

## **Monthly Report for Parish Councils January 2009**

It gets a bit repetitive saying another busy month, but it was.

I had a very enjoyable trip to Oxfordshire this month. I was the guest of their Leader, Keith Mitchell. The similarities other than having a world renowned University are quite incredible. It was interesting to see how other councils operate and deal with the issues. I came away with a number of good ideas, but let some there too.

There was no full council but I had a couple of busy Cabinet meetings.

The first Cabinet meeting on the 15th had items like some additional funding being put towards the voluntary sector to help out over the next few turbulent financial years. A lot was made of this in the press and quite rightly so, some £500k will go to those organisations to help families etc.

Cottenham Village College has applied to introduce a Sixth Form for vocational studies. I was very pleased to support this application, but then am slightly biased.

Also at this Cabinet meeting I introduced items on the Abington to Sawston Cycle way, the plans to introduce a county wide parking policy. The first steps were to bring the parking enforcement contract in house from the City Council. This is the first step, next is to sort out what all the different districts want and need. I also introduced the plans for the bus stops in Cambridge for the Guided Bus.

The next Cabinet was all about the budget, or integrated plan as it is now called. Although a short agenda there was a lot to go through. I have had so many meetings about this budget. It was resolved to set the Council Tax at 4.7% this year, which will still leave us as one of the lowest Council tax authorities in the country.

### **Guided Bus**

The month started off with the news that there had been some delays on the Guided Bus and that the Northern section will now be ready in the Summer rather than the Spring. I also spent an afternoon out with Ben Webster from The Times, showing him bits of the guideway. He ran an article later in the month, although he did get the quotes around the wrong way!!

### **Transport Commission**

The website was launched this month. It is available at <http://www.cambstransportcommission.co.uk> please take a few minutes to visit the site and fill out the questions. As you know the Commission will be looking at congestion in the Cambridge area and looking at the causes and suggesting some possible solutions. Sir Brian and Tony will be receiving the

online views and then hold some public evidence gathering sessions before reporting back to the council in the Summer.

#### **A14**

We had a very useful presentation from the Highways Agency and Costain/Skanska about how things are going on the A14 project. Nothing really new to update you on. I am due, weather permitting, to have a meeting with Lord Adonis, Andrew Lansley, Jim Paice and Jonathon Djanogly on Monday 2nd Feb to talk about the A14. I haven't seen an agenda for the talk, so my guess is as good as yours.

#### **South Cambs AJC**

As the chair of this committee I was very disappointed not to be able to make it. David has mentioned the HCV Parking Ban in Impington. It was resolved at the meeting to delegate this to me (as the Chair) and the vice chair. I have already been onto officers to ensure this happens quickly.

#### **HCV Movements Through Our Villages**

A topic I have been asking about and nagging at Shire Hall since I was first elected. JAG have done an excellent job of lifting this further up the agenda, and I was very pleased to attend a meeting this month. I was accompanied by Mac Mcguire, deputy leader, Steve Criswell (new Cabinet member and member for Earith) and Bill Hunt (member for Haddenham and Wilburton). I thought the meetings was a good start. One of the things to come out of it is the need to have JAG involvement as we work through the challenges and draw up future policy.

#### **Consultation on Extra Minerals And Waste Site Proposals**

A new consultation was launched on Monday, 26 January, on additional proposals put forward for waste management and mineral extraction in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The Council is launching a six-week public consultation in partnership with Peterborough City Council on the extra proposals suggested by stakeholders.

The consultation is a follow up to the series of public events held in September and October 2008 when communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had their say on the emerging Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan.

The Plan proposes the location of future waste management facilities and mineral extraction sites up to 2026 and has a number of key principles including making minerals available for the construction of new housing and infrastructure, including the upgrade of A14 and A1073, and encouraging recycling through conveniently located, modern, enclosed recycling centres.

In response to the 2008 consultation, stakeholders have suggested 36 new sites for mineral and waste development.

Even though these new proposals currently have no formal status, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council have to consider them and decide whether they should be included in the next version of the Plan.

Members of the public can access information on the new sites and have their say by going to:

[www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/mwplan](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/environment/mwplan)

The consultation ends on Monday, 9 March.

### **Inspection Ratings**

We had quite a bit of good news this month

Government inspectors from the Audit Commission named Cambridgeshire as the most improved County Council in England based on its performance over the last three years.

We were ranked the top county council out of 388 local authorities with 86% of its performance indicators showing improvement – against a national county authority average of between 67.5% and 72.5%.

Some more good news this month with Adult Social Support Services have been given a two star rating by Government inspectors – doubling their score.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) has judged the service to be delivering good outcomes for service users, with promising capacity for continued improvement and awarded an overall performance rating of two stars – up from the previous year's one star rating.

We also had a report from OfSTED which said Cambridgeshire County Council provides services for children and young people that are consistently above required standards, say inspectors.

In the Council's Annual Performance Assessment (APA), standards of education were found to be good, and inspectors praised the way the Council used the views of children and young people in developing its strategic plan.

**Matt Bradney**

**County Councillor for:**

**Cottenham, Histon, Impington, Oakington & Westwick and Rampton**

**m: 07739393137**

**h: 01954 204347**

**e: [matthew.bradney@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.bradney@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)**

**w: [www.mattbradney.co.uk](http://www.mattbradney.co.uk) (although I have struggled to keep this up to date this month)**