

Monthly update for parish councils: May 2011

County Council and Cabinet meetings

There was a **Council meeting** on 17th May.

John Powley was elected chair of the Council. A number of constitutional changes were rushed through. There is a reduced number of written questions and we are no longer allowed to ask questions on Cabinet-approved policy. We were particularly pleased to see the abolition of Policy Development Groups which had been held away from the public gaze. We are hopeful that the overview and scrutiny groups may provide a public domain to look at policy before it becomes a political decision. The sceptic in me is concerned that the format of these groups and their remit has not yet been agreed.

There was a **Cabinet meeting** on the 24th May.

Significant concerns were expressed over SEN transport (<http://bit.ly/ig9n97>) This has now been called in to Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as it is considered to need rewording to make it clear that the County is still responsible for transporting disabled students to school. This had not been made clear in the original letter to parents. There was a Scrutiny review of the County Farmland.

There is a **Cabinet meeting** on the 14th June.

There will be various items on schooling (notably Gamlingay and Cambourne), and updates on the Guided Busway. The regular guide bus item is interesting in that for the first time it talks about negotiation with BAM Nuttall. Go to <http://bit.ly/kgZiO6> for the papers

SCDC elections

Jonathan Chatfield was returned in Histon, Impington, the Meadows and Orchard Park, Tim Wotherspoon held his seat in Cottenham, Oakington, Westwick and Rampton.

Environmental Services

Jonathan Chatfield arranged for a meeting with Andy Campbell of Stagecoach and local Councillors in Histon, Impington and Orchard Park. This was mostly to talk about the change in frequency of the service, highlighting some of the concerns from the bus survey. The timing and reliability continues to be a problem and we urgently need people to report late buses and buses leaving early. David and I met with Council Officers to discuss the 110 and 106 services to Ely. The October round of bus cuts seems to be awaiting the outcome of the judicial review concerning the Milton service.

Various works have begun across the County to repair roads: surface dressing in Cottenham (Telegraph St), Oakington (Water Lane) and resurfacing in Histon (High Street).

The new County policy allows local people to request changes to speed limits in places which do not meet the county council criteria – if the local community will meet the cost of any changes or associated work. Go to <http://bit.ly/kP1QVi> for a relevant press release.

Libraries

£4m savings are required from the Library service. Some 13 libraries are being reviewed to find alternative ways of running or funding them. The consultation exercise included meetings in Cottenham and Orchard Park – concerns were raised about the accuracy of the figures, volunteers taking over from paid librarians, provenance of the building, trust status. County officers are setting up a "Friends of Cottenham Library" group. Rod Craig was the lead officer

for these meetings; he died suddenly just over a week ago. There's more information at <http://bit.ly/lSpQyB>

Opening hours

In the proposed changes to opening hours, Cottenham library goes from 21 to 23 hours, but loses a day, Friday, and loses evening opening times, stopping at 5pm. Histon goes from 30 to 27 hours, losing two half days and an evening session. To have your say, visit your library or go to the online questionnaire at <http://bit.ly/jSWwT1>.

Local Issues

Tony Cooper, head teacher of CVC is retiring in December 2011 after 22 years. CVC has decided to embrace Academy status after consulting with parents, staff and pupils. IVC has also agreed to go for Academy status.

Work is still continuing on the Histon B1049 cycleway. We hope to see more activity in the coming weeks between Cottenham and Histon.

The good news for a suggested crossing point at the A14 B1049 junction is that the Highways Agency has not offered any objections to one of the proposed fixes, of pelican crossings, for pedestrians and cyclists. This still needs to be agreed by the local parishes.

Histon and Impington have started the consultation for joining the two Parish Councils.

David met other councillors and Orchard Park residents to determine how better broadband for the community could be secured. The county will be key in facilitating contact with alternative suppliers.

Forthcoming meetings and events

12 June 2011	Histon open gardens
14 June 2011	Cabinet
17 June 2011	Histon and Impington councillors' surgery
18 June 2011	Library opening hours closing date http://bit.ly/m178zq
18 June 2011	Rampton All Saints garden fete http://bit.ly/l0PsCy
18 June 2011	Oakington Village Day 12.30pm Recreation Ground
23-26 June 2011	Cottenham Fen Edge Family Festival http://bit.ly/kJF0Ju
1 July 2011	Rampton councillors' surgery
11 July 2011	Area Joint Committee (roads) Cambourne District Office
12 July 2011	Histon beat neighbourhood panel http://bit.ly/m7QRO9

Both this monthly report, and the ones for previous months are on our website <http://www.chilibdems.co.uk/>

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

Sue Gymer 07919 036246
suegymer@ntlworld.com
Home: 01954 252902

David Jenkins 07739 758859
ccc@davidjenkins.org.uk
Home: 01223 236232