

County Councillor's Report for Parishes - August 2019 - Anna Bradnam

Fen Line Station Review Meeting – 17 July

Parish Councillor Peter Johnson and I both attend this meeting, as well as Robert Stripe (President) John Grant (Chairman) from the Fen Line Users Association. It brings together officers from the operators Great Northern, Greater Anglia and Network Rail with representatives from the various District, Borough and County Councils. Together we consider matters affecting each of our local stations, namely Cambridge, Cambridge North, Waterbeach, Kings Lynn, Watlington, Downham Market, Littleport and Ely. The meeting is chaired by Angela Palmer, Customer Service Route Manager, for Great Northern.

Cambridge – Greater Anglia removed 200 bicycles in autumn 2018 but only 3 were claimed from storage. Another major clearance was arranged on 15 July with 300 bikes being tagged for removal. It seems this will become a regular exercise, as will regular clearance of the covered cycle storage which is now being protected by security patrols to deter rough sleepers.

Patrick Ladbury from Great Northern and Thameslink outlined the Passenger Benefit Fund – set up to compensate train users for the disruption caused during the last timetable introduction. John Grant has been gathering views about what items passengers would like to see on Waterbeach station. Toilets are among the 'most wanted' items but of course, they not only cost a lot to install (£75,000) but require long-term funding to maintain, which this fund is not geared to provide. In **Waterbeach** requests have been made for toilets, secure cycle parking, improvements to the car park path and to move the information screens so they can be seen from the shelters. Work has started on the platform extension with the footpath being diverted. At **Cambridge North** footfall has exceeded 0.5 million but there is a general request for better bus provision from the villages and from the station to the Science Park. I asked, when 8-car trains are introduced at Waterbeach, what action will be taken to protect access for those who live and work on the east side of the level crossing at Fen Road, Chesterton. It was suggested I attend **Matt Brennan's** meeting (Corporate Affairs, Network Rail) on Monday 9 September to discuss.

Amey Community Liaison Meeting – 17 July

Having been unable to attend the previous meeting in January, I was surprised to be presented with the results of a Survey – of the members of the Community Liaison Group – which had been undertaken in Jan/Feb 2019. The survey had been emailed to all members of the Group at the end of January but there was no record in the Minutes of the Jan meeting that it was going to be issued. Perhaps that's why I missed it and only 12 of the around 25 members responded. The findings were that attendees welcomed operational updates 'from the horse's mouth' and fed back information to their neighbours, communities, colleagues and parish meetings. The majority of respondents felt that questions asked at the meetings were partially or fully answered, that two meetings a year were sufficient and the majority found the location and early evening time convenient. It was suggested an independent Chair would be preferable.

IN the main business of the meeting Terms of Reference were discussed and Trevor Nichol, the Head of the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service was elected Chair. Reports were received from Amey, the Environment Agency, Frimstone and the County Council. It was propose that Frimstone would have separate meetings in future.

Repairs on the A10/A14 roundabout

About every 40 years the waterproofing membrane on overbridges has to be checked. Highways England engineers have been surveying the eastern (southbound) bridge deck as part of the A14 upgrade work. For a while it wasn't clear if the membrane could be repaired over a weekend, whilst keeping a single carriageway open, or if a complete deck reconstruction and a 6-week full diversion would be required. Engineers confirmed last week that the work could be done over a weekend – which is a huge relief. The weekend will be chosen to cause the minimum disruption possible.

Child and Family Centres

I have just been issued with an incredibly positive update on the “Child and Family Centre Offer following the first year after implementation”. The service redesign was agreed in October 2017 and aimed to be more responsive and flexible to the local needs of families, whilst delivering savings of £900k. Child and Family Centres ran a satisfaction survey in Autumn 2018 to which 330 responses were received. We are advised that frontline delivery has been protected while more one-to-one support for families has been provided. I understand that services are being offered to a wider age range, from expectant mothers to young adults up to age 19. The service has been able to focus on the families that need them most. Co-locating health services with Child and Family Centres has been welcomed with Community Hubs providing locations for pre- and post-natal services. We are advised that there has been an expanded outreach offer into rural communities.

I say ‘incredibly positive’ because I find it hard to believe that the service offer has been maintained whilst cutting £900k from the budget. I’d be keen to hear from service users if they have welcomed the changes in their local Child and Family Centre, or if they feel the service has diminished.

Let me know at anna.bradnam@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.