverting to regular twice-yearly weed killing in the places where it used to do this before last year's policy change. Communities which do not want chemical weed spraying in their area will however be able to opt out in favour of manual weed removal by volunteers.

Cllr Alex Beckett, chair of the Highways and Transport Committee at Cambridgeshire County Council, said:

"I know we didn't get this change right, which is why I asked for a review of the policy. While some communities really appreciated the reduction in chemical weed killing, a large number did not. Local decision making is important, we have listened to that feedback and hope these new changes, if approved, will allow those communities who wish to continue without chemical weed killing to do so whilst allowing those who preferred the previous regime to go back to that."

Peat soil roads

The Highways & Transport Committee approved a report on action to address the problem of Cambridgeshire's collapsing fen roads. The report identified 156 such roads which are increasingly failing due to historic lack of maintenance, and more extreme weather. Most of these roads were not constructed to carry the volume and weight of traffic they are now seeing.

In 2018 £5M was spent on ten roads, and in 2021 a further five received investment. Further crack and safety repairs have been carried out to a number of roads in 2023. However, the problem has been growing for years, and is now growing much faster.

Various repair types have been used, some more effective than others. Individual routes are being managed through localised repairs, more extensive patching, signage, and weekly inspections. The council's Highways Operational Standards have been revised to reflect the risks.

Short term measures being used include temporary speed limits including on the A10 Lynn Road at Littleport, traffic signals, and consideration may be given to temporary road closures or weight restrictions.

In the medium term a number of roads have been included in the council's capital programme for more extensive works over the next three to five years. Locally these include the A1101 at Littleport, Chain Causeway in Sutton, and Hundred Foot Bank.

Longer term however, the primary focus must be lobbying together with partner organisations including parish councils to gain the required substantial amount of funding to provide a systemic solution. Council officers have already been working with the Department for Transport to raise awareness.

Active travel maintenance

The Highways & Transport Committee has approved changes to the Highways Operational Standards to improve recognition of, and response to, faults on cycleways and footways. These changes will help ensure a safe environment for cyclists and pedestrians, encouraging and facilitating active travel.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Mayor has proposed to increase his precept on the council tax from £12 to £36 per year for the average Band D property. This is intended to enable the funding of a number of new or improved bus services.

These include an additional Ely Zipper from Ely to Sutton and possibly Mepal; a new service between Ely and Longstanton Park & Ride via Witchford, Sutton, Earith and Willingham); and potentially a demand responsive transport service for Little Downham and wider communities.

The Government has issued a revised Best Value Notice in respect of the Combined Authority. The revised notice recognises the significant progress the Combined Authority has made as an organisation since January 2023, and also that some elements need further work. More importantly it makes clear that it wants Board members to work together with common purpose.

The Environment & Sustainable Communities Committee of the Combined Authority were recently asked about how to deal with the resale of one of the '£100K homes' in Fordham in which the Combined Authority has an interest, whose prices are permanently capped. We asked officers to do more work on this, including considering whether we should seek to turn them into more usual forms of affordable housing on resale.

CLLrs Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

County Councillors for Ely North and Ely South