

County Councillor's Report June 2018

Division Highways meeting

The first of these meeting has taken place and included Parish Clerks/Chairs from Longstanton, Over, Oakington and Westwick, along with representatives from highways. This was great success and highway issues were reported and discussed by each Parish. This will be repeated every two months with the next meeting being scheduled for Friday 17th August.

Pot Holes

The reported and white marked potholes on Rampton Road have been repaired. The white markings indicate up to 12 weeks for repair, but after a conversation between myself and highways, these were repaired within 2 weeks.

New County Council working model.

At last month's Parish Council I explained how the new proposed working model of the County Council in how it services the residents of the county, and how much more accessible it will be to all the residents of the whole county of Cambridgeshire will work.

The plan is to enable all of us to access both County Council Officers and services locally wherever we may live within the County, and not having to travel to a main building such as Shire Hall. The new administrative building was the subject of discussion and some Parish Councillors agreeing that it should be built in Northstowe, whilst some saying that it should not with some saying that existing buildings as in SCamb District Council, should be shared. Therefore, no single consensus was able to be formed.

It has now been decided that the new administration building, which will hold less than 10% of the present Shire Hall employees, some of which because of joint working with Peterborough, already travel between Peterborough and Cambridge several times per week, will be located at the Enterprise Zone in Alconbury, alongside the Combined Authority and the Local Enterprise Partnership, which are already located there. The remainder will be working in local hubs around the county to enable all residents to use the County Council easily without having to travel long distances to any one building. These hubs will include such places as Cambridge, Northstowe, Cambourne, Wisbech, Whittlesey, Soham, Ely, March, and all other areas around the county.

When this paper came to members a few weeks ago, I automatically gave a spirited defence of Northstowe in quite a few pre-full council debates and also in the actual full council debate. I really felt that Northstowe was the right place. I came home to what will be at most a 10-minute walk from the new town centre, and decided that I need to get out and seek the thoughts of other people before the main debate in Full Council.

So, I walk up Longstanton High St. stopping to chat and asking the question, also on the school run at both Northstowe and Longstanton, I also asked residents in Oakington including their

school run, some were like myself, in favour, and some really had no particular opinion. However, some said absolutely not, and this figure grew. I spoke to people in the Black Bull, then went over to the Pavilion. The majority said *“why waste valuable space in what is really a smallish town centre on boring council offices? We would prefer, a cinema, shops, pubs/restaurants, coffee shops, or even a bowling alley”*

I sat outside the Pavilion on a lovely sunny evening talking to some parents watching their children play, a gentleman looked at me and said *“we want a town centre that is great to visit, one we would want to visit, I would like to say to my wife, lets pop over to the town centre for a coffee, a café culture would be great, also, why do we need another council building when we are already getting one?”*

That is correct, the town centre is already getting a circa £17million Civic Hub containing a health centre, along with County Council services such as school nurses, a new Family and Child Centre, a new library along with community rooms, with County Council Officers to advise us and help us access County Council services.

So, I go into the main debate with all these views to work with, views that are not the same as mine, but views that are just as valuable, and views that should be respected. It is sometimes difficult to except others' views, but just because they differ from mine, that makes them no less valuable to me or our community. I respect all our neighbours and friends' views and act upon them whenever and however I can as I did in the debate.

Cambridgeshire Retrofit Programme

The Cambridgeshire Retrofit Programme continues to do well with 40 schools across the county and seven corporate sites having undertaken a whole site energy efficient retrofit project. This equates to a total investment of £8.7 million and an average of 16% energy savings.

These projects are delivered through Energy Performance Contracts which provide a guarantee that schools actually realise the energy savings in the original business case. Should the savings not be realised, and the sites have been appropriately managed, the service provider Bouygues are required to make a shortfall payment but so far this has not been necessary. 18 of the completed projects have enjoyed at least one year of the full benefits of the energy conservation measures installed. Overall performance from these sites is exceeding the targets by about 6% and collectively they are receiving a financial benefit in excess of £300,000.

The next tranche of the programme is in development with a £2.5 million pipeline of new school projects. The first project will be at Impington Village College which has formally agreed to go into the first stage of contracting for a half million site wide energy retrofit project including solar PV, new combined heat and power plant, LED lighting upgrades and other heating and control measures.

County Council wins grant from Sport England.

The County Councils Public Health Directorate is celebrating after being awarded £325,000 from Sport England to help low income families get active with their children. Four out of five primary school children do not get the recommended amount of daily exercise of 60 minutes a day and are missing out on the benefits it brings. Children from low income families are most likely to do very little physical activity.

Active Families is a project run by Cambridgeshire County Council. It is one of the first projects to receive investment from a £40 million National Lottery funding pot that Sport England has dedicated to helping families get active together because parents and close family members can have a big impact on children's experiences. The fund's key focus is on helping young people have an enjoyable experience of sport and physical activity so they develop a positive attitude towards being active at an early age and continue being active in later life.

Active Families will first focus to deliver free and fun physical activities for children and families most in need. Free school term drop-in sessions, holiday roadshows and virtual activities such as a free treasure hunt app will be available at the school gate, community centres and nearby greenspaces. Children and their carers will be encouraged to maintain their participation with a reward scheme. An online directory of free family play and physical activity opportunities will also be developed to help those families stay active.

This is such excellent news for our Active Families project which can get off the ground and start providing experiences for families that are enjoyable, convenient and low cost. The importance of having an active lifestyle cannot be underestimated, and to establish this at primary level is crucial.

Peter Hudson

County Councillor

Longstanton, Northstowe, Over, Oakington and Westwick.