

## Cambridgeshire County Councillor's Report to Parish Councils November 2017

It's the time of year when retailers start their 'best festive advertisement' competition and try to persuade us all to spend in anticipation of the festive period. It's also the time when Cambridgeshire County Council starts its **budget** setting process again. In the last 6 years it has made £215 million of savings whilst striving still to provide good quality services. Over the next five years the Council faces a further £100m pressure on its budgets. Whilst it is on target to deliver savings of £31 million this year it now has to work on plans to deliver even more savings in 2018/19 when the gap between the money it receives from Government, council tax, business rates and its own income generation and the amount that it needs to spend on services stands at £37.5m. The historic underfunding of large rural counties like Cambridgeshire cannot continue and the Council is now working with the county's MPs and its own network of similarly affected councils to campaign for fairer funding.

Having a free NHS **Health** Check has proved to be a wake up call for some residents influencing them to improve their health through simple lifestyle changes. The checks are designed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes or dementia and give people the opportunity to take steps at an early point to help lower their risk of developing such conditions. Often just changing to a healthier diet and doing a bit more exercise is all that's needed. Anyone aged between 40 and 74 can book a free check with their local GP service. Funded by the County Council through its Public Health budget the 20-30 minute session provides checks on blood pressure, weight, cholesterol and the lifestyle factors that influence your health. For more information go to <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/be-well/health-improvement/>

The most frequent complaints that I have received from residents of Bar Hill and Girton this month have been about the **local bus services**. I have been in touch with the CEO of Stagecoach who has said that roadworks are a major contributor to the deterioration in this service and I accept that these must have some effect. Residents though are not convinced by this and I am continuing to work on finding the causes and addressing them. The work on the final stage of the Huntingdon Road cycleway is due to finish, weather permitting, on Sunday 19 November and the single lane restriction at junction 14 of the M11 is due to be lifted around the same date. Once these two major contributors are out of the picture, I will be able to discuss what other reasons there are for this.

For Bar Hill and Lolworth particularly this last month has brought further challenges in connection with the work on upgrading the **A14**. The safety barrier installed at the Lolworth junction continues to promote safety concerns. I am also concerned at the often short notice or cancellation of notified works and am awaiting confirmation of a date for a meeting with Mike Evans and Bob Pettipher to discuss this. The meeting will also give me the opportunity to raise the concerns of Girton residents about the impacts on them of the removal of vegetation along the route and to pursue the issue of the safety barrier for Lolworth.

County Highways have apologised for the chaos that was experienced when Cambridge Water carried out work in connection with the upgrade to the A14 a few weeks ago. It appears that the details that the contractors gave when applying for permission to carry out the work was not quite what they actually did when on site and, as was obvious to anyone trying to get to Tesco, go to work or return home, the traffic management system was not fit for purpose. As soon as one of the County's own Inspectors visited and made changes the situation improved. Anyone who was affected will I think be pleased to know that the County Council is levying a fine on Cambridge Water. This experience has though prepared me for dealing with future roadworks situations and, having been notified that there are to be multi-way signals at Wellbrook for an extended period, I have already sought the support of County Highways to discuss their plans with the contractors involved.

Included in the agenda for **Highways & Community Infrastructure** Committee's meeting earlier this month was consideration of removing the £1 parking charge at the Park & Ride sites. Draft minutes are not yet available but you can see the report and decision statement at: <http://bit.ly/2AINsUz>

The agenda for the **Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority** [CPCA] meeting included an item on priority transport schemes. The priority list includes a number of SCamb items including Cambridge South Station, the A505 corridor study and the A14 junctions improvement feasibility study. Members of the CPCA agreed a budget of £4.53m [£3.53 in 2017/18 and £1m in 2018/19] for the rolling programme of transport and infrastructure schemes. They also resolved to review the pipeline annually. Agenda pack, decision statement and minutes: <http://bit.ly/2jwK3oh>

Delayed transfers of care continue to cause concern both for the NHS [particularly Addenbrookes] and the County Council. The report to **Adults Committee** provides little comfort. As a member of the Health Committee I have the opportunity to meet quarterly with the CEO of Addenbrookes and I know that this is a real challenge for him and his team. Members of Adults Committee were advised that for a period of six months the Head of Commissioning will be redeployed to provide leadership and coordination of the hospital discharge process and associated services. £2.3m of new money has also been earmarked to support hospital discharge. This will be spent on additional staffing for both the reablement service and the discharge social work team as well as to provide a range of interim beds in extra care sheltered housing and care homes. Agenda pack and decision statement: <http://bit.ly/2iZ0wOn>

A report on the government's revised schools funding formula was considered by **Children & Young People** Committee [C&YP] this month. The revisions include some small increases in funding for Cambridgeshire schools but I know only too well from working with our local schools that this remains a problem. Members of the C&YP committee will be required to approve the Cambridgeshire Schools Funding Formula at their January meeting. Agenda pack and decision statement: <http://bit.ly/2imtZ58>

I look forward to hearing your comments and questions about the items in this report or any other local or strategic matter either at November's Parish Council meetings or directly by email.

*Lynda*

[lyndaharford@icloud.com](mailto:lyndaharford@icloud.com);  
01954 251775/07889 131022;  
Follow me on Twitter: @2whit2whoo