

County Briefing from County Councillor John Reynolds. February 2013.

Community Navigator project wins Cabinet backing

The County Council's Cabinet has approved a new approach designed to reduce loneliness and isolation among older people living in Cambridgeshire. The Community Navigator project will develop closer links with their local communities, voluntary and statutory agencies and work with local people to identify gaps in existing services, and also help to support and develop the volunteers who are often the first point of contact for older people. Care Network has been recruiting both the volunteer navigators and the paid district-level co-ordinators who will be supporting them.

Staying independent, safe and well in 2013

Your Life, Your Choice provides information and advice about adult social care in Cambridgeshire. To promote its key message of 'Staying independent, safe and well' a series of 10 road shows were held in libraries during 2012. Each lasted for four weeks and featured a display of information leaflets. Drop-in sessions offering demonstrations of the Your Life, Your Choice website were held at five of the libraries, and colleagues from the Assistive Technology Team and Trading Standards were also involved in providing information. Following the success of the road show in 2012 it will visit a further 19 libraries during 2013. A list of the libraries and dates can be downloaded from the homepage of [Your Life, Your Choice](#) website.

New framework to deliver Personal Health Budgets

Adult Social Care has been supporting this work and offering the learning points from Self-Directed Support. Since 2009 a number of Primary Care Trusts across the country have been piloting Personal Health Budgets. These pilot projects came to an end in October 2012. Based on the findings the Government has announced that by April 2014 everyone in receipt of Continuing Health Care will have the right to ask for a Personal Health Budget. Clinical Commissioning Groups may also be able to offer Personal Health Budgets to people with long term conditions. In Cambridgeshire this development has been anticipated and the Continuing Health Care Team at NHS Cambridgeshire have put in place a project to work with a small number of service users setting a new framework to deliver this new approach.

Connecting Cambridgeshire

The Connecting Cambridgeshire superfast broadband campaign reached a milestone of 24,000 registrations at the turn of the year, making it one of the fastest growing and biggest broadband campaigns in the country. This was achieved with the fantastic support of Broadband Champions, local Members, partner organisations, council staff, schools and libraries. Active campaigning has now closed although people can still register their interest and keep up to date with the programme on the [Connecting Cambridgeshire](#) website.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Cabinet has approved the award of contract to the preferred supplier to roll-out better broadband for all over the next three years. Connecting Cambridgeshire will be seeking State Aid exemption during the final stages of the complex procurement process before finalising the contract for sign off due in March 2013. Roll-out plans will then be drawn up and agreed with the supplier and announced later in the year; <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/CMSWebsite/Apps/News/Details.aspx?ref=866>.

Super Connected Cambridge

Cambridge has won a share of the Government's £50m Urban Broadband Fund to become a super-connected city as part of Connecting Cambridgeshire. The plan will boost the local economy by delivering broadband speeds greater than 80-100 mbps for businesses, speeding up residential connectivity, and providing high speed wireless across the urban Cambridge area, where the density of properties places high demands on broadband coverage. The bid has been developed by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City

Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council working with the greater Cambridge business and academic community to include major economic and housing areas in and around Cambridge.

Cambridge's share of the UBF funding will be in addition to the investment in superfast broadband to stimulate growth and help communities and businesses to thrive. We are awaiting further details of the funding award for Super Connected Cambridge, which will allow us to progress our plans. A map showing the proposed Super Connected Cambridge area and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are available on the Connecting Cambridgeshire website at www.connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk

A14

We have been working closely with DfT and local partners on the A14 study which has now been completed and the final stage has been published. Much work is still required to finally define the scheme, decide how it will be procured, by whom and what role the Local Authorities will play in its delivery. Nevertheless there are steps which can and should be taken to expedite delivery. We have initiated early discussions between Local Authorities and LEPs in the region to explore how far they can support the financing of the scheme from future locally-controlled revenue streams.

Detailed discussions are ongoing with Government about the ultimate funding package, what special delivery arrangements might be instigated to deliver the design, part financing and delivery of the scheme. More work is also needed on determining the optimum tolling strategy to raise revenue while minimising the diversion of traffic to other routes. The Secretary of State suggested that construction could begin in 2018 (and possibly as early as 2016 if a conventional funding route were used). If that is to be the case, then detailed scheme design will need to commence soon.

The DfT has allocated £5m to the Highways Agency within this current spending period to progress the scheme through the options and development phases review, although the design process is likely to need more funding, even if the scheme draws heavily on the preparatory work of the previous scheme. The separate announcement, also on 18 July 2012, of the Government's intention to underwrite £50bn of infrastructure investment, may offer an opportunity to help with the delivery of the A14 corridor transport improvements.

A14 Ministerial Visit

Stephen Hammond MP visited the Council, along with officials from the Department for Transport and the Highways Agency, met with Cllr Clarke, Cllr Bates, the Chief Executive and the Executive Director, Economy, Transport and Environment to discuss the A14. The meeting was very positive and the Minister reaffirmed his commitment to the A14 improvement and indicated that a clear decision on timescale and means of funding could be made towards the end of this year. He also made clear that the DfT are doing all they can to speed up the delivery of the road. Leading up to this, Council officers have worked closely with the DfT and continue to do so as well as working on the potential for a contribution from a range of local Councils towards the scheme.

Cambridge Science Park Station

The station has multiple benefits, including improved access to the railway network from the north side of the city, improved access to the key employment centres at the Science Park and other business parks on the northern fringe, direct interchange with the Busway, and opening up a significant area of land for economic development. The design of the new station is being developed in partnership with Network Rail and the train operators and the formal Option Selection report was submitted to Network Rail at the beginning of November. The public have been asked for their input to the emerging designs to allow a final design to be developed for submission of a planning application. There has been a delay to the franchise process as the issuing of the invitation to tender for Thameslink due in October has been delayed. It is not anticipated that this delay will have any impact on the delivery of the station at this stage.

Ely Rail Crossing

There is a common agreement that action needs to be taken to resolve the growing congestion at the level crossing. The selected bypass option is currently felt to be the best solution when all factors are taken into account. The impact on Ely Cathedral has been given due consideration alongside the other factors: reduction in congestion, severance between the railway and the town, future traffic growth and cost benefit. The suggested 'hidden bypass' presents some significant technical challenges, but to demonstrate that all options are being properly considered this proposal is now being subjected to a full technical evaluation comparable with those undertaken for the other options. To allow this to take place the public consultation has been deferred until June 2013.

Northstowe – A Modern Garden City

The planning application for the first phase of 1,500 homes at Northstowe was supported by the Joint Development Control Committee (Planning Committee) in October. A further meeting of the Committee was held on 30 January 2013. Since October the Local Authorities have worked with partner organisations to look very closely at the infrastructure requirements and the planning conditions required to ensure the planning permission delivers a very good standard of development. This work has also been mindful of the frontloaded costs associated with this project and considerable care has been taken to ensuring the project remains viable.

In parallel with this ongoing viability work the local authorities have approached the Department of Communities & Local Government to secure a government loan in order to deliver some of the infrastructure components early, and bring the delivery of phase one forward. On 15 January 2013 Cabinet considered a report on the necessary infrastructure costs and seeking to prioritise these in formulating the S106 and planning conditions.

Alconbury Weald

An outline planning application for 5,000 new homes, schools and other mixed uses has been submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council. This planning application will require a number of revisions, not least given that there are issues relating to the location of the secondary school and the fact the planning application for housing could include some housing on land within the designated Alconbury Enterprise Zone. The District Council is looking to determine this application after the publication of their Local Plan consultation document which is due to be published in May/June 2013. Cabinet will consider the county consultation response on 5 March 2013.

Local Plans - Planning the “blue print” for Cambridgeshire

All five District Councils will publish their revised Local Plans for a further round of public consultation shortly. Officers will arrange for workshops to be held for all services with a direct involvement with Local Plan preparation. This approach should provide for a much more rounded response being submitted.

South Cambridgeshire DC will shortly complete their consultation on the detail of the sites to be included in their draft Local Plan. The next version of this will be subject to a further round of public consultation in January/February 2013.

Cambridge City Council have recently consulted on the detail of the sites to be included in their draft Local Plan. The next version of their Plan will be subject to a further round of public consultation in January/February 2013.

Local Major Schemes Funding

Ministers have announced their intention to devolve funding for local major schemes to Local Transport Bodies for the period from 2015 -2019. Funding is likely to be in the order of a total of £21m for the whole area of our proposed Local Transport Body (LTB) which is to encompass Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Rutland and include the LEP. The intention is that local bodies will decide on priorities and the programme for delivery to 2019, in line with Government guidance and locally agreed criteria.

In order to secure the funding, Government has asked LTB's to submit an Assurance Framework setting out governance arrangements, process and criteria for assessing schemes by end of February. Our Draft Assurance Framework has been reported to Cabinet on 4th February.

Better Bus Area Fund (BBAF)

Good progress continues to be made with a number of BBAF projects:

The Babraham Rd Park & Ride site extension has now been completed, increasing the number of parking spaces from 1000 to 1500. The construction included widening of the exit road, construction of an alternative drop off point and installing lighting & CCTV cameras. Conversion and introduction of new RTPI displays using mobile GPRS technology (which has better coverage than radio-based PMR) is gathering pace, with 4 displays on Drummer St & Parkside already installed and further displays on Regent St and Bridge St to be completed by the end of January. Trials using GPRS units onboard Whippet and Stagecoach buses are due to start at the end of January. Trials using on-bus audio equipment on Whippet and Stagecoach Guided Busway buses is also due to start at the end of January.

Local Pinch Point Fund

The Department for Transport announced in January 2013 the creation of a Local Pinch Point Fund worth £170m to remove bottlenecks on the local highway network which are impeding growth and restricting the movement of people and goods. Any English local transport authority or local highway authority outside of London can apply. Transport for London will be able to bid for up to £10m of the Fund on behalf of London. It should be noted that this funding is in addition to the Highways Agency's Pinch Point Fund which target England's motorways and major 'A' roads.

The Fund is designed to tackle the most immediate barriers to growth. Thus all bids must demonstrate that proposed schemes will be delivered as soon as possible with supporting evidence e.g. designs, modelling, business case, scheme impact data. Bridges and structural maintenance bids are also eligible. Local contribution / match funding of at least 30% is required. Schemes requesting over £5m DfT funding are classed as Large Schemes and between £1m-£5m as Small Schemes. The DfT Fund will have to be spent by March 2015. Although local transport authorities can submit more than 1 bid, DfT may restrict the awards to two per bidding authority. Potential schemes in Cambridgeshire that meet the funding criteria are being considered within ETE and with partners for submission. The deadline for bids to be submitted is 21 February 2013.

Cycle Safety Fund

The Department for Transport announced the availability of £15 million to provide capital support for safety improvements at junctions identified as having a record of cyclists being killed or seriously injured. Local highway authorities were invited to submit applications for the Cycle Safety Fund. Sustrans has been appointed by DfT to coordinate the funding and process the proposals. Cambridgeshire County Council, in consultation with cycling stakeholders, has submitted 5 applications seeking a total of £1.5 million from the Cycle Safety Fund towards the total cost of £2.6 million. The 5 schemes are: Catholic Church Junction (Cambridge), North Cambridge Radial Network, Perne Road (Cambridge), March South and Whittlesey to Peterborough. Schemes are selected for proposals to meet the DfT assessment criteria of deliverability by the end of 2013 and innovative design solutions. Successful schemes will be this month.

S106 Funding in Cambridge & South Cambridgeshire

Some 20 new schemes were approved by Cabinet in December for funding in the Cambridge and South Cambridge area. Most of these have been put forward to the County Council by local communities to help improve safety and accessibility on the network.

Over £2million has been secured from developers to pay for the improvements to the Cambridgeshire road network, necessitated by growth. This funding has been secured by the County Council in order to make improvements to infrastructure in line with the objectives of the Area Transport Corridor Plans.

Included in the proposals are major projects such as; lighting along The Busway maintenance track at Trumpington, Histon and Impington; improvements for cyclists and pedestrians to Cherry Hinton High Street; traffic calming for Tenison Road; a cycle route from Milton to Landbeach; improved traffic calming for Fen Road; and a shared use path named Ring Fort Path, from Orchard Park to the A14 intersection at Histon, providing a shorter route for cyclists.

Public consultation will be undertaken where relevant for the more significant proposals. Schemes will now be programmed for design and delivery over the next 5 years as part of a wider programme of improvements being delivered across the area.

Community Learning Trust Fund

The Adult Learning & Skills Community Learning Trust Fund is currently funding 22 projects in Cambridgeshire. These projects are generally delivered by Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, who work with those people farthest away from learning. Learners include those lacking confidence or basic skills and those with issues such as mental ill-health or homelessness. The projects are essentially a first step engagement activity and are very diverse in type, ranging from training to be a volunteer through to financial literacy, cooking skills, employability skills and many more. Partnership work is the key to our projects and our district Community Learning & Skills Partnerships are responsible for identifying the priorities in districts and working with the VCS organisations to deliver.

Cambridgeshire Culture Partnership

A partnership has been established between the Arts Council, Cambridge University and Cambridgeshire local authorities to maximize the potential for investment in culture to support economic growth, regeneration and to encourage engagement and participation in community and cultural activity. The partnership increases the likelihood of funding coming into Cambridgeshire.

Street Lighting PFI

Meetings have taken place with Balfour Beatty, the contractor, to address ongoing concerns regarding consultation and programme delivery. Further work is being undertaken to ensure that the consultation process is fit for purpose and that communication between the contractor and local members and communities is effective. The contractor is bringing in additional resource to assist with this process. .

Highways fault reporting Improvement Project

The changes to the Highway Fault Reporting system went live on Wednesday 19 December 2012. The enhancements aim to address a number of issues raised about the systems and should result in the following benefits:

Easier data entry

Easier to track progress of fault

Improved online customer interaction by Contact Centre

Ability to enter second fault without having to re-enter customer details

Improved system resilience to reduce report failures

Members are asked to encourage their residents to use the online process for fault reporting; however those faults reported by phone should also benefit from a quicker and more comprehensive response.

Ofsted School Inspections

Ofsted is currently undertaking a 'first wave' of simultaneous inspections of schools in the lowest performing Local Authority areas, as a precursor to a wider programme of LA inspections. Cambridgeshire is not part of the 'first wave'. Ofsted is simultaneously consulting on a new framework for the inspection of local authority services for supporting improvement in schools and other providers, for the wider programme. Further details can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-education-for-all-inspection-of-local-authority-services>.

Adoption Funding, powers + Scorecards

Government has announced that Councils in England could lose their powers over adoption services if they don't help plug the national shortage of adopters – at present Cambridgeshire does well in the 'adoption scorecard' but national expectations are becoming more and more challenging. There has been a recent announcement of £150m nationally of one-off funding to address this issue.

Early Support for Families

Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire NHS signed a partnership agreement in April 2012 to jointly commission the provision of Early Support to families with children 0-5 years with lifelong, multiple needs. A new Early Support specification and care pathway was developed by parents and professionals in the statutory and voluntary sector, which was launched in September 2012. Early Support aims to improve the way services are accessed and delivered to families with children with a disability or complex additional needs. Families and children are at the centre of decision making and their needs are put first. The Early Support pathway provides:

- *A care co-ordination process which will work across agencies in partnership with families using the Family Service Plan as a tool for joined up holistic assessment and planning.
- *A single point of contact for families and practitioners to co-ordinate services and information
- *A named key worker, identified in partnership with parents, to enable the family access information and services
- *Relevant information and support for parents
- *Team around the family meetings to avoid duplication and ensure children and families experience an integrated support package and feel supported and included.
- *A clear understanding on eligibility and thresholds

Child Exploitation Strategy

Towards the end of 2011, the Government published a 'Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan' following reports from Barnardos and CEOP (the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) both of which expressed serious concern about the help available for young people who are sexually exploited. In response to the Action Plan, the LSCB established a task and finish group jointly with the Peterborough LSCB, chaired by the police. This group has produced a strategy, a risk assessment referral tool and an awareness raising leaflet, all of which were approved by the Board and are now being widely disseminated.

Community Engagement

Timebanking (a means of exchange used to organise people and organisations around a purpose, where time is the principal currency) is gaining momentum. Cambridge University, businesses, voluntary services and representatives of the faith sector are all keen to be partners going forward. The aim is to work out how we can grow the current five timebanks (one in each district) to a much bigger network of timebanking activity across the county. We envisage a community member who has supported an elderly neighbour being able to exchange their time credits for a matinee theatre performance, or a small media business being able to help a voluntary organisations.

Public County Council meetings February

11 February	1.00pm	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority	Fire Service HQ, Brampton Road, Huntingdon PE29 2NA
14 February	10.30am	Resources and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP
18 February	2.00pm	Local Government Shared Services Joint Committee	Knuston Hall, Station Road, Irchester NN29 7EU
19 February	10.30am	County Council	Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP
20 February	10.30am	Joint Development Control Committee: Cambridge Fringes	The Guildhall, Cambridge CB2 3QJ
22 February	10.30am	County Council (reserve date)	Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP
25 February	10.00am	Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee	South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne CB23 6EA
28 February	10.00am	Cambridgeshire Schools Forum	Shire Hall, Cambridge CB3 0AP