



Lina Joseph
Cambridgeshire County Councillor
Hardwick Division

October Report 2018

Dear all,

I hope you find this information useful.

Highways

It is great news that Phillip Hammond will announce tomorrow during the budget that over 400 million will be given to Local Councils for repairing potholes and over 3 billion for major roads. Of course, I would like to see more money given for local roads as they very much are in need of repair.

I will continue working with officers and other colleagues to find a way of putting more money into our roads. They are an essential public good used by everyone. I completely understand that we are a demand lead local authority. This means that we must care for an elderly person in need of support, a child who have been neglected by their parents or a person with serious mental health issues. We are protecting the most vulnerable individuals in our society and we have the responsibility to look after them.

Once the financial officer receives this budget, I will let you know how much our county will receive.

Budget

You may have recently seen on the news that our CEO announced that staff needed to take leave during Christmas. This will save nearly 1 million pounds. Staff in the lower pay grade will be protected.

This decision has been happening since I started as an officer back in 2013 and the County was in no control which means supported by Liberal Democrats, Conservatives and Labour. It's a measure that we know will not have a high impact on staff or services but it can make a crucial saving that will allow us to maintain other services at the current standards.

However, as we are looking to close the funding gap we will have to make other decisions and follow what neighbouring counties are doing. If you compare our county with others across the county we are not charging for many services that others are doing. This does not mean that we will follow completely but we must put all the options on the table. Once I have more information about the different committees, I will let you know.

We believe that by 2020 we will not experience as much pressure as now because the savings we have to make will be going down. This will also be linked with the return on property investments and other. The County is one of the largest landowners and we will maximise this. I have highlighted to the Chairman of the Investment Committee that we must protect a minimum of the land. I understand that residents need housing but it cannot be at any cost and with my environmentalist hat on, I will continue to put pressure so that future generations enjoy the land that I and many cherish greatly.



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News

The purchase of a purpose built student accommodation block in Cambridge, will allow Cambridgeshire County Council to plough £1.9m a year back into vital frontline services – as well as supporting more students to find high quality accommodation in the city.

The council's investment of £38m in the 251 bed Brunswick House on Newmarket Road, is the first acquisition in its strategy to build a portfolio of investments that both support its objectives - and raise an excellent return, helping to safeguard the future of vital services for people across the county.

The completion of the purchase, agreed by the council's Commercial and Investment committee, was reported to Members in this week's General Purposes Committee.

This is the Council's first major purchase as part of a plan to invest a total of £100m raised from sales of land to another successful investment initiative, "This Land" a property development company owned by the council. As a result the Council is increasing its total asset portfolio, improving the supply of homes to Cambridgeshire residents, and creating an on-going revenue stream.

"With rising demand for our services, the council is determined to consider all opportunities to invest in schemes that will help us maintain and improve our service levels and stand on our own feet financially. Our ethos of transformation, commercialisation and sound financial management means we are better able to deal with financial pressures, meaning cutting back on services is a last resort." said Cllr Steve Count, leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, and chair of General Purposes Committee.

"We are being economically prudent, and are taking advantage of current low interest rates which means we can make a return as well as improve the local area. Helping to alleviate a chronic lack of high quality purpose built student accommodation in Cambridge, is something that completely fits with our council objectives."

Brunswick House offers 231 ensuite rooms and 20 self-contained studio flats in a building directly opposite Anglia Ruskin University's Computer Science centre.

Cambridge faces a severe shortage of student accommodation with 44% of students currently unable to access university or private sector purpose built student accommodation in the city – amongst Anglia Ruskin students (the nearest University to this building) the figure rises to 77%.

Combined Authority

The latest report looking at sustainability across the work of the nine combined authorities in the UK shows Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has made the greatest level of improvement.

The Combined Authority Sustainability Benchmarking Technical Report analyses sustainable activity and scores each authority on their progress in areas including air quality, carbon emissions, green infrastructure, biodiversity, energy systems, renewables, district heating and public transport.

www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk/resources/combined-authority-sustainability-benchmarking-technical-report-analysis-of-strategies-2/



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South Cambridge District Council

I am sure Parishes should know but I just thought to mention it just in case you were not aware.

Unfortunately, Parish Councils will not be able to apply for Community Grants from the district council. It is my understanding that the new administration believes that you should be raising council tax in order to pay for anything you want for your community. I know how hard it is to fundraise, I used to volunteer in Burwell Parish Council when I was living there and also when supporting specific residents involved in large projects for which the parish doesn't have the funds... Obtaining grants will become more of a challenge as you are excluded from most grant applications.

When conservatives were in power they believed that parish councils should be able to apply for these grants for specific projects. The projects they delivered benefited the community greatly.

Local issues

Hardwick:

This parish as other larger ones has seen their land bought by developers. I must say that is my opinion that the community will largely benefit from S106. They had early negotiations with the developers and obtained close to 1 million pounds. I understand the dilemmas that increase of housing poses on parishes, however, I must say that residents will benefit greatly from a business type approach and long-term strategy.

Madingley:

There is resurfacing of a road in Madingley planned for this autumn. It is great that at least 2 of my parishes have been chosen for resurfacing main roads out of 17. I will continue to work with officers so that they are completely aware of which roads require repair and are not put at the bottom of the list!

Caldecote:

There has been some concerns raised due to highways works. This has been raised with the local highways officer and streetworks team. I will continue to work with these teams until we get it right. Apologies to all the residents for the inconveniences caused and thank you for raising this matter.

Kingston:

There has been a reported crime in the village. As much as we live in one of the safest parts of the country, it's just a reminder that we cannot be completely complacent about security and leaving things of value at public view.

I am organising a meeting with the Police Commissioner to talk about rural crime and discuss other issues.

Coton:

James Palmer visited the parish council and shared with them the outcomes of the latest report from a consultancy that has been looking at the "metro". It came to light that the best way forward would be to go off-road due to high speed and other reasons which I will go in more detail in the next couple of months.

I will continue to support the Parish Council and push for an on-road option as a short-term option. I have meetings planned with key stakeholders and will continue to voice the concerns of residents.



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Comberton:

Residents have been concerned about the health of the pond and wildlife. This issue was raised with the Parish Council. The pond dried this summer due to the hot temperatures. However, now it has started to fill up. When speaking to the water company to see if they would intervene, it was mentioned that due to the water being treated with chemicals this could have a negative impact on the ecology. For this main reason ponds across the country are left dry until the weather conditions change.

Local Natural Partnership Board

As you may already know I represent the Council in this outside body. You have over 10 organisations represented and it's always active, trying to push the natural agenda forward and upwards.

Recently we have been able to launch a new website, please take a look at it. This is a very exciting milestone. www.naturalcambridgeshire.org.uk

Events

Please find attached a Highway Events remembrance diary special highlighting all the events likely to impact the highway on Sunday 11th November 2018. With over 30 events taking place and although many of these events are short in duration they may have an impact on you if you are travelling or are undertaking works on the 11th November. Please take a moment to review the diary and contact me if you have any questions in regards to any of the events listed or if you are aware of any other events that are taking place that are not listed.

All events can also be found on our webpage at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/highway-events/>

Funding portal

Please do share this link with community groups that wish to find funding pots.

<http://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/supportcamb>

Highways

A reminder that you can report road maintenance issues here:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults/>

Hedges

If you have an issue with hedges then they would be advised to log their complaint on our website

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults/>

Roadworks

I had calls from residents regarding roadworks. If you would like to know what is happening in your area you can check in this website. www.roadworks.org



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Just to remind you that the public is very welcome to attend committee meetings and Full Council. You can find all the details [here](#).

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

Lina

Representing the villages of: Harlton, Barton, Great and Little Eversden, Caldecote, Kingston, Madingley, Hardwick, Coton, Grantchester and Comberton.

Mobile: 07402351821 E-mail: Lina.Joseph@Cambridgeshire.gov.uk Facebook: [Cllr Lina Joseph](#)