

Cambridgeshire County Councillor's Report August/September 2018

Whilst there weren't many committee meetings during August there have been other things going on that have kept me well occupied. Due to the resignation of another councillor I have gained a place on the **Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee** [H&CI] and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority. I am really pleased about the first and have taken the second on the basis that the committee might well cease to exist if its legal challenge to the Police & Crime Commissioner's bid to take it over is unsuccessful.

The agenda for my first meeting as a member of the H&CI committee includes items on Road Safety across Cambridgeshire and an update report on 'the package of improvements to the Library Service' which you may recall included charging for the use of computers in libraries. I'll report back to you on these next month. The minutes for the last meeting make interesting reading. There were questions asked by a member of the public about issues relating to the A14 upgrade and their impact on residents of Histon Road. The concerns are very similar to those expressed by residents of Huntingdon Road and relate to noise nuisance and speeding of HCVs. On the subject of the latter I have now succeeded in getting the last digital sign on the approach to Huntingdon Road reprogrammed to read '30 MPH AREA. PLEASE CHECK YOUR SPEED'. I have also asked for information about the numbers of vehicles displaced onto Huntingdon Road on those occasions when the A14 is closed and the number of those which are recorded as speeding. If this provides evidence of a substantial problem I can use it to ask the police to allocate some of their meagre resource to the occasional speed trap there. Disappointingly debate on the annual report on Highways maintenance performance doesn't appear to have raised any issues that we are not all already familiar with. The item on traffic signals and design that I flagged up in my last report was withdrawn from the agenda as Officers required more time. However this means that I shall be able to contribute when it is next on the agenda.

Agenda pack and minutes: <https://bit.ly/2udaMrQ>

As a substitute member for **Economy & Environment Committee** I was called upon to attend the August meeting. There was one key decision relating to procurement of several Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority [CPCA] transport projects. The County Council will be acting on behalf of the CPCA and there were questions asked about the capacity of Officers to deal with this. Members were reassured that the work is being done by the same Officers who would have done the work when it was the responsibility of the County Council - so basically no change. I shall be challenging this through my membership of H&CI committee as I believe that resource is extremely stretched as evidenced by the number of approved LHI projects on which work is still outstanding.

Agenda pack and minutes: <https://bit.ly/2NujzBb>

Whilst the County **Planning Committee** didn't meet in August, there was more than enough reading to do in preparation for the two meetings that it will have in September. Both meetings are to consider applications that have a great deal of public interest. The first was held last Thursday. There were only 2 items on the agenda but, with the first item having 33 registered speakers, it was about 3.30pm by the time we had debated and voted on it [started at 10am]. Whilst the location of the application may not be of local interest, the proposal may be. It was for the construction of a heat and power plant comprising a biomass *energy from waste* facility with an additional facility for the treatment of waste water by evaporation. It was interesting to hear from the applicant that Brexit is prompting some waste handling firms to review their operation as opportunities for the export of some types of waste may be more limited in the future. The second item related to the restoration of the cement works at Barrington and was deferred at approaching 5.30pm for further information to be supplied by the applicant.

Agenda pack: <https://bit.ly/2x0i3gR>

The Council has recently learned that it is to be recognised for its support for the armed forces and their families. It will receive a silver award in the **Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme** at a special ceremony due to take place at Emmanuel College, Cambridge on Thursday 08 November 2018. The awards which were established in 2014 include bronze, silver and gold categories. The silver level is being awarded to the Council for its efforts to support the armed forces community through its employment of individuals with connections to the armed forces and for its support for reservists. The Council is also a lead signatory to the Cambridgeshire Armed Forces Community Covenant. The Covenant ensures that those who serve or have served, and their families are treated fairly within the community.

I hope you have all received notification of this year's **Conference for Cambridgeshire Local Councils** which will be taking place on Friday 23 November 2018 in Huntingdon. In response to feedback from those who attended last year's event and thanks to sponsorship from the CPCA, this year's conference will be a full day event [09.30 - 15.45]. The full programme has yet to be finalised but the event always provides great networking opportunities and there will be a number of stalls offering useful information and services to local councils. The event will be attended by the Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough who will talk about his ambitions for our rural villages and market towns. You can book a place or places at <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/lcconference/> up to Friday, 09 November 2018 and joining instructions will be sent to all delegates one week prior to the event.

I hope you all had a good summer and what a summer it was with record breaking temperatures! And rumour has it that we may be in for a last gasp of warmth and sunshine this month and even [although more doubtfully] an Indian Summer. I have only recently learned that the term Indian Summer can only be used to describe warm, sunny weather in October/November.

I look forward to receiving any questions or comments that you have about the items in this report or any other matters either at your September meetings or by email.

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