



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CITY OF ELY COUNCIL HELD AT 7.05 PM ON MONDAY,
15TH APRIL 2024 AT THE MALTINGS, SHIP LANE, ELY**

PRESENT: Mrs T Coulson – Clerk to the Council

Cllr C Phillips, Mayor

Cllr M Banyard

Cllr L Fox

Cllr K Holtzmann

County Cllr P Coutts

Cllr R Ward

Cllr S Austen

Cllr R Moss-Eccardt

Cllr C Ní Dhónaill

Cllr R Trent

Cllr R Morgan

1. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Wade, Denness and Warman. 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 26TH FEBRUARY 2024 AND
MATTERS ARISING**

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 26th February 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. They were signed by the Chairman. Pages 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090 and 2091 refer. Matters arising:- Page 2088, item 17 – the Clerk gave an update on the OCH repairs.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported on the successful Mayor's Gala Evening held on the 14th April and said that about £2,000 had been raised for NSPCC (Ely). He also reminded councillors of the upcoming Civic Service which would take place in the Cathedral on the 28th April at 4 pm and of the two by-elections to fill current vacancies on the Council.

6. QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

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. District Cllr Holtzmann informed members that the District's Environmental chapter of the Local Plan had been delayed due to Government changes. The Council had approved their annual budget and the new bereavement centre, which will be funded from £9 million of their CIL funds.

8. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS & REPORT

The Mayor had spoken at a meeting of the Littleport Society; presented awards at the RAF Cadets' Awards Ceremony in St Mary's church; attended a fund raising concert for Ely Foodbank; attended an awards ceremony for Viva in St Mary's church; attended and spoken at the Iftar meal held by the local Muslim Association; attended a meeting of the Rich Tea Club and took part in the Good Friday Walk of Witness in the city centre and at the Cathedral.

9. PLANNING

The Planning Chairman gave a report on the planning meeting which had been held on the 8th April. He also reminded Councillors of the teams meeting with West Care Homes on the 16th April.

10. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

The following information only items were received and noted:-

Street Naming & Numbering:- Mill View House, 50 West End, Ely

Notification of Street Closures:- Cambridge Road and Barton Road, Ely parking bay suspensions 22.4-7.6.24; Back Hill, Ely – 5.6.24

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) PERSONNEL, FINANCE & GOVERNANCE - Cllr Ní Dhónaill presented a report of a meeting held on the 11th March 2024, which was unanimously approved. A new Youth Lead would need to be appointed at the next meeting. The Communications & PR Working Group need to discuss issues raised by this Committee at their next meeting..

(ii) CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT – Cllr Holtzmann presented a report of a meeting held on the 8th April 2024, which was unanimously approved. Work on the Climate Action Plan continues with a further more 'user-friendly' version being produced for further discussion by the Climate Action Working Group. This will then be circulated for consultation to all Councillors. There would be a trial of a paperless meeting at the next meeting of this Committee on the 1st July. The CCTV update was noted.

(iii) ASSETS - Cllr Morgan presented a report of a meeting held on the 18th March 2024, which was unanimously approved. A blanket request to the CIL Sub-Committee will be made for £100,000 for the purchase of future play equipment. Purchases will be subject to approval by the Assets Committee. A full structural survey for the Chapel at a cost of £2900 plus VAT will be included in the budget for 2025/26. The Christmas Lights Sub-Committee will change to a Working Group with immediate effect. The Local Needs Housing Scheme rent increase with effect from the 1st July 2024 was agreed at 4.9%, the RPI applicable as of January 2024. A request for CIL funding will be made for the replacement windows to the Foyer and Kempen Room at the Maltings. After obtaining three quotes a new mower will be purchased at a cost of £5350 plus VAT. Cllr Morgan proposed the Council consider the three quotations received for the new stair lift at the Maltings, with the cheapest one from Delton Lifts for £14934.00 being accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Austen and unanimously agreed.

(iv) TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE – Cllr Banyard presented a report of a meeting held on the 2nd April 2024 which was unanimously approved. An update on the services was noted. The Committee had discussed the Town Crier Competition and the 50th Celebrations.

12. REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL MEETINGS

City of Ely Allotments and Gardens Association – minutes of a meeting held on the 17th January 2024 were noted. Cllr Banyard informed members there is a Ribe Association event on the 27th April at the Golf Club. The Committee is moving forward with a new Chairman and he hoped that some councillors would consider becoming members of the Association. Cllr Banyard also reported that Stuntney Village Council were interested in implementing 20 mph in Stuntney.

13. NOMINATIONS FOR MAYOR FOR 2024/2025

Due to Cllr Denness having to withdraw her acceptance of being elected to be the Mayor for 2024/25 the Council considered further nominations for this position. Two nominations had been received for Cllr C Phillips and Cllr R Morgan. However, Cllr Morgan withdrew his nomination at the meeting. Councillors approved the nomination of Cllr Chris Phillips for Mayor, proposed by Cllr M Banyard and seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill.

14. TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Cllr Moss-Eccardt requested that when this is undertaken next year if the Clerk could expand on the property section more. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed this be noted and approved. This was seconded by Cllr Morgan and unanimously approved.

15. TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW UNDERTAKEN BY THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr Trent proposed this be noted and approved. This was seconded by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and unanimously approved.

16. TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE RFO'S ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT TERMS OF REFERENCE AND INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN

Cllr Moss-Eccardt proposed this be noted and approved. This was seconded by Cllr Trent and unanimously approved. This clearly shows that the Council has undertaken all the necessary checks and procedures to ensure compliance with the Annual Statement of Governance.

17. TO NOTE AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENTS

Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed this be noted and approved. This was seconded by Cllr Morgan and unanimously approved.

18. TO CONSIDER RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP OF CAPALC

Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed the Council renews its membership with CAPALC for a further year. This was seconded by Cllr Moss-Eccardt and unanimously approved.

19. FINANCE

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

Direct debit payments and BACS payments

ECDC	303.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	2299.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	196.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	523.50	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	499.00	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	1578.52	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
FuelGenie	335.80	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	334.80	Paid by direct debit

19. FINANCE CONTINUED

Cybertill Ltd	74.82	Paid by direct debit
Bidfood Ltd	1268.80	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	298.28	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	250.00	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	741.22	Paid by direct debit
Liquidline Ltd	246.91	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	46.54	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	1021.57	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	888.24	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	2992.10	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	585.70	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease	772.90	Paid by direct debit
EE Ltd	94.97	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1280.27	Paid by direct debit
ICO	35.00	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	319.81	Paid by direct debit
FuelGenie	242.57	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	358.09	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	139.50	Paid by direct debit
Cybertill Ltd	74.82	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	250.00	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
SSE Energy Supply Ltd	74.46	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	56.34	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	180.40	Paid by direct debit
Cambridge Marketing Ltd	90.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Museum	181.50	Paid by BACS
L E Enterprices	756.20	Paid by BACS
NPS Fencing	3750.00	Paid by BACS
Human Capital Department	226.80	Paid by BACS
CTN Turf	54.00	Paid by BACS
Gem Heating Solutions Ltd	2628.24	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	349.64	Paid by BACS
1st Class Fire Protection Ltd	600.00	Paid by BACS
We Are Blushed Ltd	360.00	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	1141.64	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	36.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Central Heating Services	108.00	Paid by BACS
Stoke Ferry Timber Ltd	283.02	Paid by BACS
Simpson's Nurseries Ltd	155.52	Paid by BACS
Arco Ltd	325.99	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	145.81	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	226.71	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	1400.06	Paid by BACS
RJH Consultancy Ltd	3300.00	Paid by BACS

19. FINANCE CONTINUED

Thompson Media Partners Ltd	350.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	199.80	Paid by BACS
Shefs	1296.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Museum	88.00	Paid by BACS
Yandell Publishing Ltd	544.32	Paid by BACS
Aztek Services Ltd	188.78	Paid by BACS
Yellow Publications Ltd	89.10	Paid by BACS
Festive Lights Ltd	119.95	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	36.48	Paid by BACS
Arco Ltd	28.92	Paid by BACS
ESPO	153.42	Paid by BACS
Clearview Intelligence Group Ltd	10299.25	Paid by BACS
Stoke Ferry Timber Ltd	76.80	Paid by BACS
CamAlarms Ltd	954.01	Paid by BACS
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	11.30	Paid by BACS
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	199.24	Paid by BACS
Ely Tool Hire Ltd	42.00	Paid by BACS
Minerva Publications	216.00	Paid by BACS
H C Electrical	1548.00	Paid by BACS
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	197.82	Paid by BACS
Eden Farm Hulleys	118.74	Paid by BACS
Nisbets	1388.35	Paid by BACS
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	6.68	Paid by BACS
H & J Cutlack Ltd	86.34	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	27.08	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	36.00	Paid by BACS
LE Enterprices	656.25	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage Ltd	234.00	Paid by BACS
Prepared Media Ltd	150.00	Paid by BACS
Zurich, Town & Parish	14860.18	Paid by BACS
Human Capital Department	226.80	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	223.27	Paid by BACS
B Laver	26.73	Paid by BACS
Clearview Communications Ltd	2723.40	Paid by BACS
Abrey & Son Ltd	6420.00	Paid by BACS
PPP First Aid	1800.00	Paid by BACS
Shefs	570.00	Paid by BACS
Thompson Media Partners Ltd	330.00	Paid by BACS

The following invoices had already been paid prior to the meeting

City Cycle Centre	184.38	114594
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	119.14	114595
ECDC	107.82	114596
ESPO	176.88	114597
G & J Peck Ltd	72.46	114598
Jewson Ltd	165.37	114599
H M Revenue & Customs	6043.24	114600
Thurlow Nunn Standen Ltd	180.55	114601

19. FINANCE CONTINUED		
Ernest Doe & Sons Ltd	148.11	114602
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	501.63	114603
ECDC	51.88	114604
Jewson Ltd	90.53	114605
P Hutchinson	26.00	114606
Gordon Harrison	70.44	114607
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	179.39	114608
Warren Access	1142.40	114609

The following invoices had not been paid prior to the meeting

Simpson's Nurseries Ltd	74.99	114610
Savills (UK) Ltd	338.09	114611
Securitas Security Services Ltd	58.80	114612
Cloister Antiques	60.00	114613
Kamarin Computers Ltd	3240.00	Paid by BACS
Soham Pest Control	99.00	114614
Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	1054.80	114615
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	26.00	114616
City Cycle Centre	19.44	114617
ECDC	32.40	114618
Poets House	39.00	114619
Westair Reproductions Ltd	459.14	114620
Anglian Water	33.52	114621
House of Marbles	528.00	Paid by BACS
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	14.95	114616
First Aid Training Services Ltd	660.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Skip Hire Ltd	304.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Cathedral	144.00	114622
Greene King Brewing & Retailing Ltd	1360.00	Paid by direct debit
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	1246.84	Paid by BACS
Millennium Pest Control Ltd	72.00	Paid by BACS
Bidfood UK	604.25	Paid by direct debit
Eden Farm Hulleys	120.53	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	216.45	Paid by BACS
British Telecommunications	50.22	Paid by direct debit
RBS Ltd	990.00	Paid by BACS
P Gilman	40.00	Paid by BACS
CAPALC	1994.05	Paid by BACS

Payments relating to staff since meeting on the 26th February 2024

Salaries and wages	£36,258.20 (March)	£39,078.20 (April)
Inland Revenue (tax & NI)	£10,561.69	£11,0635.33
Pension fund payments	£11,344.65	£12261.19

Councillors noted and approved the bank reconciliations for the periods ending 29th February 2024 and 31st March 2024.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Cllrs Piers Coutts and Alison Whelan

MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2024

FULL COUNCIL

The Council met on Tuesday 19 March, and received reports on senior manager pay, pay policy, and gender and ethnicity pay gaps. Five motions were proposed.

1. To work with partners to ensure our Armed Forces Covenant Officer is properly resourced; and write to Government about support for veterans, Afghan refugees, and dependents of Commonwealth veterans (**PASSED**)
2. To ask the Government to disband the Greater Cambridge Partnership and transfer its functions to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority but still let us keep the money (**DEFEATED**)
3. To oppose any new 'locally imposed forms of taxation', cost up lots of 'ambitious transformational strategic infrastructure interventions', and discuss with the Government how to pay for it (**DEFEATED**)
4. To ask the Government to introduce a proportional voting system for Police & Crime Commissioners and Mayors, and work with partners to encourage greater understanding of our tiers of local government and increase young people's participation in local elections (**PASSED**)
5. To ask the Government to commit to making the benefits and opportunities created by growth in Greater Cambridge accessible to all residents of Cambridgeshire and to commit to essential infrastructure and services to deliver growth, establish ambitious targets for affordable housing, and invest in training and education (**PASSED**)

There was also a public question by a Fenland district councillor about why the county council had 'gone back on its resolution to do everything in its power to oppose the incinerator' at Wisbech. The response was that we were still waiting for Fenland District Council to inform the county council of the advice it had obtained from its legal counsel about the prospect of success at judicial review. (Fenland has subsequently announced that it plans to seek a judicial review of the minister's decision but at the time of writing we do not know on what grounds.)

Council composition changes again

The Liberal Democrat candidate won the by-election for the vacancy in Yaxley & Farcet on Thursday 21 March. For the first time ever the Liberal Democrats are the largest group on the council. The composition of the council is as follows.

Liberal Democrats	23
Conservatives	22
Labour	9
Independents	4
Non-aligned	3

Development Corporation to decide future of Cambridge

The Government has set out more details of its plans for a huge expansion of Cambridge and the areas around it. Originally called Cambridge 2050, then Cambridge 2040, it has now been set out in a document called *The Case for Cambridge* with plans for 150,000 more houses in and around Cambridge.

The Government's spring budget included £10.2M for the Cambridge Biomedical Campus and transport to it (the Cambridge South East Transport or CSET project).

A major obstacle to growth in and around Cambridge is water scarcity, to which the Government's answer is to pilot a new system of 'water credits' where 'developers can offset their development through the purchase and sale of water credits to ensure they have a neutral impact on water scarcity within Cambridge'. It is unclear how this would work, and there currently significant scepticism about this suggestion.

Last year, the Government appointed head of Homes England Peter Freeman to lead a new Development Corporation called the Cambridge Delivery Group to deliver the Government's vision for Cambridge. This will add yet another layer of local government to our already toppling structures, and a new and unaccountable body deciding the future of the city. Some locally elected representatives will be on an advisory board, but it appears that decisions will be taken elsewhere.

STRATEGY RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE

Household Support Fund and supermarket vouchers

The Government's budget included an announcement that it would be extending the Household Support Fund for six months. This is the funding that helps the council pay for supermarket vouchers during the school holidays for families entitled to support, as well as other payments to households in need.

The Government did not announce this in time for local councils to include it in their budgets, so the council's Strategy Resources & Performance Committee has agreed to modify its spending plans. The supermarket vouchers will therefore continue to be issued at the current rate for the next six months.

ADULTS & HEALTH

'High intensity users' of A&E services

Cambridgeshire County Council will host the 'High Intensity Users' team working with patients who frequently attend hospital A&E departments. Last year the NHS in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough spent an estimated total of £28 million on emergency care for 4,500 people who attended A&E departments between

five and ten times a year. Many of these patients have complex needs, and identifying and supporting them early can save the NHS at least forty per cent of these costs.

ASSETS & PROCUREMENT

The council's Assets & Procurement Committee has approved a new Land & Property Strategy to guide the management of its diverse portfolio of land and property. This strategy will implement actions for change and improvement highlighted in a Property Asset Management Health Check commissioned by the council from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

The committee has also approved a Commercial, Commissioning & Procurement Framework and made arrangements to reprocure water and waste water services when its current contract comes to an end in October.

COMMUNITIES SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION (COSMIC)

Cambridgeshire Priorities Capital Fund

The council's Cambridgeshire Priorities Capital Fund was hugely over-subscribed. Twenty-six applications were awarded funding.

Cost of living

The council's Communities Social Mobility & Inclusion Committee (COSMIC) has approved an additional £150,000 to Cambridge Housing Society to deliver the Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme, which supports Cambridgeshire residents facing unexpected financial difficulties.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/parenting-and-family-support/cambridgeshire-local-assistance-scheme

The council has also allocated £400,000 to Citizens Advice to deliver income maximisation across Cambridgeshire. By the end of the third quarter of 2023/2024, Citizens Advice had supported 2,251 people, against an annual target of 2,400. This resulted in a total additional income gain of over £1.5 million.

'Closer to Communities'

The council is proceeding with a series of pilot projects to bring decision-making closer to local communities. One of these projects is in East Cambridgeshire, involving a community led environmental initiative. A consultation event will take place at The Maltings in Ely on Wednesday 24 April.

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/supporting-communities-to-benefit-from-the-energy-transition-stakeholder-engagement-workshop-tickets-868896872937

Safe accommodation

The committee has also refreshed its Safe Accommodation Strategy for victims of domestic abuse for the next three years.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Flooding cases

Officers from the Flood & Water team and the Drainage & Resilience team are meeting weekly to review the many cases across the county of water problems arising from Storms Babet through Henk, and the saturation arising from an exceptionally wet winter.

Flood risk enforcement

The council has refreshed its policy and protocol for enforcement under the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Fens 2100+

Fens 2100+ is a new programme of work launched in 2023 to enable the Fens to adapt to the challenges of climate change both now and into the future. It is a partnership project between the Environment Agency, Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA), Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs), National Farmers Union (NFU), and Anglian Northern and Great Ouse Regional Flood & Coastal Committees (RFCCs).

Its aim is to develop a Fens-wide flood resilience investment strategy, and develop a strategic case for continued investment in flood risk management across the Fens. The project will set out the flood risk management investment choices needed so that the Fens can flourish and adapt to climate change.

The programme will develop a Fens-wide flood resilience investment strategy so that Flood Risk Management Authorities can plan for the next twenty-five years. The writing of the strategy will be completed in 2025.

Over the next 100 years, an additional £4.5 billion will be needed to manage flood risk in the Fens—based on today's costs and not accounting for climate change. Under current flood risk management funding rules half of that investment would be funded, the rest is not. The Fens 2100+ programme has been developed to address that gap.

<https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-anglia-c-e/fens2100/>

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The council is working with partners on the production of this strategy. Natural Cambridgeshire is continuing to develop an engagement and communications plan to support this piece of work.

Decarbonisation of council buildings

The council has been successful in its application for Government grant to decarbonise nine more of its own buildings including libraries and youth centres. This will help the council meet its target of 2030 for net zero for its own operations. Government funding of £1,244,550 will be added to £3,793,741 from the council's own decarbonisation fund. The works to these buildings will remove 178.44 tonnes of carbon emissions every year.

Clean energy at Park & Rides

Work is progressing on the installation of solar panels at St Ives and Babraham Park & Rides. These will provide power for the operation of the sites themselves, while also making energy available to commercial customers via a private wire.

Several electric vehicle charging points are being installed at each site, with some of these designed specifically for the access requirements of drivers with disabilities.

North Angle private wire

Work is also finally under way on the project to connect North Angle Solar Farm to the Swaffham Prior community heat network by means of a private wire.

Swaffham Prior named as finalist in international award

Meanwhile the Swaffham Prior community heat network has been named as a finalist for an international award, the Ashden Awards, recognising ground-breaking climate solutions. The project won the prestigious Edie Net Zero Award for Renewable Energy Project of the Year last November. The Ashden winners will be announced at a ceremony in London on Thursday 27 June.

Connecting Cambridgeshire

Connecting Cambridgeshire is involved in increasing awareness of the upcoming national Digital Switchover. The switchover will affect not only landline telephones but also a range of telephony-dependent devices including many alarms. More information at

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9471/>

Gigabit-capable broadband coverage in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough has hit 85 per cent a year early, meaning we are above the national average and ahead of Government targets. Work is ongoing to bring future-proof connectivity to homes and businesses in harder to reach areas.

Connecting Cambridgeshire will be launching its Digital Inclusion Strategy in May. District Digital Overviews for each district in Cambridgeshire are available at **<https://www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk/about/digital-connectivity-strategy-2021-2025/district-digital-overviews/>**

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Gully clearing

The cyclical road gully clearing programme, reinstated by the Joint Administration, reached nearby villages recently, with an estimate of over a thousand gullies to be cleared in Coveney, Witcham, Mepal and Sutton. The work should be reaching the City of Ely in the next few months. Where works have been completed elsewhere, the number of gullies cleared has been considerably higher than the estimate.

20MPH schemes

The 20MPH speed limit in Ely went live on 29 March, and a 20MPH limit has also been approved for parts of Huntingdon. Applications for fresh schemes across Cambridgeshire closed on Friday 22 March. Speed reduction schemes such as these are being funded from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Transforming Cities Fund allocation from Government.

Hemlock management

Hemlock has been gradually establishing itself and expanding across areas of Cambridgeshire. While it is invasive, and highly toxic to livestock and humans, it is a native plant species. In public spaces under the council's control it instructs its contractor to treat hemlock using professional equipment and glyphosate. The Highways department's Green Infrastructure Team can offer advice and guidelines to private owners and occupiers on managing hemlock on their land.

Meanwhile, the council continues to carry out treatments for injurious weeds such as Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Guided buses resume two-way running

Work on a section of the Guided Busway between Cambridge Railway Station and the Cambridge Biomedical Campus to install a new safety measure is now complete and buses returned to two-way operation from Saturday 30 March.

EV charging cross-over pilot

A trial will take place across the county on a first-come first-served basis of EV car charging solutions that involve cables crossing the highway. We need to be ambitious in this: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough will need ten thousand public plug-in stations by 2030, as more and more residents without off-street parking and charging capacity will be wanting to make the switch to electric vehicles.

PLANNING (including consents)

Envar inquiry

An eight-day Public Inquiry to hear the appeal against the refusal of permission for Envar's proposed incinerator at Woodhurst closed on 1 March. The inspector is expected to make his recommendation within three or four weeks, and the Secretary of State to issue a decision a month after that.

Sunnica solar farm

The statutory deadline for the Secretary of State to decide this application was to have been Thursday 11 April, however the Secretary of State has decided to re-set the statutory deadline for this application to 20 June 2024.

East West Rail

EWR are planning the first stage of their statutory consultation in the first half of this year.

Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation

The Examination of this application is due to finish on Wednesday 17 April.

Fens reservoir

Anglian Water and Cambridge Water are to consult on proposals for two new strategic reservoirs for the East of England region. One reservoir is to be located in the Fens and the other in Lincolnshire. The 'phase two' non-statutory consultation will start in May 2024, and will run for eight weeks.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Combined Authority Board has awarded a contract to A2B, a local bus operator, to replace as much as possible of the No9 service from Littleport via Ely and Stretham to Cambridge, following the cutbacks by Stagecoach. This will add three services in each direction with a £2 capped fare. Tickets from Stagecoach will be accepted on the new services. The Combined Authority is also working on its plans for bus network improvements, £1 youth bus fare, and bus shelter improvements.

CLLrs Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

County Councillors for Ely North and Ely South

