

Cambridgeshire County Councillor's Report May 2018

There was no meeting of the **County Council** in April and the Planning Committee and many of the service committees also did not meet during the month. The next meeting of the County Council, its Annual General Meeting, will take place on Tuesday 15 May 2018. Agenda item 8 will ask members to ratify the decision of Commercial & Investment Committee to select Alconbury as the preferred location for the Council's new headquarters. Agenda pack: <https://bit.ly/2KkXgJ2>

County Councillors are offered regular briefings and development sessions and the number of members attending is variable. The session held this month entitled "**Highways Maintenance: The Asset Management Approach**" was though extremely well attended; an indicator of just how many issues are raised by residents with their local councillors and the countywide concern about the condition of our roads. Officers acknowledged that the prescribed timescales for attending to reported issues have not always been kept to in the recent past and there is commitment to improved performance in this respect for the future. Various changes to the way in which reported highways defects are managed are also being proposed including much clearer information on the Council's website about the status of reported defects and closer management of quality issues by Local Highways Officers. I will be monitoring the implementation of these changes and their impact.

Several members raised issues relating to the claims being made by residents for damage to their cars caused by potholes. Officers confirmed that negligence on the part of the County Council has to be proved in order for such claims to be successful. The Council does not have a statutory duty to maintain roads in perfect condition. It does though have a statutory defence against claims of negligence. It has to provide evidence of the existence of and adherence/response to an inspection schedule to rely on that defence. The Dragon Patcher purchased in the last year has been very successful in increasing the rate at which potholes can be dealt with and there are plans to purchase another two machines.

Economy & Environment Committee's agenda included a report on the increased cost and funding requirement of the Ely Southern Bypass. Members agreed unanimously to recommend to General Purposes Committee that it should allocate an additional £13m to assure the scheme's completion. There was however criticism of the type of contract that had been entered into with members expressing concern that this seemed to have been influenced by a local desire to see the scheme implemented very quickly. Members also approved the preliminary draft Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Minerals & Waste Local Plan to allow public consultation to commence in May.

Agenda pack: <https://bit.ly/2wErntc>

Health Committee's agenda included a report on the provision of dental services. There was concern about the level of provision both to new communities and to address the cumulative impact of development sites approved in villages. They requested that NHS England Dentistry be invited to attend a future committee meeting. They also requested that the Director of Public Health monitors Section 106 [developer contributions] agreements for primary care provision for large new developments, including Northstowe] to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to dental health facilities.

A lot of concern has been expressed about the planning application being made by **Amey Cespa** and a perceived lack of opportunities for members of the public to hear about this **Waste to Energy proposal** and ask questions. As a result a further drop-in session has been organised for this coming Wednesday, 16 May 2018. This will be held at Landbeach Village Hall. In attendance will be the County Council's Planning, Minerals & Waste Business Manager as well as representatives from the Environment Agency and Public Health England. The applicant has submitted additional environmental information under the Town & Country Planning [Environmental Impact Assessment] Regulations 2011: Regulation 22 which is now available for comment. The application documents are available on line at: <http://planning.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/swift/apas/run/WPHAPPDETAIL.DisplayUrl?theApnID=S/3372/17/CW&theTabNo=3&backURL=backURL>

There was some good news on the funding front with a successful bid by Cambridgeshire & Peterborough to the National Lottery. Living Sport is the **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Sports Partnership** that was formed in 2006 to raise the profile and engagement of these local authorities with sports bodies and to increase community participation in sport. Its purpose is to inspire everyone to lead healthy lives by increasing and improving opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity. It has just been awarded £500,000 of National Lottery funding to help people in new communities in the local area to stay active following a house move. Research by Sport England shows that there are nearly 15 million people who regularly participate in sport and physical activity and as a result benefit from increased confidence as well as improved physical and mental wellbeing. However, even strong habits can be disrupted when people go through a major life change such as moving into a new community which initially can be lacking in established facilities for sport and physical activity. The funding will be used to support the Active New Communities project which is supporting eight growth sites in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and are due to be occupied over the period 2018-2021. In the first year the project will focus on Northstowe, Alconbury Weald and Hauxton.

Foster Care Fortnight will be taking place from 14-27 May. It aims to raise the national profile of fostering and encourage more people to become foster carers. The County Council welcomes applications from people of all ethnic backgrounds, with or without children of their own. Applicants must be aged over 21 and can be single, married, in a civil partnership or living with a partner.

Each year the County's Registration Service publishes details of the most popular names registered in Cambridgeshire for the preceding twelve months. Most popular boys' names for the last year were Oliver, Harry, George, William and Joshua. I wonder if we will see Louis gain popularity this year. For girls the popular choices were Olivia, Amelia, Charlotte, Isla and Emily. Will Megan be in next year's top five for girls? Among the most unusual names registered were Zebedee and Orion for boys and Sailor and Armani for girls.

I look forward to receiving any questions or comments that you have about these or any other matters either at your meetings or by email.

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