



**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CITY OF ELY COUNCIL HELD AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY,
2ND DECEMBER 2024 AT THE MALTINGS, SHIP LANE, ELY**

PRESENT: Mrs T Coulson – Clerk to the Council

Cllr C Phillips, Mayor

Cllr R Trent

Cllr L Fox

Cllr Ní Dhónaill

Cllr S Sandhu

Cllr R Morgan

Cllr C Whelan

Cllr M Wade

Cllr D Warman

Cllr M Banyard

Cllr W Novick

Cllr R Denness

Cllr R Moss-Eccardt

County Cllr P Coutts

4 members of the public

1. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Ward and Cllr Holtzmann. The reason for their absence was accepted.

2. COUNCILLOR REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensations.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 21ST OCTOBER 2024 AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 21st October 2024 were proposed by Cllr Banyard that they be agreed and signed as a true record with the addition of Cllr Sandhu on the present list. This was seconded by Cllr Wade and unanimously approved. They were signed by the Chairman. Pages 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 212, 2130 and 2131 refer. Matters Arising:- Page 2128, item 15 – Cllr Banyard informed councillors a response on this consultation had been received, which he had forward to all councillors for confirmation with the points clarified. He will now write back and confirm that this Council is in favour of these proposals.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman thanked colleagues for their attendance at the Remembrance Sunday service in the Cathedral and said that the turnout of councillors was the best for many years. He announced there would be a fund-raising Mayor's Quiz on Friday, 17th January and the Civic Service on Sunday, 2nd March at Choral Evensong in the Cathedral.

6. QUESTION TIME

A member of the public raised their concerns regarding the Hopkins Homes estate developer's planning application to opt out of the originally agreed community provisions for the area. They felt the withdrawal from providing a public house was not acceptable as these types of facilities were needed to encourage community engagement. Cllrs Morgan, Trent, Moss-Eccardt, Sandhu and Whelan responded to his concerns and explained how the Council is involved in the planning process and what they can do. Another member of the public felt there should be a community sauna in this area and felt that it would be good to have something that is not provided in Ely. Cllr Whelan said that the community centre will bring people together.

7. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A written report was received from County Cllrs Coutts and A Whelan, which was presented by Cllr Coutts. A copy of which will be attached to the minutes. District Councillors Wade, Trent and C Whelan gave updates on the District Council meetings they had attended.

8. MAYOR'S ENGAGEMENTS & REPORT

The Mayor had undertaken a tour of Ely Cemetery for the Visit Ely Guides; attended the Ely Choral Society Concert; had coffee with the Christmas Lights volunteers; attended the firework display at Cherry Hill; the Careers Fair at Ely Cathedral; the Welcome Service for the Revd Matthew Creber at St Mary's Church; Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day; Wisbech Civic Service, VCAEC AGM; Caribbean evening at Habis restaurant, Littleport; Pagan Winter Fayre at the Maltings and the Eve of Thanksgiving Service at Ely Cathedral. The Deputy Mayor had attended the Whittlesey Civic Service; the Wisbech Civic Service and Remembrance Sunday.

County Cllr C Coutts left the meeting at 7.50 pm.

9. PLANNING

Cllr Morgan as the Planning Committee Chairman gave a report on the three planning meeting which had been held prior to this meeting.

10. INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

The following information only items were received and noted:-

Street Naming & Numbering:- Evelyns Orchard, Stuntney, Ely; Flat 3, 80B Broad Street, Ely

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

(i) PERSONNEL, FINANCE & GOVERNANCE - Cllr Ní Dhónaill presented a report of a meeting held on the 11th November 2024, which was approved. The request approved at the CIL Sub-Committee meeting held on the 25th November 2024 for funding from CIL for the repair work required at Oliver Cromwell House was proposed by Cllr Ní Dhónaill for approval. It was seconded by Cllr Novick and approved by members following a majority vote. It was noted that the Youth Lead would be seeking clarification as to Ely College's withdrawal from the support of the Youth Forum. The next edition of the Elyi will include details on the Ely North councillors, along with an article from the Mayor. A letter from Babylon Arts, requesting funding had been considered and would be discussed further in Committee at Item 14 when the setting of the precept for 2025/2026 would also be discussed. Councillors approved the increase in hours to full time for the CCTV Co-ordinator, commencing from 1st April 2025, which was proposed by Cllr Ní Dhónaill and seconded by Cllr Denness.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS CONTINUED.....

(ii) CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT – Cllr Denness presented a report of a meeting held on the 28th October 2024, which was approved. Training providers are being sourced for carbon footprint assessment. Cllr Fox is working on a biodiversity/nature strategy. The Council’s two bids under the LHI scheme had not been successful. It had been agreed the Cam Drive bid would be resubmitted for next year.

2 members of the public left the meeting at 8.03 pm.

(iii) ASSETS – No report as Committee had not met.

(iv) TOURISM – No report as Committee had not met.

12. REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL MEETINGS

Members noted the notes from the City of Ely Allotments and Gardens Association meetings held on the 16th October 2024. Cllr Trent informed councillors there had been some issues with regard to horticultural practices and management. Cllr Denness agreed to discuss these with him and decide how best to address these issues.

Members also noted the minutes of the Ely Ribe Association, held on the 4th November 2024 and the notes of the Executive Review Group meeting held on the 21st October 2024. The Chairman informed councillors he had attended a meeting of Needham’s Chairty/Trinity Dole today and the process of merging these two charities to become the Needham’s Trinity Charity is nearly complete.

13. TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FOR A DISABLED PARK BAY IN CHIEFS STREET, ELY

Councillors had no objections to this application but would request that the disabled bay be removed if the resident no longer lives at this address and the requirement for the disabled bay is no longer needed.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC Cllr Phillips proposed to resolve that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the Meeting. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Banyard and unanimously agreed by councillors. There were no members of the press or public present.

14. TO CONSIDER PROPOSAL FOR ELY COMMUNITY CINEMA. THIS IS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CONJUNCTION WITH BABYLON ART’S REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND THE DECISION IN RELATION TO THE SETTING OF THE PRECEPT FOR 2025/26 UNDER ITEM 11 (I)

Councillors approved the proposal from Ely Community Cinema with conditions. The Council would await further information from Babylon Arts and agreed that no funding could be offered to them at this time. Cllr Ní Dhónaill proposed the setting of the precept for 2025/26 of £822,558. This was seconded by Cllr Trent and approved. Councillors wished to record their thanks to the Clerk for her work in preparing the budget for next year.

Item 15 was taken before item 14. The members of the public left the meeting at 8.27 pm before the meeting when in to Committee for item 14.

15. FINANCE

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

Direct debit payments and BACS payments

ECDC	299.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	2295.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	200.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	524.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	499.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	299.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	2295.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	200.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	524.00	Paid by direct debit
ECDC	499.00	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	65.47	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	65.47	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	95.37	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	117.88	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease	772.90	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	62.76	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	299.66	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	66.33	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	32.85	Paid by direct debit
SSE Energy Supply Ltd	77.19	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1824.70	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	64.80	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	320.70	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	1352.35	Paid by direct debit
Liquidline Ltd	352.08	Paid by direct debit
Bidfood Ltd	638.23	Paid by direct debit
FuelGenie	407.00	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	92.13	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	32.21	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	336.25	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	5752.22	Paid by direct debit
TotalEnergies Gas & Power Ltd	222.31	Paid by direct debit
Siemens Financial Services Ltd	452.40	Paid by direct debit
Barclaycard	1383.56	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
Virgin Media	62.40	Paid by direct debit
EE Ltd	87.50	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	234.99	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	297.55	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	1893.89	Paid by direct debit
ESPO	200.70	Paid by direct debit
British Telecommunications	65.47	Paid by direct debit

15. FINANCE CONTINUED

British Telecommunications	65.47	Paid by direct debit
Greene King Brewing & Retail Ltd	2627.55	Paid by direct debit
Gem Heating Solutions Ltd	840.00	Paid by BACS
Stark Building Materials UK Ltd	21.36	Paid by BACS
Ely Museum	10000.00	Paid by BACS
Warren Access	238.80	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	2017.03	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	60.00	Paid by BACS
Konica Minolta Bus Sols Ltd	267.36	Paid by BACS
V Rudkin	228.00	Paid by BACS
LE Enterprices	1155.00	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	36.00	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage Ltd	234.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Tool Hire Ltd	48.00	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	247.23	Paid by BACS
Welford Christmas Tree Farm	2200.00	Paid by BACS
K & M Lighting Services	252.00	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	244.20	Paid by BACS
Simpson's Nurseries Ltd	65.63	Paid by BACS
Ely Tool Hire Ltd	432.00	Paid by BACS
Thompson Media Partners Ltd	225.00	Paid by BACS
Cambridgeshire Turf Nurseries	252.00	Paid by BACS
Glasdon UK Ltd	377.40	Paid by BACS
Human Capital Department	226.80	Paid by BACS
Warren Access	2419.20	Paid by BACS
S Green	100.00	Paid by BACS
Grocer's Brokers Ltd	69.12	Paid by BACS
Mile Tree Brewery Ltd	489.74	Paid by BACS
Ellgia Ltd	433.89	Paid by BACS
Pheasant Catering	2695.00	Paid by BACS
Bacon Lightning Protection	528.00	Paid by BACS
Strictly Tables & Chairs Ltd	2197.80	Paid by BACS
Thompson Media Partners Ltd	225.00	Paid by BACS
N Bevis	24.40	Paid by BACS
R Howley-Rivers	50.00	Paid by BACS
Create Signs Ltd	108.00	Paid by BACS
1094 (Ely) Squadron ATC	80.00	Paid by BACS
Warren Access	1209.60	Paid by BACS
Waterbeach Brass	250.00	Paid by BACS
Thompson Media Partners Ltd	270.00	Paid by BACS
March Stationery & Print	49.40	Paid by BACS
Gem Heating Solutions Ltd	5209.44	Paid by BACS
E R Copley	59.50	Paid by BACS
Mrs K Evans	62.50	Paid by BACS
N J Marketing Ltd	237.24	Paid by BACS
Two Bad Mice Publishers Ltd	392.52	Paid by BACS
Heelis & Lodge	700.00	Paid by BACS
Ely Central Heating Services	96.00	Paid by BACS
M Chinery-Colyer	401.30	Paid by BACS
G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd	2421.68	Paid by BACS

15. FINANCE CONTINUED

Ely Skip Hire Ltd	304.00	Paid by BACS
Soham Comrades Band	250.00	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova Ltd	108.00	Paid by BACS
Stark Building Materials UK Ltd	185.78	Paid by BACS
Trade UK	336.81	Paid by BACS

The following invoices had been paid prior to the meeting

Gordon Harrison	304.59	114721
Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal	55.00	114722
East Cambs Trading Co Ltd	2274.69	114723
ESPO	69.89	114724
G & J Peck Ltd	162.48	114725
City Cycle Centre	80.77	114726
S Thompson	11.00	114727
Stoke Ferry Timber Ltd	71.40	114728
SLCC	420.00	114729
ALCC	50.00	114730
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	515.75	114731

The following invoices had not been paid prior to the meeting

G & J Peck Ltd	79.95	114732
March Brass 2000	250.00	114733
ECDC	140.00	Paid by BACS
Amazon Payments UK Ltd	558.01	114735
SSE Energy Solutions	79.75	Paid by direct debit
Barclays	65.80	Paid by direct debit
Lex Autolease Ltd	772.90	Paid by direct debit
CaterFix Ltd	1380.00	Paid by BACS
ATS Heritage	234.00	Paid by BACS
BFS Group Ltd	1112.80	Paid by direct debit
Warren Access	1209.60	Paid by BACS
RGP Security Services Ltd	238.65	Paid by BACS
Simpson's Nurseries Ltd	1188.00	Paid by BACS
Brighid Designs	250.00	Paid by BACS
Studio Nova	36.00	Paid by BACS
Greene Kind Brewing & Retailing Ltd	662.39	Paid by direct debit
Francotyp Postalia Ltd	250.00	Paid by direct debit
Liquidline Ltd	245.16	Paid by direct debit
Aztek Services Ltd	641.34	Paid by BACS
ECDC	560.00	Paid by BACS
M Routledge	68.20	114737
S Thompson	15.00	114736
C Phillips	63.00	114738

Payments relating to staff since meeting on the 21st October 2024

Salaries and wages	£51,200.29
Inland Revenue (tax & NI)	£11,255.21
Pension fund payments	£12,305.76

Councillors noted and approved the bank reconciliations for the periods ending 30th September 2024 and 31st October 2024.

The meeting closed at 9.06 pm.

Cllrs Piers Coutts and Alison Whelan

MONTHLY REPORT December 2024

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

On 28 November the Government published its local government finance policy statement 2025 to 2026. This lays out the principles for the funding of principal local authorities for the financial year starting in April.

There will be no change to the council tax cap, which will remain at three per cent for core council tax, with a two per cent adult social care precept. The cap for the police precept will be £14, and £5 for fire and rescue authorities. There will be no cap for Combined Authorities, or for town and parish councils. There will be a number of changes to grant funding. And in 2026/27 the Government plans to 'radically simplify the local government funding landscape'.

Local Government Reorganisation

Proposals to review local government arrangements are coming over the horizon yet again. In particular, all-purpose unitary councils are likely to replace the two tiers of county and district councils; and we are likely to see more directly elected Mayors in parts of the country which currently do not have them. There will be endless debate and consultations, and it is not clear yet whether local government will necessarily be better as a consequence.

Remote meetings consultation

I (Piers) have submitted my own personal response to the Government's consultation on returning to remote meetings. My personal view is that I would be very happy if the Government were to permit meetings online, as this is more efficient, and better for the environment too—and it also enables more people, including those with disabilities or caring commitments, to participate in local democracy.

However, I believe that hybrid meetings, with some councillors physically present and others online, are less successful because they disadvantage those who are not in the room. I am confident technology, and training for chairs, will eventually catch up with that, but they have not done so yet.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Special educational needs and disabilities funding update

The County Council's Children & Young People Committee received an update last month on the 'safety valve' agreement it made with the Government in 2023. The agreement was made because of the escalating costs of providing for

children and young people with high levels of need to meet their special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The agreement included a contribution of £49M from the Government to help repay the council's SEND deficit, with a further £9M to be supplied from the council's reserves. A further £11.3M has been supplied in capital to support new SEND provision in mainstream schools. Two new special schools are to be established in March and Gamlingay delivered directly by the Department of Education.

The intention of the agreement is that children with SEND should be supported to remain in mainstream education wherever possible. However, demand continues to outstrip supply, with an increase of over 46 per cent in the number of requests for Education Health & Care Plans in the last five years. This means that the terms of the agreement have not been met and are being renegotiated. Many 'safety valve' councils elsewhere in the country are in the same situation.

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION

Pension Credit

A reminder that anyone wishing to qualify for a 2024/25 Winter Fuel Payment must apply for Pension Credit by 21 December 2024.

Pension Credit information at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/pension-credit

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Temporary booking system for Witchford recycling centre

A new, larger Household Recycling Centre at Milton has been given the go-ahead. The modern, split-level facility will be built on the site of the existing centre, and adjacent land, at Butt Lane, Milton, and will include a purpose-built re-use area and more parking for cars and bikes. It will cover a larger area than the current facility, already the busiest in the county, and is designed for easier, more accessible recycling for residents.

Work is expected to start on the new facility in autumn 2025 and will take around nine months. This will include the demolition of the existing centre, so while work takes place the site will be temporarily closed and residents directed to their closest alternative sites at Thriplow, Witchford and Bluntisham.

To help manage demand and tonnages at those sites, the council will be introducing a temporary online booking system while Milton recycling centre is closed. This will help reduce queues and waiting times, and aim to ensure residents can visit the three sites at a time convenient to them.

Community energy consultation

The county council has approved a new Community Energy Action Plan which defines how the council will support communities in developing solutions of local energy supply.

The eleven actions in the Plan are:

1. Facilitate the set-up of a Cambridgeshire community energy co-operative.
2. Provide match funding for feasibility studies.
3. Employ a council community energy development officer.
4. Offer guidance and advice to community energy groups.
5. Broker customer relationships between community energy groups, host sites and customers for community delivered rooftop solar.
6. Search for sites.
7. Promote uptake of domestic energy efficiency grants.
8. Raise awareness of innovative energy tariffs.
9. Support neighbourhood uptake of domestic renewables.
10. Promote domestic retrofit with private landlords.
11. Continue education and awareness raising.

Flood funding for Internal Drainage Boards

The government last month announced that £50M will be distributed to internal drainage boards (IDBs). The funding will help projects to improve, repair or replace IDB assets, including flood barriers, embankments, and maintenance of watercourses. The funding will support projects which reduce risks and impacts from flooding to farmers and rural communities across England.

The government has also committed to look at the funding formula for allocating money to proposed flood defences. A consultation will be launched in the new year which will include a review of the existing formula to ensure that the challenges facing businesses and rural and coastal communities are adequately taken into account when delivering flood protection.

Packaging fees

The Government has published an update on the introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)—the ‘polluter pays’ scheme whereby those responsible for producing and circulating packaging must pay for the cost of its disposal over the course of its life.

EPR for packaging fees has been deferred for a year. No EPR packaging fees will be payable in 2024. However, businesses must report their packaging data for 2023, and will be required to pay any related fees in 2025 based on 2024 data. They must also continue to pay any fees due under previous regulations.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Winter preparations

Preparations for winter are well under way with the county council's fleet of 37 gritters and two quad bikes on stand-by to keep the county's roads, paths and cycleways safe for residents in the colder months.

The team's annual preparatory 'dry runs' are now complete. The council's salt barns are fully stocked with 10,000 tonnes of rock salt ready for the start of the cold season, and grit bins across Cambridgeshire have been refilled. The council maintains over 108,000 drains across the county, and has been clearing and repairing these where necessary before winter sets in.

Crews will be on standby across the council's four winter service depots at Huntingdon, March, Whittlesford and Witchford, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, between now and April 2025. Around seventy community volunteers also go out to help grit paths and pavements to keep them safe for those on foot.

Prioritising the Highways capital programme

The county council's Highways & Transport Committee on 3 December is asked to approve a new scoring system to set priorities for planned capital highways maintenance schemes.

The total proposed allocation for capital highway maintenance in 2025/26 is subject to the council's business plan being agreed in February, but is expected to total £40.576M. This excludes £5.5M set aside for specific work on the de-trunking of the A14 and reactive capital work throughout the year,

The aim of this new system is to provide a more transparent process for building the programme, based on weighted scoring of a range of factors relevant to each asset type (for example, carriageways, footways, bridges, signing and lining, rights of way, traffic signal replacement).

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is developing a Fen Roads Economic Impact Assessment for Peat Soil Affected Roads. This is something we have been asking the Combined Authority to get involved in, given how important our peat soil affected roads are to our area.

The Combined Authority has also received an update on the project 'to address existing and future challenges around capacity and road safety' on transport corridor between Ely and Cambridge. The Department for Transport asked the Combined Authority to put forward a preferred option that includes both junction improvements and dualling, and a lower cost alternative option. Further

work is in progress or about to begin, and is expected to conclude by the end of January.

The Authority's Best Value Improvement programme is closing down, now that the 'best value notice' imposed by the previous government has been lifted.

Cllrs Alison Whelan and Piers Coutts

County Councillors for Ely North and Ely South

