

Monthly update for parish councils: August 2009

County Council and Cabinet meetings

There were neither full council nor cabinet meetings in August. Note that there will be 2 cabinet meetings during September and at the second one (29 Sep 09) the Cabinet is expected to recommend a route forward with regard to the Transport Innovation Fund.

Environment and Community Services

The government has announced that the Monopolies Commission is to look at bus services. It is particularly concerned about situations where there is a dominant local supplier, such as Stagecoach in Cambridge.

Following an FoI request data was released showing how much councils were spending on compensation for pedestrian accidents when using their footpaths. Cambridgeshire comes out badly with a ratio of compensation to investment of 0.27. This compares with a national average of just 0.11.

It has been announced that the guided bus will be 'handed over' end October which should enable it to start commercial operations before Christmas. It now seems likely that the cycle path will be completed at the same time.

Children's Services

August was of course the month for exam results: A levels and GCSEs. IVC scored a 100% pass rate for A levels and in the International Baccalaureate 93% of its students achieved a full diploma compared to the national average of 82%. In GCSEs at CVC 78% of students achieved 5 or more A* to C grades with 32% of passes being A or A*. The numbers for IVC were 60% and 34%.

Adult and Community Services

The Central Library is now expected to enjoy a 'soft launch' 29 Sep 09.

Corporate Services

I have been briefed about the impact of the financial crisis on local government financing. There will be less money available and demand for services is projected to grow substantially. The end result is the need to cut spending in real terms by about 6%/year over the next 5 years. This will not just mean savings but will require that some services are simply not delivered.

Local issues

The Cycling Development Town plans have been published and have been on display in Impington and Cottenham. There are bold plans for the B1049 out as far as Cottenham but there are still no solutions on offer for the A14 crossing.

Sue met Stagecoach during the month and they gave early notice of changes which they propose for the Citi 7 service. It is hoped to be able to explore these with the parish councils early in September.

The Lambs Lane resurfacing has proceeded well but unfortunately there are insufficient funds to upgrade the pavements as much as had been hoped.

Sue and I met officers to bring some focus to the several minor actions, agreed and aspirational, that are perceived to be outstanding. This will now be a regular meeting and it is to be hoped that improved performance will result.

We also attended a Histon and Impington cross council meeting (county, district and parish). There was particular criticism of the county council's call centre especially with regard to highways issues.

I met officers, tree surgeons, parish councilors and residents on the Green at Cottenham to discuss proposals regarding the lime trees on its east side. It was a valuable and constructive meeting which reached a satisfactory conclusion based on objective input from the experts.

I have asked the City's North Area Committee to look at a number of Meadows issues which fall within that committee's remit.

Forthcoming meetings and events

8 Sep 09	Cabinet meeting
10 Sep 09	CCC development control meeting
10 Sep 09	CGB liaison forum
29 Sep 09	Cabinet meeting

And finally ... I had occasion to rent 4 cars during August. Car number 1 was a VW Golf. It's a well engineered car and is one of the best selling cars of all time. It's an excellent drive and because it's substantially the same as my Skoda Octavia I was immediately confident driving it. Number 2 was a Mini. I remember driving a mini in the 60s, my first car was a mini, but today's Mini is a far cry from what I remember. I enjoyed the experience but felt no familiarity with it at all. And then came number 3: a Mercedes SLK 200 complete with an 'electro-hydraulic vario-roof'. Believe me it took decades off me. And finally down to earth with car number 4 a BMW 100. This was perhaps similar to the Mini, they are after all both BMWs, and maybe the best of the lot: good small car handling but with the comfort of a larger car. Better for my ego than my Skoda, more appropriate for my age than the Merc and still as good as a car can be for the environment.

Both this monthly report, and the ones for previous months are on our website.

David Jenkins on behalf of Sue Gymer and David Jenkins
County Councillors for Cottenham, Histon and Impington

contacts	email	mobile	home	website
Sue	suegymer@ntlworld.com	07919 036246	01954 252902	
David	ccc@davidjenkins.org.uk	07739 758859	01223 236232	www.davidjenkins.org.uk