

Monthly update for parish councils: September 2009

County Council and Cabinet meetings

There will be a council meeting on the 13th October; there were none in September. David attended the two cabinet meetings in September: the second of which included agenda items such as:

- TIF: a proposal to go ahead with conditional congestion charging - with a £25million sweetener up front for the Chesterton Station - went through with little debate. There needs to be agreement with Whitehall on what the trigger for congestion charging will be and once that is sorted, it is hoped that the County will get £500million TIF money.
- The cabinet also discussed the South Cambs Gypsies and Travellers' plan (David spoke to insist that the County be robust in providing education, transport etc input when specific planning applications are made).
- Cycling Demonstration Town proposals: David spoke to highlight
 - the need for a safe A14 crossing,
 - to caution the implementation of the Milton-Impington scheme
 - CGB maintenance track/cycle path (David spoke to ask for some form of illumination).
 - support for the Cottenham-Histon-A14 scheme

I emailed my support of these schemes but expressed concern about the potential loss of Milton to IVC school bus being connected to the provision of the Butt Lane to Impington cycleway.

Some of the above proposals will be debated in October's council meeting. In addition,

- The Lib Dems will also be proposing a 1010 motion (www.1010uk.org).
- The Minerals and Waste Plan is also another item, where Cottenham/Landbeach is mentioned in respect of sand and gravel extraction, and Brookfield Business Park for waste oil. Additional inert landfill is envisaged to be needed by 2026, near Mepal and North of Cottenham.

Environment and Community Services

The latest on the guided bus is that Nuttalls will hand it over at the end of October, to allow for a month of driver training, before the bus companies use it in December. Chief Executive Mark Lloyd is closely monitoring progress. South Cambs have not discharged planning conditions relating to noise barriers, so the CGB people are proceeding 'at risk'.

Draft orders for the A14 (Ellington to Fen Ditton) work have been published and there will now be a series of exhibitions across the county.

The 12 Oct 09 AJC meeting has been cancelled.

Children's Services

The County's childrens' social care service has been subject to an OFSTED inspection. There are problems with the computer systems used to share data with other services such as the GPs and hospitals. One of the five County's childrens' homes inspected in August was found "unsatisfactory".

Scrutiny met for its first meeting of this term. Some of the future projects are to look at child poverty in the County and also improving provision for new settlements.

Adult and Community Services

The Central Library has opened 29th September. I was able to attend its pre-opening but not before my son and a group of “teen readers” from CVC had looked round. They and I were amazed by the space and services on offer. It’s more like a book shop than any library. It has multiple copies of many popular books – a quick pick system being sited by the door. The technology makes for a fast and efficient service but you will need a PIN number as well as your library card. (This can be done in the library) The entrance is on the first floor (by the top of the “Top-Shops” escalator). It will be open 9-7pm most weekdays, 8pm on Wednesday and 9am- 6pm Saturday, 12-4pm on Sundays. Other features are the café, the film library (little booths to watch archived films) and Wi-Fi.

For further info: <http://hipweb.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/central/>

We must not forget our local libraries and I was very pleased to be asked to receive a cheque from the Firs House Doctors for “books on prescriptions”. This has allowed Cottenham library to purchase books to allow self help or background reading on many medical conditions. Your Doctor may give you a “library prescription” for one of these books – it means you can borrow them for longer. I would like to express my gratitude to the local GPs for supporting this scheme

There are reports of a serious cash overspend in Adult Social Care.

Corporate Services

There are reports that the Council is overspending in a number of budget areas and “virements” have started. This is disappointing given that the Council is still getting windfall advantage from lower interest charges. Surprisingly the salary bill seems to be higher than expected.

Local issues

CCC has responded negatively to a petition from Rampton requesting a regular bus connection to Cambridge. David and Sue will continue to fight this one. It seems that Officers are simply putting it in the “too difficult” category.

Our local retained firefighters in Cottenham are short of firefighters during the day. I would urge you to encourage anyone who you think may be interested to contact the Fire Authority / Cottenham station. There are mandatory tests that will need to be passed and it does involve a two week training period. If you live or work in Cottenham then please support this vital service in our Community.

Further info: <http://www.cambsfire.gov.uk/recruitment.php>

I noticed that many of the Parish Council websites require some updates regarding Councillor contact details: I found it difficult to locate email addresses when away from home – and some bounced.

Forthcoming meetings and events

08 Oct 09	CGB liaison forum
09 Oct 09	A14 exhibition (first day of several)
13 Oct 09	County Council meeting
13 Oct 09	Neighbourhood (police) panel
14 Oct 09	CCC development control meeting
20 Oct 09	Cabinet meeting

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

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