

Monthly update for parish councils: May 2010

County Council and Cabinet meetings

There was a County Council meeting during May but anyone expecting the new mood on politics coming out of Whitehall to be reflected locally would have been disappointed. There was one significant constitutional change to allow petitions to secure a debate in council. It was proposed to set the bar for this at 15000 but the Lib Dems objected suggesting 1500 instead because the former number would, for example, require all registered voters in this double division to sign! The Lib Dems also urged the Council to sign up to the 10/10 initiative which David Cameron had publicly supported soon after the election. Local Tories decided that it was not for them.

Sue asked about the children of asylum seekers and how they could be sure of receiving a good education regardless of the status of their parents.

David also asked about progress with respect to the Local Transport Plan. The deadline for submissions has been extended to 30 Jul 10. Use the link below for more information.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/strategies/local/

David also attended Cabinet and spoke on the NIAB development. He urged that lessons (again) be learnt from the Orchard Park development and that specifically:

- ✓ the commercial centre should be in place early and include a post office and library;
- ✓ the development should communicate easily with adjacent communities; and
- ✓ transport links be sustainable

Corporate Directorates

The County Council has launched a new web service, My Cambridgeshire. It is designed to inform residents who their councilor/s is/are and where the nearest council facilities are. There is a box to put in a post code in the top right hand side of the County Council web-site. Then click 'GO' and all will be revealed. I did and found out that Victor Lucas was my councillor and that the nearest library was in Ramsey! That's cleared once you click on your specific house but it's a bit unnerving at first. Then there's plenty of useful information.

Adult and Community Services

There have been no significant developments.

Environmental Services

The new speed limits and cycle route developments along the B1049 have been advertised. The deadline for input is 22 Jun 10. Use the link below for more information.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/projects/south/Histon+Cycleway+Improvements.htm

There has been continuing news about the Guided Bus. Small steps forward but continuing slippages against plan. David noted that the concrete block which obstruct access at Gatehouse Lane in Histon have been moved so maybe we'll see some buses running soon.

The County Council has advised that the Citi 7 bus stop in Cambridge will be moved. It will share the site of the Citi 1 service. The location is much better but there will be operational challenges as people queue for two buses at the same stop.

Histon and Impington Parish Councils are working together an input to the A14 enquiry (20 Jul 10). Sue has been providing 'expert' input.

Childrens' Services

The £110 million contract for Cambridgeshire's first wave of 'building schools for the future' has been signed. There had been some concern that it would be vulnerable to the new government's spending cuts but these have proven to be unwarranted. Building work on the first two schools, Thomas Clarkson in Wisbech and Neil Wade in March, will begin in July.

Local Issues

Histon FC has announced the setting up of a local liaison group and has asked David to join it. A new manager, who's not so new, has been announced.

We met Stagecoach management and enjoyed a cordial meeting. There will be no quick wins but we did explore ways of improving the bus provision for Rampton.

No waiting and unloading lines have been painted on Station Road in connection with the Guided Bus. The unloading restrictions are especially onerous and are being challenged.

Note that David and Sue, along with their fellow Lib Dem district councilors, are proposing to set up a regular surgery. We will of course invite other councilors to come along if they wish. Watch this space for more information later in the summer.

Forthcoming meetings and events

19 Jun 10	Recycling Open Day at Donarbon
19 Jun 10	North West Cambridge Public Community Forum Event (Meadows)
22 Jun 10	Cabinet meeting
24 Jun 10	Development control

And finally ...

I've just spent a couple of very pleasant days in Edinburgh. The weather was excellent but unfortunately it's destroyed an important literary image. I'm a great fan of Ian Rankin's books and Inspector Rebus in particular. Rebus grew old as Rankin wrote successive books and now he's retired but he must surely look back on a city which might have evolved for the better but which is not the one which shaped him and in which he would have been comfortable. Rebus was not exactly PC; he was a smoker and, as they say, he enjoyed a drink. He also had a problem with authority and generally broke the rules to get a result. That couldn't happen today and I had a problem reconciling the sunny, smoke-free (even the Oxford bar) city I saw last week with the dark and furtive city of the books. I couldn't imagine Rebus enjoying a latte at a pavement café on George Street!

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

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