

Cllr Liam Beckett

MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2025

COUNTY COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

The County Council held its annual meeting on Tuesday 20 May. Lucy Nethsingha was re-elected as Leader of the Council. The meeting appointed Chairs and Vice Chairs of its committees, and representatives to some of its major partners.

I am now a member of the Children and Young People Committee, and the Environment and Green Investment Committee.

Attention was drawn to the 'extraordinary challenges' of the rising number of older people needing social care and of children with special needs and disabilities. The new Liberal Democrat administration will 'make sure our council continues to be more caring, better connected and that Cambridgeshire continues to be a wonderful environment for all to thrive'.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Disposable vapes ban

From 1 June it will be illegal to sell or supply disposable vapes. The government ban is being introduced to tackle the impact of these items on the environment.

It is also hoped the move will help cut the number of children and young people vaping. Retailers caught breaking the law in England face a minimum £200 fine, with a prison sentence of up to two years for repeat offences. Trading Standards will be able to seize any single-use vapes they find. It is estimated that almost five million single-use vapes a week are either littered or thrown away in general waste in the UK.

Fire service issues battery charging safety reminder

Charging batteries have caused six fires in homes across the county so far this year. Firefighters have been called to fires involving batteries being overcharged, resulting in thermal runaway from the lithium-ion contained in them and causing significant damage to people's homes.

Highways

Process for Assessing Road Repairs (i.e. Sign Off)

Currently, once works have been completed, local highways officers should be checking the works so that payment can be made to the supply chain. If work is not satisfactory, it will be logged on the current system, a manual email sent to the

supplier with photographs for them to return and make correct their repairs at their own cost. I was not informed whether the repair works would subsequently be checked by officers to make sure the remedial work is carried out, but I have queried this for more clarity.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that although reports on the councils highways reporting tool may go green and say 'Report Actioned', this **does not** always mean that the pothole or repair has been **fixed**, it can mean that an action has taken place already to make sure it will be fixed in the future.

The council is currently investing in a new asset management system which will allow an officer to check, document the situation and have the work automatically allocated where required. This should avoid mistakes in communication, standardise the process for suppliers and officers, update the Cambridgeshire reporting tool more quickly and with more specific outcomes, ultimately saving a lot of time and money.

Mill Road 'Buffer Zone'

Highways had programmed for this design to be reviewed in April and proposals shared with stakeholders accordingly but unfortunately it has suffered a slight delay due to internal pressures relating to the increased capital maintenance budget. CCC have briefed the designer on the work needed and he is working on that now. As it is part of a historic scheme, we don't anticipate this to take long.

Mill Road 'Blocked Views' – Reeds in Riverbed

There have been concerns raised by residents about the visibility of other vehicles travelling along the mill bridge. The ability to anticipate other cars is limited now because the reeds have grown too tall. Whilst it may not be the season for it, the Offord's Parish Council would like to propose sharing a proportion of the cost of the work required to make it safer – i.e. cutting down the reeds. Would Buckden parish council support this and if so, write to the parish clerk and chairman to organise an initial assessment.

A1 Subways

The subway structures under the trunk road A1 are owned and maintained by National Highways. The only area that may be under our remit would be any tarmac surfacing.

Mill Road – Double Yellow Line Gap – before Mill Bridge

It's been reported that there is a gap in the double yellow lines by the mill bridge – meaning if you have a very small car, you could theoretically park there – remedial work has been contracted and the line will soon be fixed.

A1307 maintenance works continue

Maintenance work continues on the A1307 (the old A14), with 40MPH speed limits expected to be lifted by the end of the summer. The County Council took over responsibility for this road from National Highways last year, with serious outstanding

issues with the barriers between Godmanchester and Huntingdon and drainage problems at both Fenstanton and Hemingford. Highways & Transport Committee chair Cllr Alex Beckett and Cllr Lorna Dupre pressed County Council officers a few months ago to try to expedite this work, which has taken much longer than initially hoped, so it is excellent news that an end is in sight for these temporary speed restrictions.

Temporary Road Closure – Brampton to Grafham

Cambridgeshire county council will be closing the road on the 13th August between 08:00 and 17:00 to investigate a potential sinkhole lying close to the Brampton wood car park.

Temporary Road Closure – Buckden Road Slip Road

I would also like to highlight that the slip road near to Buckden roundabout (northbound A1, leading to Brampton) will be closed overnight from the 7th July to the 8th July between 9pm and 5am.

Local Grants – Currently Open to Applications

A428 Community Fund

Grants of up to £15,000 are available for projects in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire that support local economy, skills and employment; support and connect communities and/or enhance the environment.

Applications open between now and 1st August

Thalia WB Community Fund

The Thalia WB (formerly Amey) Community Fund is part of the national Landfill Communities Fund scheme. The fund offers grants for capital projects to improve the local environment, including public buildings and amenities, habitats and architecture. Grants between £10,000 and £50,000.

Apply by 1 September for projects starting December

Apply by 1 December for projects starting March

Brampton to Grafham Quietway

I felt that the consultation event on the 15th May went well. Residents views have been taken into account and the new Quietway proposal will be open to all traffic at low speeds. Local schools have been contacted to involve local children in designing artwork for the route to help encourage active travel modes alongside other encouragements such as informational boards along the route, seating, road markings and road-width 'gates' that all foster a sense of being inside a zone meant for pedestrians and slower traffic. Funding has been primary from Active Travel

England and this is the first scheme in the county, putting Grafham and Bramton on the map for innovative new rural ideas to encourage active travel.

There were two ‘design showcase’ drop in sessions that have now closed:

- Thursday 5 June, 4-7pm, Grafham Village Hall, Van Diemens Way, Grafham, Huntingdon, PE28 0GB
 - Monday 9 June, 4-6.45pm, Brampton Memorial Centre, Thrapston Road, Brampton, Huntingdon, PE28 4TB
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Meet your Councillor

Brampton Co-Op (High Street) – 5th July 10:30-11:30

I can also be contacted...

- By email liam.beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
 - By phone 07312 081892
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Cllr Liam Beckett

County Councillor for the Brampton and Buckden Division