

County Report

January 2020

Cllr Roger Hickford & Cllr Kevin Cuffley

General

As many of you will know Cllr Kevin Cuffley is in long term recovery from illness and is only able to do very light duties at the moment. I thank all those of you that have sent him your best wishes for a full recovery. Kevin used to do much of the work on the County Report for Parish Councils, which I will now take on.

Budget

Most of the government grants for this financial year have been confirmed again for next year. However, the Highways grant of around £6m has still not been confirmed, and it looks like we will not know until after budget setting in February.

Adults Committee

Adult Social Care Charging Policy

The Adults Committee is due to consider the outcome of a consultation on changes to the way contributions to adult social care packages are charged for at its meeting on 16th January. Similar proposals were considered and rejected just over two years ago by the Committee. A number of recommendations are proposed that, if adopted, will bring the Council into line with neighbouring and other local authorities with social care responsibilities. Thousands of people in Cambridgeshire currently arrange and pay for their care and support with no involvement from the Council, but of those in receipt of Council arranged care services, over 60% contribute from their own finances towards the cost of their care. This contributes significantly to the Council's Adult Social Care budget, and helps the Council to meet its statutory care obligations within very tight financial margins. It also enables the Council to invest in prevention and early help services to support people to live in the community and avoid or delay the need for a more expensive care package. In common with all Councils with social services responsibilities, Cambridgeshire has in recent years faced growing and acute financial, demographic and demand pressures in Adult Social Care - including the impacts of an increasingly ageing population and significant financial volatility in the care provider market and it is in this context that the recommendations will be considered.

Commercial & Investment Committee

Swaffham Prior Community Heat Project receives funding support from Government and Cambridgeshire County Council. The ground-breaking Community Heat Scheme which will take East Cambridgeshire village Swaffham Prior homes off oil, took a step closer to fruition in December 2019. The project has been granted £232,000 of grant funding from BEIS (The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) Heat Networks Delivery Unit (HDNU) and match funded with £66,000 from Cambridgeshire County Council. The funding will be used to develop and submit a planning application for the scheme, legal work on how to set up the commercial arrangements between Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust and the Council as well as work to develop heat agreements for residents connecting to the scheme. The grant also supports the costs of Project Management and Community Engagement to ensure the community are aware of how the project is progressing.

LGC Awards - double awards finalists Cambridgeshire County Council has been shortlisted as a finalist in two categories for this year's LGC Awards. Our entry for the Entrepreneurial Council category highlighted innovation across the Council, including in energy, property acquisitions, the Commercial Strategy, Greater Cambridge Partnership, and digital infrastructure. The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)'s Smart Cambridge programme has also been shortlisted in the Future Places category. The entry highlighted the strong portfolio of exciting projects underway, and the growing list of technology partners that the team work collaboratively with, to help reduce congestion and pollution to improve quality of life in Greater Cambridge. The LGC Awards are the biggest celebration of excellence in local government and celebrate local authority teams and individuals making the biggest difference to their communities. Winners will be announced at a prestigious ceremony in London on 18 March 2020.
