

Date of Publication of Decision List: 30 May 2024

FOR INFORMATION ONLY – THESE DECISIONS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO CALL-IN



EAST  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**COUNCIL – 23 MAY 2024 – DECISION LIST**

Prior to the commencement of the meeting:

Prayers were led by Revd Canon Dr Eleanor Jane Williams, Vicar of Burwell with Reach

Item No.	Report Ref.	Item	Issue	Decision	Action by
1.	-	Public Question Time	To answer questions from members of the public.	Public questions were received and responded to as detailed at the end of the Decision List.	-
2.	-	Election of Chair 2024/25	To elect a Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.	It was resolved: That Cllr Mark Goldsack be elected as Chair of East Cambridgeshire District Council for the municipal year 2024/25.	
3.	-	Apologies for Absence	To receive apologies for absence from Members.	Apologies were received from Cllr Christine Colbert and Cllr Katherine Holtman.	-
4.	-	Election of Vice-Chair 2024/25	To appoint a Vice-Chair of the Council for the 2024/25 municipal year.	It was resolved: That Cllr David Brown be elected as Vice-Chair of East Cambridgeshire District Council for the municipal year 2024/25.	-
5.	-	Declarations of Interests	To receive declarations of interests from Members in respect of any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.	No Declarations of Interests were made.	-

Item No.	Report Ref.	Item	Issue	Decision	Action by
6.	-	Minutes – 20 February 2024	To receive the Minutes of the last Council meeting.	It was resolved: That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 20 February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	Democratic Services Manager
7.	Y1	Ely West Ward District By-Election Result	To note the election of Cllr Ross Trent as District Councillor for Ely West Ward	It was resolved: That the result of the Ely West Ward By-Election be noted and Councillor Ross Trent welcomed as a new District Councillor.	-
8.	-	Chair's Announcements	Announcement of items of interest.	The Chair made the following announcements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chair's Engagements</b> The Chair referred to the list of Chair's engagements for the year and declared that his policy was only to attend meetings that were of a real relevance to the residents of East Cambridgeshire. Highlights from the year included the Armistice/Remembrance Day at Ely Cathedral and events at the US RAF bases.</li> <li>• <b>Retirement of Tracy Couper, Democratic Services Manager</b> The Chair expressed the Council's best wishes to Tracy on her retirement, thanked Tracy for her hard work and stated that she would be a loss to the Council. Tracy was presented a bouquet of flowers from all Members and all Members and Officers</li> </ul>	-

Item No.	Report Ref.	Item	Issue	Decision	Action by
				present then gave her a round of applause.	
9.	-	To Receive Petitions	To receive public petitions.	No public petitions had been received.	-
10.	-	Notice of Motions Under Procedure Rule 10	<p>The following Motions were received and considered:</p> <p>i. <u>Preventing Abuse and Intimidation of Public Officials</u></p> <p>Text of motion at end of Decision List</p> <p>ii. <u>Two Child Limit to Benefit Payments</u></p> <p>Text of motion at end of Decision List</p> <p>iii. <u>Accessible Play</u></p> <p>Text of motion at end of Decision List</p>	<p>Motion carried unanimously.</p> <p>Motion lost.</p> <p>Motion carried unanimously.</p>	-
11.		Notice of rescission Motion under Procedure Rule 20	<p>To formally rescind paragraph (iii) of the Motion in relation to the Constitutional Review Working Party (ref: 20 February 2024, Agenda Item 17 paragraph (iii))</p> <p>Text of motion at end of Decision List</p>	Motion carried unanimously.	

Item No.	Report Ref.	Item	Issue	Decision	Action by
12.	-	To answer Questions from Members	To receive questions from Members of Council.	Two questions from Members were received and responses given as detailed at the end of the Decision List.	-
13.	Z1	Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Group Leaders, and Deputy Group Leaders	To receive details of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the 2024/25 municipal year.	It was resolved: That the details of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the forthcoming municipal year, as detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the Officer's report, be noted.	Democratic Services Manager
14.	Z2	Political Proportionality	To receive details of the political balance of the Council and the implications for the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees, and other Member Bodies.	It was resolved: That the political balance, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, be noted, and the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.	Democratic Services Manager
15.	Z3	Membership of Committees and Sub-Committees (including substitutes) and other Member Bodies 2024/25	To consider the appointment of Members and substitutes to Committees, Sub-Committees, and other Member Bodies for 2024/25.	It was resolved that:  i. The membership of Committees, Sub-Committees, and other Member Bodies for 2024/25, as detailed in revised Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, with the deletion of Cllr Inskip and Cllr Christine Whelan as Substitutes on the Finance & Assets Committee and Cllr Cane being removed as a substitute on the Operational Services Committee, be approved.  ii. The appointment of Stephen Joyce as Lay Member of the Audit Committee, be approved.	Democratic Services Manager

Item No.	Report Ref.	Item	Issue	Decision	Action by
16.	Z4	Schedule of Items recommended from Committees and other Member Bodies	<u>Audit Committee – 19 March 2024</u> Audit Committee Annual Report 2023/24	It was resolved: That the Audit Committee Annual Report be approved.	Democratic Services Manager
17.	Z5	ECTC and ECSS Matters	To consider changes to the East Cambs Trading Company Ltd (ECTC) Shareholder Agreement, East Cambs Street Scene Ltd (ECSS) Shareholder Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between the Council and ECSS	It was resolved that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The changes of the ECTC Shareholder Agreement, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.</li> <li>ii. The changes to the ECSS Shareholder Agreement, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved.</li> <li>iii. The replacement of Schedule 5 of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Council and ECSS with Schedule 5 as set out in Appendix 3 or the report, be approved.</li> <li>iv. The Director Legal and Monitoring Officer be authorised to complete the legal documentation to bring in the effect of the decision of i) to iii) above, be approved.</li> </ul>	

18. -	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority a) Appointments to the Combined Authority b) Update reports	<p>a) To consider the appointments to be made to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the municipal year 2024/25.</p> <p>b) To receive the reports from the Constituent Council representatives on the Combined Authority:</p> <p>Skills and Employment Committee (04/03/24)</p> <p>Business Board (04/03/24)</p> <p>Audit &amp; Governance Committee (08/03/24)</p> <p>Human Resources Committee (08/03/24) (13/03/24) (14/03/24)</p> <p>Environment &amp; Sustainable Communities Committee (11/03/24)</p> <p>Human Resources Committee (13/03/24)</p> <p>Transport &amp; Infrastructure Committee (13/03/24)</p>	<p>a) It was resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the following appointments/nominations to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the municipal year 2024/25 be approved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) That Cllr Anna Bailey be appointed as the Council's appointee to the Combined Authority with Cllr Julia Huffer appointed as the substitute member.</li> <li>ii) That Cllrs Lucius Vellacott and Charlotte Cane be nominated as Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with Cllrs Keith Horgan and Caroline Shepherd nominated as their respective substitutes.</li> <li>iii) That Cllr David Brown be nominated as Member of the Audit &amp; Governance Committee, with Cllr Kelli Pettitt nominated as the substitute member.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. That the Chief Executive be authorised to make any amendments to the appointments to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee, in consultation with the Political Group Leaders, if the political balance is amended by the Combined Authority between now and the next Council meeting.</li> </ol> <p>b) It was resolved:</p> <p>That the reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's representatives be noted.</p>	Democratic Services Manager
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			Overview & Scrutiny Committee (18/3/24)		
			Combined Authority Board (20/3/24)		
19.	Z6	Action taken by the Chief Executive on the Grounds of Urgency	To note action taken on the grounds of urgency in relation to the Inter Authority Agreement – Materials Recycling & Waste Transfer	It was resolved: That the action taken on the grounds of urgency be noted.	Chief Executive

## 1. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

### i) Question from Joan Wall, President of East Anglia Council of the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.

“Regarding the Council’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025 which says in its forward:

*The Service identified a gap in supported accommodation for mental health and learning disability and worked hard to introduce partnership working with The Pringle Group to secure more properties in the district specifically for this client group.*

And it details on Pages 12/13

*[the Service] approached The Pringle Group who purchase and develop fully supported properties for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues. The Council now has direct referral rights into 3 properties in East Cambridgeshire and several outside of the district for long term supported accommodation. We currently part fund a member of staff with a £7,000 grant on an annual basis. We continue to work with The Pringle Group to identify new properties.*

Yet a Freedom of Information enquiry FOI/EIR 24/25-065 shows that the funding stopped just as the ink dried on the strategy because there has been no funding in any year of the current strategy.

The Housing Act 1996 defines that there is *a priority need for accommodation for a person who is vulnerable as a result of...mental illness...*

So, can the Council Leader and/or Councillor Julia Huffer explain and opposition Councillor Mark Inskip comment on why the Council stopped this funding, when those of us carrying out local charitable work as part of the national Saint Vincent de Paul society and who work with people on the street believe there is a crying need for such support instead of abandoning people?"

**Response from the Leader of Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

"Thank you for putting your question, which was quite detailed, with no prior notification given, therefore I am not familiar with the detail, and I would like to ensure that we give an accurate answer. I also have not seen the FOI request or response and it would be helpful for us to review that as well before a proper, full, and accurate answer is given. Therefore, I would like to take the question away and provide you with a written answer, which would be included in the record of the meeting."

**Response from the Cllr Julia Huffer:**

"I was unaware that the funding had ceased, therefore this has come completely as news to me. I will make strenuous investigations into this issue starting tomorrow morning. I will also consult with Cllr Bailey and Cllr Inskip to ensure the information you receive is accurate."

**Response from the Cllr Mark Inskip:**

"I am concerned, as I was not aware that the funding had ceased, therefore, I will be looking for the explanations as to why that has happened."

**ii) Question from Mrs Jones, resident:**

When it rains, the street gulleys fill up and it floods the junction of Deacons Lane and Lynn Road with water across both road and pavements, sometimes right across both road and pavements, sometimes right across the crown of the road, Anglian Water say gully cleaning is the responsibility of the Highways authority which blames blockages in the gulleys on the District Council not sweeping the highways adequately.

The north side of Deacons Lane and west side of New Barns Road have residents cars parked a lot of the time. Both these roads have Lime trees that shed lots of blossoms in the summer and then leaves in the Autumn, both these falls, in addition to heavy winds bringing down extra branches and leaves, cause a build-up of material on both sides of the road. All these falls regularly block the road, lots of it rots down into black sticky leaf detritus(which is advised to be contaminated by oil from cars so not compostable by residents) making wading across the road unpleasant as well as slippery.

Sweeping was done fortnightly twenty-five years ago on both roads. Pavement sweeping happens not at all now and the roads are swept unpredictably. The areas covered by cars are never swept.



Despite a recent ad hoc request to sweep the north side of Deacons Lane, asking for car owners to be notified by the Council, and for it to be done when residents had driven away to work, the street sweeps came at 7am on a Saturday and 9am on a Sunday and swept the south side only.

Could the Council Leader explain and the opposition lead councillor comment on why cannot the Council devise a notification scheme for residents to know on which day a regular road sweep will occur, preferably later in the day, so that if not away at work, they can park on the other side of the roads or in the Paradise car park for the day?"

**Response from the Leader of Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

"I have had no prior notice of the question, but I can give some general information and then defer to the Deputy Leader as this is her area. I had a similar case raised with me not so long ago elsewhere in Ely, so I am familiar with this as a problem. It does make life very difficult when cars are regularly parked in the same location and we have taken measures in the areas that I was overseeing, to find a way of dealing with that. As a bigger piece of work, it will form part of our Waste Strategy Review which we are getting ready to undertake. There is a regular sweeping schedule, but if cars are in the way, then I can understand the problem that is building up with detritus going down the gully; it can get very unpleasant therefore we need to get on top of it. I am pleased to hear that the ad hoc request was responded to promptly but can understand that this may not be much good if it did not sweep the correct side of the road. As a short-term measure, we will certainly look to do what we can to resolve the problem and then this issue will form part of the wider Waste Strategy Review to consider how this can be dealt with on a more permanent basis."

**Response from the Cllr Julia Huffer:**

"As someone who is surrounded by Lime trees, I feel your pain as they are dropping something all year round. On the 10 June, the Waste Review Working Party is meeting again and both street sweeping and cleansing is part of that review, and this will be more closely looked at to find out what strategies can be put in place going forward. I will consult with the Director of Streetscene and find out what can be done about providing a better service on Deacons Lane in the interim."

**Response from the Cllr Mark Inskip:**

"I am on the same working group looking at street cleansing and it is not just Deacons Road that has this problem. Sutton also has problems with straw lorries going to the straw burning plant and when the streets are swept, you can see where the cars were parked. I know that work has been done to try and come up with a more regular schedule, but the problem of parked cars has not yet been discussed, which needs to be addressed in the coming meetings. If residents were aware in advance, then I am sure they would co-operate to make it more effective."

## **10. MOTIONS**

**i. Preventing Abuse and Intimidation of Public Officials**

East Cambridgeshire District Council, hereinafter referred to as the 'Council', notes that:

- It is a privilege and a responsibility to be elected to a public office, which Members feel proud to enter into. It is an equal privilege and responsibility to serve local government as an officer.
- The intimidation and abuse of councillors and candidates, of any party or none, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy, prevents elected Members from representing the communities they serve and deters individuals from standing for election. It also undermines effective discussion, understanding and accountability for the benefit of local people.
- According to the Local Government Association, this intimidation and abuse is greatly increased with respect to social media, which has greater implications for younger people becoming or serving as councillors or officers.
- Increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse, towards both officers and Members, distracts from the material priorities of local communities, and is preventing the engagement of a wide range of people and viewpoints in the democratic process.
- Preventative actions, support and responses should be in place to ensure that Members, candidates, and officers feel safe and able to fulfil their obligations to the best of their judgement and ability

The Council resolves to:

- Officially subscribe itself to the Local Government Association's Debate Not Hate campaign, which endeavours to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and support those in public life more generally who may face abuse and/or intimidation.
- Use the LGA template letter to write to Lucy Frazer MP and Steve Barclay MP to ask them to work with His Majesty's Government and the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of public officials at every level of government.
- Subsequently, instruct the Chief Executive to publicise the Council's membership thereof to all Staff and Members and display the LGA Debate Not Hate posters at The Grange Reception and Council Chamber, and to actively encourage its Parish Councils to do the same, citing the above information.
- Instruct the Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager to undertake a 4-yearly review (before each full election to the Council) of the support available to councillors, officers, and election candidates in relation to abuse, intimidation and safety, and report this to the Finance and Assets Committee and to all candidates.

- To have this information uploaded to a page as part of the new website development, and to display the LGA's Debate Not Hate logo in the website footer.
- Work with the local Police and the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of public officials and their families, including prevention.
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors, candidates, and officers, whether in person or otherwise, and support them to uphold the most exemplary standards of respectful debate, individual accountability, and public service.

**i. Two Child Limit to Benefit Payments**

The Two Child limit to benefit payments was introduced in 2017. It prevents families from claiming Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit for more than two children in the household.

Council notes the recent research conducted by the End Child Poverty Coalition which has found that:

- 1.5 million children in the UK live in households subject to the two-child limit on benefit payments. That is roughly one-in-ten children in the UK.
- In 2023/24 the two-child limit cost families up to £3,235 per child each year.
- There is a strong correlation between families affected by the two-child limit and those who are living in poverty.
- Scrapping the two-child limit would lift 250,000 children out of poverty overnight, and significantly reduce the level of poverty that a further 850,000 children live in.
- Scrapping the two-child limit would cost £1.3 billion, however it is estimated that child poverty costs the economy £39 billion each year.

In East Cambridgeshire, 1,160 children in 330 households are currently affected by the two-child limit to benefit payments. That is 6 per cent of all children in the authority area. At the same time 3,226 local children are living in poverty.

Council strongly believes that the two-child limit to benefit payments is a cruel and harmful policy that should be scrapped. Research from the University of York has shown its introduction has had no positive impacts on employment and earnings. Instead, it has dragged hundreds of local families into poverty.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister on 8 July 2024 indicating East Cambridgeshire’s strong belief that the two-child limit to benefit payments should be scrapped—which would help 1,160 children living in East Cambridgeshire.
- Further instruct the Chief Executive to write to both MPs covering the East Cambridgeshire area on 8 July 2024, asking them to commit their public support to the campaign to end the two-child limit to benefit payments.

### **iii. Accessible Play**

This Council:

**Acknowledges the Essential Role of Play:** Believes that opportunities for outdoor play should be accessible to and inclusive of all children and young people. Recognizes its role in ensuring this is the case for playgrounds under its control and in promoting high standards of inclusivity in playgrounds maintained by other bodies, including parish councils.

**Addresses Accessibility Concerns:** Notes that not all current playgrounds meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities, including but not limited to children and young people using wheelchairs or special educational needs, including but not limited to children and young people with autism, and commits to addressing these gaps, where practical and possible.

**Playgrounds as Essential Community Hubs:** All children and young people have a right to play, which should be supported and reflected in our playgrounds, where practical and possible. They are essential for community engagement and childhood development and the Council must do what it can to encourage providers to design and build playgrounds with inclusivity as a foundational principle. The Council will lead by example and when our playgrounds need replacing, where it is practical and possible, we will incorporate inclusivity as a foundational principle.

This Council resolves to:

1. Undertake an independent audit of all playgrounds within this Council’ ownership or control, to assess levels of inclusive provision and identify areas needing improvement.
2. Write to all Parish Councils and invite them to submit to the Council, playgrounds within their control for the same independent audit. The Cost of the independent audit, for Parish Council controlled playgrounds, will be met by this Council and will be carried out at the same time as the Council’s independent audit.
3. Approve a budget of up to £25,000 to implement 1) and 2) above.

4. Receive a report to the Finance & Assets Committee detailing the outcomes of the audit.
5. Develop an inclusive Playground Strategy which will include (but is not limited to):
  - a) How the Council will respond to the independent audit in the short, medium and long-term to achieve, where practical and possible, an outcome of inclusive playgrounds that are within this Council's control.
  - b) Possible funding opportunities to deliver a) above.
  - c) A Toolkit for achieving Inclusive Playgrounds, based on the standards and principles relevant at the time of delivery, which will be used by the Council and available for use by other providers.
  - d) A communications strategy to promote Inclusive Playgrounds which will include raising awareness of the importance of Inclusive Playgrounds and possible sources of funding to external providers.
6. Work closely with its planning department to encourage Inclusive Playgrounds into the planning and approval processes for new developments. Ensure, where developers agree, that new playgrounds meet high standards of inclusivity from the outset.
7. Explore the feasibility of developing a planning policy, through the new Local Plan, to include a requirement to deliver Inclusive Playgrounds.
8. Ensure the local community is made aware of accessible features and inclusive equipment in local playgrounds via effective channels, including the Council's website, social media platforms, and information boards.

#### **11. NOTICE OF RECESSIOIN MOTION UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 20**

The Council formally rescinds paragraph (iii) of the motion in relation to the Constitutional Review Working Party (ref: 20 February 2024, Agenda Item 17 paragraph (iii)).

The Council notes the application of Council procedure rules to the Council's Committees as defined in the Constitution (ref: 4 (1a) paragraph 27.2).

The Council instructs the Chief Executive to produce a written guidance note to members, specifically to:

- recognise the importance of scrutiny in local authorities. In a committee system, committees are the place where this happens and where questioning and debate should happen
- reiterate the Council procedure rules as they apply to Council committees
- confirm the cessation of written questions from members to officers
- confirm that questions from members to officers without notice should be pertinent to the agenda item and at the discretion of the Chair
- recognise the necessary discretion to the Chairs of the Council's Regulatory committees
- confirm the requirement for regular briefings between opposition spoke persons and the relevant senior officers, in addition to the requirement for briefings with the Chair/Vice-Chair and relevant senior officers

## 12. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

### 1. **Question from Councillor Lucius Vellacott to Councillor Alison Whelan:**

“Cambridgeshire County Council currently decides on blanket 20mph zones in East Cambridgeshire in private delegated decision meetings, with very limited public consultation, rather than in a public meeting of the authority. Does Cllr Whelan believe Cambridgeshire County Council should continue with this approach?”

### **Response from Cllr Alison Whelan:**

“Thank you, Cllr Vellacott, for your question which was wholly expected, and you will be pleased to know, that despite my illness and medication, I have taken the time to come here and answer this question. Cambridgeshire County Council follows required procedures for Highways decisions, and some of these are done through delegated powers by the officers, informed by public consultation, and that is what happened in Ely. The City of Ely Council brought forward this proposal and a brief review of their Council minutes sees this issue minuted eight times in 2021/22 as well as at other times in their committees and working groups. There was public consultation, which was in no way limited, and even Conservatives opposing the consultation were helping to publicise it. There were multiple social media sites that covered the story, multiple news websites, local radio, several front-page stories in the local press. We posted leaflets through the doors of a large number of homes and handed out leaflets in the Market Place, asking people to respond to the consultation, that was until East Cambs Market Staff incorrectly told us to stop doing so. It is interesting to see that of the few people contacting me to complain about the scheme, a frequent theme emerged, they do not use social media, they do not read local papers, listen to the radio, or read the news websites. When asked what else could be done, they suggested putting things through doors, something we had actually done to some of them and still they did not recall seeing it. Consultation processes clearly do not reach everyone, and I suggest they never can, there are always improvements that can be made, and we should be reviewing that, after every consultation and after every new policy. But a quick search of social media shows that

there was significant imprints of the plans over the extended consultation period for the 20mph Scheme. People often do not take the time to respond to consultations and I would like to thank all of those who did, each of whom received a response from the officers concerned. But all consultations prove challenging. A consultation by this Council, covering the wider area of the whole of East Cambridgeshire, on an issue of great public importance, £9.6m of developer contributions being spent on a crematorium, received fewer responses despite being for a larger area, and 85% of those showing a view were opposed to the plans. Cllr Vellacott will be pleased to know that I have received more comments from residents thanking the Councils for implementing the scheme than opposing it, despite calls from his colleagues to write directly to me expressing their opposition. Of course, it is easy to see the purpose of this question, which is no more than electioneering, otherwise there would be a paper to this meeting, seeking to improve the way consultations are carried out at this Council. We also should remember the half-century war against non-motorised users, that has been waged by many governments and councils. Thank you.”

**2. Question from Councillor Lorna Dupré to Leader of the Council:**

Residents in the area I represent have been delighted to hear of the new bus routes and enhanced bus services which will soon be forthcoming as a result of the increase in the Mayor’s Precept. Not least of these is the proposal for a bus from Ely through Sutton to the guided busway stop at Longstanton, opening up the prospect for my constituents of onward travel to Cambridge Regional College, the Science Park, Addenbrooke’s, St Ives, Huntingdon and Hinchingsbrooke—something I have been championing for a very long time.

This and other enhancements to public transport across East Cambridgeshire, including services from Soham via the Swaffhams to Cambridge and improvements on the B1102 corridor, will open up new opportunities for many residents with no access to a private car, and to those who cannot drive or who want or need to move away from private to public transport. What explanation will the Leader of the Council give for her vote against the funding which is making these improvements possible?

**Response from the Leader of Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

“Thank you to Councillor Dupré for the question because it does give me the opportunity to explain myself exactly and I very much appreciate Councillor Dupré having championed the idea that, in fact Conservatives first put forward in 2019, when young Beth Skellen proposed the idea of a bus from Sutton to the guided busway at Longstanton, it first appeared in literature, in her election leaflet and I was delighted to see the Conservatives idea being adopted by Councillor Dupré in her own literature after that. It will be interesting to see what sort of patronage it gets, and I hope Cllr Dupré, and I am sure she will, continues to champion its cause in her villages. Cllr Dupré is correct in that I did not support the mayor’s 200% increase to his Council Tax precept; Cllr Dupré will know well that this Council stands on a proud record of 11 years without the need to increase our share of Council

Tax bills and she should therefore not be surprised that I did not support the Mayor's precept in the first place of his 200% increase this year and that is mainly because his precept increase was absolutely not necessary.

- 1) The Mayor came into office having stated that he had no plans to introduce a mayoral precept, despite the fact that he wanted to improve buses, so he u turned.
- 2) There was £10 to £15 million of headroom in the CPCA revenue budget, the increase was absolutely unnecessary.
- 3) East Cambs residents that responded to the CPCA consultation on this matter were against the idea; 66% of them said they were not willing to pay the precept to fund buses, so the East Cambs residents did not support the idea and I support them.
- 4) The Mayor and his Liberal Democrat and Labour colleagues on the Board, are letting down the people of Littleport, Ely, Stretham and Little Thetford who are now paying that 200% increase in the Mayoral precept, when their No. 9 bus service has been hollowed out to the point of being unusable; they don't feel that they are getting a great deal out of this and I am working night and day to try and improve that situation.
- 5) The Mayor failed to win bus improvement money from the Government, every single combined authority with a directly elected Mayor got tens of millions of pounds for bus improvements, except ours. Some got hundreds of millions and I think in two cases it was over a billion pounds.
- 6) Our Mayor, unfortunately, is running a dysfunctional authority - things are improving, but in the first three years he has been spending taxpayers money on large exit payments to staff. The CPCA is still under 'a best value notice,' which means they are not spending taxpayers money properly and funding is still being withheld. So, I do not support taxpayers having to foot the bill for the personal failings of the Mayor.
- 7) The Mayor has failed to carry out timely bus reforms. I will not sanction charging Council Taxpayers to continue subsidising unsustainable bus routes, like the 7A, which continues to cost taxpayers £250 per passenger return journey.
- 8) The answer to Cambridgeshire's transport problems is ultimately not just buses, a well-functioning transport system is one that people want to use because it is so good, so quick, so efficient, accessible, and cheap, that it is better than the car and what we need is a 21<sup>st</sup> century, turn-up and go public transport system for our county."