

Report to Parish Councils for October 2024 from County Councillor Claire Daunton

Quy Issues

1. Mobile van. I will deal with this at the meeting. District councillors have been in contact with the PC.
2. Highways Quarterly Meeting for the Division. This will take place on Monday 14th October and I will report on this at the PC meeting. It will cover maintenance, drainage, HGV and other issues of relevance to Quy. The PC will be represented.
3. GCP Assembly. The next meeting of the Assembly will take place on Wednesday 26th October. Although there is nothing directly relevant to Quy on the agenda, I hope to have an update on the progress of the Swaffhams Greenway to pass on.
4. LHI bid. I give some detail on this below, but it is heartening to see that Quy came very close to the top of the list for the 20mph bids. These village-wide schemes are proving to be popular with communities. This together with the recent success on the MVAS units should help make the movement of traffic through the village safer.
5. Buses. I keep fully abreast of all developments on buses, bus routes, new routes, discussion on franchising and attended a meeting concerning the latter recently. It was also attended by representatives of bus companies and senior county officers. We were able to question representatives of the CPCA. There are several further meetings on the topic of franchising for representatives of parish councils and the public.
6. Road layout at Quy roundabout. The problems of lane-changing at the Quy roundabout have been drawn to my attention again by a local councillor colleague in East Cambs. I am hoping that the possibilities of examining problems here can be raised in conjunction with the PC. I will be asking the county road safety officer to come out and look at the issue. I have already asked for the white lines at and near the roundabout to be repainted.

New Director of Public Health

Cambridgeshire County Council has a new Director of Public Health, Sally Cartwright, who joins us from Luton in January. The Director of Public Health is responsible for identifying and improving the health and wellbeing of residents, reducing inequalities in health outcomes and protecting local communities from public health hazards, such as infectious diseases and environmental threats.

Vaccination update

Vaccinations are now available for eligible people against a range of conditions including Covid, flu, pneumonia, shingles, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Local GP practices are calling up eligible patients, or you can find out more at <https://www.cpics.org.uk/the-vaccinators/> and book with a local pharmacy or attend a convenient drop-in session without an appointment.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

School place appeal panel volunteers

Volunteers are urgently needed to hear appeals when children are not offered a place at their preferred school.

All parents or carers have the right to make an appeal to an independent appeal panel if their child is not offered a place at their preferred school. The role of the panel is to decide whether a child who has been refused a place by Cambridgeshire County Council should be given a place.

All parties involved must be given an appeal hearing that is transparent, accessible, independent and impartial. The appeal panel is independent of the local authority and its decisions are binding on all parties, unless overturned by the courts. Volunteers will sit on the independent admission appeal panels and ensure that parents feel they have had a fair and independent hearing and have been given every opportunity to put their case and have been taken seriously.

Panel members must be able to listen to two sides of a case and weigh up evidence objectively and impartially. They must also be able to:

- Communicate effectively with a wide range of people
- Read and assess information and identify key points
- Listen to key information
- Ask questions to obtain information and clarify points being made
- Analyse information and use it to form opinions and conclusions
- Obtain and weigh up evidence to reach a decision
- Work as part of a team, take advice and develop their own skills

All volunteer Panel Members receive initial and annual refresher training and will be fully supported by the Appeals Service.

The time commitment depends on how much time volunteers are willing to give. While appeals are held throughout the year, the peak months are between April and July. The appeals are arranged either for half a day or a full day, and hearings are currently held online using Microsoft Teams.

Anyone interested in applying or who would like an informal chat about the role should contact clare.cronk@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

New homes for children with complex needs

Cambridgeshire County Council's Assets & Procurement Committee has selected two former farmhouses close to each other in Soham as a pilot project to increase the number of local places available for children and young people with complex needs. Both properties, currently vacant, are owned by the Council. They will be fully refurbished and a provider will be offered a contract for up to ten years to provide care services to best meet the needs of the children.

Locally and nationally there is a growing need for placements, with children having to be placed out of the county due to a lack of local places and a limited number of registered settings being available. This project offers an opportunity for local and more stable placements, as well as avoiding over £635,000 of costs each year on private placements.

Looked after children

The Council's residential strategy for looked after children will be referred to the Strategy, Resources & Performance Committee. There remains a shortage of care placements for looked after children across the country.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Climate change progress report and carbon footprint

The County Council's Environment & Green Investment Committee received on Thursday 3 October a progress report on its Climate Change & Environment Strategy, and the annual Carbon Footprint report. This is the sixth annual Carbon Footprint report, and covers both the County Council's own carbon emissions, and those of Cambridgeshire as a whole.

Carbon emissions are classified into three 'scopes'.

Scope 1 is direct emissions such as from gas or oil boilers and vehicles.

Scope 2 is emissions from purchased electricity.

Scope 3 is indirect emissions such as those of contractors and suppliers

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The Council's Scope 1 and 2 are 42 per cent lower than in the baseline reporting year of 2018/19. Scope 2 is now always zero as the Council buys electricity through a zero-carbon contract. The Council's Scope 3 emissions for 2023/24 account for around 99 per cent of its carbon footprint, and were 111,307 tonnes CO₂e excluding the Council's rural estate—39 per cent lower than in 2018/19.

During 2023/24 the Council procured expert support to identify baseline carbon emissions for its rural estate, and more work needs to be done to agree an achievable target. For Cambridgeshire as a whole, in 2022—the most recent available data—total greenhouse gas emissions were 6.45 million tonnes CO₂e, a three per cent fall from 2021. Transport (27 per cent) remains the highest emitting sector in the county, followed by land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) (23 per cent), agriculture (15 per cent) and domestic energy use (13 per cent). The risk of not reaching the Council's carbon targets has reduced but still remains considerable. Delivery of these targets relies on collaborating with our partner organisations.

Newly discovered Roman town given heritage protection

A newly discovered Roman small town south of Great Staughton has been given heritage protection as a scheduled monument by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport on the advice of Historic England. Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for maintaining information about scheduled monuments in the county, and requested that test trenches be dug at Great Staughton during archaeology prior to the submission of proposals for a solar farm. As a result of the findings, panels will not be installed on that part of the site. This site is now Cambridgeshire's second largest Roman Scheduled Monument after the walled town of Durobrivae, five miles west of Peterborough.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Local Highways Improvement schemes

The Highways & Transport Committee meeting on Tuesday 1 October has agreed which Local Highways Improvement (LHI) bids will be approved for the coming year. These are divided into complex and non-complex schemes.

prioritisation through the council's Delivering Transport Strategy Aims programme.

Next year's application round:

The application window for the next LHI application round will be as follows.

- Application window opens: Friday 1 November 2024
- Application window closes: Friday 10 January 2025
- Feasibility studies undertaken: February—May 2025
- Panel meetings: June—July 2025
- Report to committee including prioritised list for approval: October 2025

20MPH schemes

Local 20MPH schemes still prove hugely popular, with 91 schemes submitted by local communities for consideration, and a further eleven withdrawn for consideration under other proposals. Only eight of the 91 schemes were recommended to the Highways & Transport Committee on Tuesday 1 October for implementation this coming year, again for lack of funding:

- Waterbeach (village-wide)
- Stow cum Quy (village-wide)
- Elm (village-wide)
- Bottisham (village-wide)
- Little Paxton (village-wide)
- Earith (majority of village)
- Swavesey (majority of village)
- Steeple Morden (central area of village)

The Fulbourn scheme which was approved for funding last year has now been approved for implementation and I have written to the parish council concerning next steps. It is hoped to implement the scheme in early 2025, with a possibility of this happening at the end of 2024. The Great Wilbraham scheme which was approved for funding last year is waiting for approval. I hope the arrangements for decision making will be put in place very soon.

IMPORTANT POINT it was agreed by the Highways and Transport Committee to put some additional funding (ca. £200k) into the LHI schemes. The details of this are to be worked out, but this decision recognised that LHI bids come from local communities and are expressions of what communities want to see happen to improve their areas.

Mill Road (Cambridge) closure

A special meeting of the Highways & Transport Committee took place on Friday 4 October to determine afresh the application for a Traffic Regulation Order. This would restrict traffic over the bridge by motor vehicles, except local buses, taxis, Private Hire Vehicles, blue badge holders' registered vehicles, and other authorised vehicles. Access would be maintained for cyclists and pedestrians. The Mill Road decision quashed by the court in August, and the statutory consultation relating to it, was agreed

not to be taken into account, and the matter was determined by a different group of councillors. The restrictions noted above were voted in on a majority vote and will take effect as soon as the necessary work to make this happen can be undertaken.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority has now been released from the 'Best Value Notice' placed on it in January 2023 as the Government has recognised the improvement in the organisation.

The Authority's Transport & Infrastructure Committee is recommending that the Board allow older people and those with disabilities to use their bus passes before the current 9:30AM start. The new Tiger Pass offers bus travel for £1 per journey for those aged up to 25. Details of how to apply for the new pass can be found at

<https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/onepoundbusfare/>

I was pleased to see that the Vision Zero road safety project is being revived. Its aims are to reduce the numbers of people killed or seriously injured on our roads and the social and financial impact of this, and to develop financially sustainable models of road safety activity. The original prospectus in 2020 aimed for zero killed or seriously injured by 2040 though this seems unlikely to be met.

A reminder that the Combined Authority's consultation on bus franchising continues until 20 November. Short and long questionnaires can be found at **<https://cpca-yourvoice.co.uk/bus-franchising-consultation/>**