

Cambridgeshire County Councillor's Report April/May 2019

April was a very quiet month as far as meetings of Council committees are concerned as Cambridge City, East Cambs District and Fenland District councils all had elections and other authorities have to observe the requisite purdah rules.

One of the Council committees that did meet was **Communities & Partnerships** which was asked to approve the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Prevent Strategy. The strategy has been drafted in accordance with The Counter Terrorism & Security Act which requires that the Council must have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The strategy can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/2WChYLe>

Commercial & Investment [C&I] committee also met. It reviewed the Council's Commercial Strategy for 2019-2021. It has been updated to reflect previous comments from members of the committee. Updates include key performance indicators that will be monitored against agreed targets and regularly reported to C&I; a definition of the term 'social value' to provide key economic and non-economic benefits that can be used in assessing the value of the Council's commercial activities and an explanation of the Opportunity Appraisal Framework tool and how it will be used to assess commercial activities/opportunities. The strategy can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/2LENvuN>

There were also meetings of the **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority's** [CPCA] Transport & Infrastructure, Housing & Communities and Skills committees.

The Transport & Infrastructure committee received a report providing an update on the work undertaken on feasibility of the M11 extension project. There was acknowledgement that consideration might be given to linking this work to the high priority dualling of the A47.; the focus being on the A47 and A10 and opening up the Fens. The report will now be forwarded to Highways England to ask for their long term views. For the time being the committee agreed to note the findings of the report and to revisit the M11 extension project once the outcomes of the funding bids for the A47 and A10 are known. The committee also received a report on stakeholder engagement for the Bus Reform Task Force which will look at strategy and opportunities for improving bus services. All four leading organisations, Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City councils, the Greater Cambridge Partnership [GCP] and the Combined Authority will input to the task force which will be chaired by the Mayor. Stagecoach will also be included in discussions and the assessment done by the GCP of funding options will also be taken into account.

Agenda pack, decisions and draft minutes: <https://bit.ly/2EicGgT>

Agenda packs for Housing & Communities: <https://bit.ly/2LDPcsv> and Skills: <https://bit.ly/2Vxc4OW>

More recently the CPCA has published on its website a notice confirming that it is preparing an assessment of a proposed bus franchising scheme which will cover the whole area of the CPCA. The Bus Services Act 2017 confers the powers to reform the bus market, to provide for new types of partnership schemes and the option to franchise bus services.

In recent days Marshall, the owner of Cambridge Airport, has announced its intention to relocate to one of three sites, Duxford, Wyton or Cranfield. The Mayor has expressed his intention to do all he can to retain the company's presence in one of the two Cambridgeshire locations. The Greater Cambridge Partnership has also commented positively, highlighting particularly the opportunities it might afford for collaborative working to develop high quality, sustainable public transport. The current site is being proposed through the new Cambridge & South Cambs' Local Plan as a site for 12,000 new homes. The County Council has also submitted a comprehensive list in response to the call for sites. There is nothing on the list for Lolworth.

I do hope that you are considering applications to the Council's **Local Highways Improvements** scheme this year. As a member of Highways & Community Infrastructure committee I shall be considering with my colleagues a report recommending changes to the scheme following a recent review. One of the changes is an increase in the upper limit of grants from £10,000 to £15,000. I will report the outcome to you following that meeting which is due to take place on 21 May 2019 but I am hopeful that it will be approved.

Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service [CFRS] has issued some safety advice after a coroner recorded a verdict of accidental death following a fire involving a cup heater at a bungalow in March, Cambs. The fire investigation carried out by CFRS discovered that the most probable cause was the use of a one-cup type, portable heater that had been used to make hot drinks. It had been left plugged in and was standing on the carpeted floor adjacent to the victim's bed. The investigating Officer urged people to take extra care when using this type of appliance in the home. He explained that many of them don't have a thermal cut off and so remain on full heat [hot enough to boil water] until they are unplugged. He advised that this type of device should be placed on a heat proof surface once used and that those using them should disconnect the electricity supply when they are not in use. A better alternative is a one-cup kettle. CFRS offers Safe & Well visits to the most vulnerable members of the community and the service encourages individuals, their family/carers to get in touch if a visit would be of benefit. For more advice on home fire safety: <http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/firesafety.aspx>

In its **Public Health** role the Council has recently set up a stroke prevention programme with GP practices in Wisbech and Greater Peterborough. The programme is being jointly funded by Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City councils, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Sustainable Transformation Partnership and NHS England. The objective of the programme is to identify and treat a greater proportion of the population with the most common form of irregular heartbeat [atrial fibrillation]. Prevalence of the condition increases with age and leads to an increased risk of experiencing one of the most severe forms of stroke. The condition can be managed through use of anticoagulants [blood thinners]. Increasing the number of those identified with the condition and providing careful management of it significantly improves health and social outcomes. It is estimated that each year one in every twenty-five patients diagnosed and treated for the condition can avoid the devastating effects of a stroke. Diagnosis will be made through pulse checks for the over 65s in conjunction with the existing annual flu jab programme. As well as the obvious personal benefits for individuals who avoid a debilitating and often life changing stroke, the avoidance of related hospital admissions and care costs provide cost savings for the NHS and councils. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough generally have higher numbers of undiagnosed and therefore untreated patients than similar areas nationally. Wisbech and Greater Peterborough have been selected for the initial programme as that proportion is even higher in these areas. It is estimated that the programme may reduce the number of strokes in those areas by up to 18 over the next year.

You may have seen the news of some significant archaeological finds as the improvement work continues on the site of the **A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme**. Finds so far have included three Anglo Saxon villages, an abandoned medieval village, 100,000 year old woolly mammoth tusks and a woolly rhino skull, a Roman supply depot and rare Roman coins dating from the third century. Archaeologists from both the A14 team and the County Council have been working together on these finds and in a recent public vote they were awarded the prize for 'Rescue Project of the Year' in the 2019 Current Archaeology Awards.

Please do email me any questions or comments that you have about the items in this report or any other matters.

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