

County Councillor's Report for Parishes, February 2019 – Anna Bradnam

Council Tax

The Council will be setting its budget on Wednesday 6 February. The Business Plan currently assumes (at the time of writing) that Council Tax will increase by 1.99% for the financial year 2019-20 but the Council has the option to raise Council Tax by a further 1% which will raise an additional £2.728 million. The Chancellor announced in the Autumn Budget additional money for Adult Social Care. Of this, Cambridgeshire will receive £6.3 million. Despite this boost and incorporating identified savings and proposed additional income over the next five years, the Council is still projecting a shortfall of £13.1 million in the budget for 2019-20 and substantial gaps each year until 2023-24. In order to manage the budget deficit, the Council has four options, to increase general Council Tax; to use the Smoothing Fund, to redirect the Minimum Revenue Provision towards the Transformation Fund to reduce the deficit, or to reduce service levels. Various amendments have been proposed.

I will give a verbal report at your meetings to update you on the outcome.

Highways In October 2018, the Chancellor announced in the Budget the Government was allocating a further £420 million of new money for local highways maintenance. This additional resource is for the repair of roads (including potholes), bridges and local highways infrastructure generally. From this new funding Cambridgeshire County Council has been allocated £6.6 million to spend by the end of March 2019.

The allocation of this additional funding is most welcome and needed. However, delivering the work and spending £6.6 million by the end of March 2019, presents problems for delivery. So it has been agreed that the money might be best spent on a combination of

- Keeping abreast of minor reactive repairs over the winter period
- Additional preparation for preventative treatments
- Minor repairs to bridges
- Deeper structural treatments to carriageways and repairs to footways/cycleways.

We have just heard how County Highways plans to use this money. They are needing to allocate to work that is deliverable before the end of March 2019, so they have brought forward schemes where design and investigation have already been undertaken and where they can be delivered within the tight timeframe. The schemes have been selected to minimise any conflict with other works/schemes in the area, and to allow schemes to be carried out consecutively where possible without impacting significantly on a particular area.

I'm delighted that our Local Highway Officer has brought forward the following works from the existing programme: **footways** for repair - **Landbeach** High Street (throughout), **Milton** Knights Way and Walkling Way. I have asked that in addition to the footways, the **roadway** in the north section of Knights Way should also be resurfaced. I have also asked them to bring forward the further siding-back I have requested on the A10 foot and cyclepath between Chittering and Waterbeach and major repairs to Bannold Road. However, I suspect this may not be deliverable sufficiently quickly.

Children's Mental Health. For the last 6-7 years the County has employed clinicians to work alongside frontline Social Workers, so the team can respond quickly to children's needs. Developmental Trauma experienced by children who have been neglected or abused has immediate conscious and unconscious impacts on the development of a child's brain and on its ability to learn, so the sooner the team intervene, the better the outcomes for children. The team focus on what is happening to a child, what the child needs, and supporting the

network of people around the child. They find it much more effective to think in terms of how the situation affects the child's learning, how does it affect them physically and how does it affect their emotional relationships. We are very fortunate to have this small group of intuitive and sensitive professionals working with children from Cambridgeshire, even if the children are in placements outside the County.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Local Transport Plan is being developed. It will cover the period up to 2036 and beyond. It aims to create "a world class, integrated transport system, which maximises Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's sustainable, economic potential whilst protecting and enhancing the environment." The plan will be drafted in April, considered by officer Working and Steering Groups in April/May, then go out for 6 weeks public consultation in **Jun/Aug**. Consultation responses will be reviewed in Sep-Nov and the Local Transport Plan will be draw up in **Nov 2019**.

Trading Standards work across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and have officers at Cambourne (South Cambs Hall) and Peterborough City Council. They cover food safety, product safety, safety of sports grounds, criminal trading practices, proceeds of crime recovery, fair trading, feed and agriculture, animal health, explosives, petroleum and weights and measures. Constituents should contact the **Citizens Advice Consumer Service for all consumer advice matters on 0345 4040506**. They share intelligence with Trading Standards as appropriate, who will monitor and intervene as necessary.

Libraries for the Future The Council has engaged a charity called CIVIC to investigate how we can transform libraries into hubs for community activities and centres for public service. CIVIC aims to work with 60 libraries across the County to develop models that can be applied to enable a range of services to be put into Libraries. Funding is available from the National Endowment for Science and Technology. One aim is to put a radio studio into every Library which will have access to the full BBC archive of film and audio recordings. The aim is to revive rural communities by delivering services from libraries.

This week 28 Jan-1 Feb there will be meetings of the **Combined Authority Business Board** and the **Combined Authority**. They will be considering matters including Local Industrial Strategy, Growth Deal project proposals, Annual Delivery Plan for Business & Skills and the Rural Community Energy Fund, appointment of (another) Interim Chief Finance Officer, recommendations of the Audit & Governance Committee, Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-2023, Business Plan 2019/20, the Mayor's Budget 2019/20 and the Strategic Bus Review.

The **Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee** will be considering priorities for the Virtual School, the performance of children who are looked after and support for those leaving care, including "The Local Offer".

The Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board will be reviewing the results of the campaign to end loneliness, the Adults Positive Challenge and the suicide prevention programme, Living Well across Cambs and Peterborough.

AB 29 Jan 2019