

February Report 2010 - Cambridgeshire County Councillor John Reynolds

Have your say on improving transport in Cambridgeshire.

A series of public exhibitions started from February 9 to help update the Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire. This will be the third Local Transport Plan for the county and is a blue-print, based on the priorities set by residents, on what transport schemes should come forward.

Every home in the county will receive a leaflet outlining initial plans and giving each household the opportunity to give their views by returning a questionnaire. Throughout February and March exhibitions will be held in locations around the county and people will also be able to complete the questionnaire on-line via a link from the main Local Transport Plan page at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ltp

Green vision consultation launched for Cambridgeshire.

Cambridgeshire Horizons are working with its partners again to review the Green Infrastructure Strategy, and expand its reach to cover the whole of Cambridgeshire.

Back in 2006 Cambridgeshire Horizons and its partners launched the original Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Cambridge Sub-region. The Strategy encompasses a range of outdoors places and spaces including rivers and watercourses, country parks, woodlands, hedgerows, public rights of way and much, much more.

The consultation will run until March 7. with a series of public exhibitions. The information and the consultation questionnaire can be found online at: www.cambridgeshirehorizons.co.uk/greenvision.

Budget proposals announced.

The most challenging financial climate for decades is the stark backdrop to the County Council's budget for 2010/11, with the Council needing to become leaner to deal with a 20% cut in its spending power over the next five years.

Inflation, an increasing population especially among the older population, additional demands on services and the anticipated sharp reduction in government funding have all created huge pressure on the Council 's budget.

But the County Council is proposing a budget which aims to:

- * Create a leaner council which targets services to those who need them most
- * Continue to support communities and focus on residents' priorities.
- * Transform services to make them more efficient.

Over the next five years the Council will need to find funds to meet £48m of inflation pressures, £55m of demand pressures as the population increases, as well as cope with a reduction in government funding of £2m. In order to stave off the worst effects of the funding pressures and protect essential services, a 3% council tax increase for 2010/11 is proposed. Even with the proposed increase, the council tax bill for County Council services in Cambridgeshire would still be among the lowest in the country.

click here for news release on budget proposals

<http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/db/pressrel.nsf/729e5777b124350980256b560033a513/d1a5cfe102308208802576b100577134?OpenDocument>>

Minerals and waste plan consultation launched.

Planning chiefs are calling on residents to help shape the future of waste management and mineral extraction in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Cambridgeshire County Council is launching a six-week public consultation from Monday 15 February. Events are being held across the county to provide an opportunity for local communities to have their say.

Local events are being run at the following venues:

- * Bar Hill Village Hall on 17 February 2010 from 4pm-8pm..
- * Milton Bowls Pavilion, Milton on 25 February 2010 from 4pm-8pm.
- * Swavesey Village College on 26 February 2010 from 4pm-8pm.
- * Over Community Centre on 2 March 2010 from 4pm-8pm.
- * Great Shelford Rugby Club on 3 March 2010 from 4pm-8pm.
- * Arkenhall Village Centre, Haddenham on 4 March 2010 from 4pm-8pm.
- * Brampton Memorial Centre on 5 March 2010 from 4pm-8pm.

Government continues to ration grit during UK salt shortage.

The County Council, like authorities across the UK, has been told by the Government to continue to ration rocksalt use between 40 to 50 per cent.

The instructions follows the record prolonged spell of winter weather and a national shortage of salt. This means the County Council, in line with neighbouring counties, continues to grit only 'A' roads and a priority network of 'B' roads as well as waterside roads such as those next to drains in the Fens.

This will continue until the Government lifts the rationing. Details of the revised network of roads which are being treated are available on the County Council's website - www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

County Council appoints new parking enforcement contractor.

The County Council has appointed the UK's largest provider of on street parking services to run parking enforcement in Cambridgeshire.

The new contract, which comes into force on April 1, will coincide with the County Council taking on the running of parking enforcement from the City Council which has acted as agents for parking enforcement for the County Council since 2004.

Under the new contract the number of parking enforcement officers on the streets of Cambridge will be retained at current levels, with the potential for parking enforcement operations to be extended to other parts of the county as and when Government powers are sought.

Cycling scheme gets go-ahead.

Proposed safety improvements to segregate motorists, cyclists and pedestrians on Hills Road Bridge have been approved by Cambridgeshire County Council.

The Cabinet have given the go ahead to make the new £500,000 safety scheme permanent.

Positive feedback from people who use the route and results from a trial of the scheme indicated that introducing 2.1 metre cycle lanes over the bridge improved cyclist's journeys and did not have a detrimental affect on traffic flows.

Results from the trial revealed that on average 18,000 vehicles, 5,000 cyclists and 2,500 pedestrians use the bridge every day. Construction of the new road layout will coincide with the Cambridge Gateway project

Government says water good idea to Cambridgeshire Drain Scheme.

A groundbreaking scheme being trialled in Cambourne to revolutionise how rain water is dealt with to reduce flooding could be rolled out across the UK.

Interim results of the green scheme which uses natural features, landscaping and environmentally friendly materials shows that less water is discharged than in traditional developments, thus reducing the risk of flooding and also reducing pollution.

The Lamb Drove SUDS project in Cambourne could become the blueprint for the national approach and is being used by DEFRA to help guide UK authorities to dealing with drainage.

Library opening holds novel community celebration day

An exciting free community celebration day was held on January 30, at Great Shelford Memorial Hall to mark the opening of the new library and associated development.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association put the new £500,000 library and facilities firmly at the heart of the community by celebrating with a day of events for the whole family.

The contents of a time capsule which were provided by contributions from the community and sponsored by the Great Shelford Parish Council was also on show. The capsule will be placed in the library for future generations to uncover.

County Council meeting.

Council will meet on 16th February, when the main item for debate will be the Integrated Plan proposals, including the budget and Council Tax. There is also a reserve date of 19th February, in case Council is unable to conclude its deliberation of the Integrated Plan proposals at the meeting on 16th February. Other items to be discussed include the recommendations from the Political Management Arrangements Policy Development Group for amendments to the Constitution.

Cabinet meeting.

Cabinet will meet on 23rd February and will be considering a number of key decisions, including decisions on shared services, the Council's Community Engagement Strategy and the review of primary school provision in Cambridge City.

Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

Since the last update, the Council's Cabinet has received a report of the outcomes of the 2009 CAA assessment and outlined the process and timescales for 2010. The full report is at:
<http://www2.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/db/council2.nsf/c3cf865e3cc1131380256a6b0037e439/97e9c3c4f03c863d802576ac004dd409?OpenDocument>

I am available for consultation by phone, letter or e-mail. I can be contacted at the address or telephone number below. Please let me know if you would like these regular updates by email.

Yours

John Reynolds

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