

# Cllr Liam Beckett

## MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2025

### Full Council

#### Council composition

In the last month, the Reform UK group on the council has lost one of its members who now sits as an Independent, and appointed a new interim leader Cllr Stefan Fisher to replace the previous leader James Sidlow.

Meanwhile the 31 Liberal Democrats and two other Independents have joined forces to form a single Liberal Democrat & Independent Group.

The new composition of the council is as follows.

#### **Liberal Democrat & Independent 33**

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| Conservative | 10 |
| Reform UK    | 9  |
| Labour       | 5  |
| Green        | 3  |
| Independent  | 1  |

#### Local Government Reorganisation

The Full Council meeting on Tuesday 21 October resolved by a majority to submit Option A to Government for its consideration. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire will vote to submit Option B, as will East Cambridgeshire though with at least half the council opposing it.

Huntingdonshire may submit either Option C, or its own Option E which looks like Option C but with a separate Huntingdonshire. Peterborough is likely to submit either Option A or Option D which is being pushed by its two MPs. Option D would split Huntingdonshire in two, with East Cambridgeshire in a council with Fenland and the east half of Huntingdonshire.



Proposal A



Proposal B



Proposal C

It is not clear what if anything Fenland will submit. Surrey is further along in the process than we are, and the Government has just announced its decision on the new boundaries there. This will create just two unitary authorities, with five of the current districts in one, and six in the other. The majority of respondents to the Government's consultation did not want this solution for Surrey—just 19 per cent supported it while 56 per cent opposed it. Cambridgeshire's outcome may be different, but at the moment it appears that Local Government Reorganisation is being led by the Treasury and resulting in larger councils, with local opinion not counting for much.

### Motions for debate

Four motions were debated at the County Council meeting on 21 October.

1. the impact of the Government's plan to end overseas recruitment for social care visas.
2. the opportunity to lower the voting age to 16 for the new unitary councils, and to change the voting system.
3. attacks on public-facing workers including, but not only, shop workers.
4. support for people in mental health crisis and suicide prevention.

A fifth motion, on fast food advertising on bus shelters, was withdrawn for further work.

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## Anglian Great Ouse Regional Flood & Coastal Committee Update

### Local Projects and Levy Funding

#### Purpose of the RFCC

The Anglian (Great Ouse) RFCC exists to guide flood and coastal erosion risk management across the catchment. It ensures strategic planning, targeted investment, and collaboration between the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authorities, and other stakeholders. This meeting was to agree local projects, local levy contributions for county councils and internal Drainage Boards, review the progress made on flood projects for this FY and look at the winter readiness campaign provided by the EA.

**Levy Funding Advocacy:** I urged fellow members to support a 3% increase in local levy funding to strengthen flood resilience. While we ultimately **agreed on a 2% rise**, this was a significant improvement from the original consensus of 0%, and I was pleased to see some progress made. I was disappointed however that councillors from other counties demanded that 55% of the organisation's reserves be used this year in light of it being 'exceptional' financially. The reserves will not be possible to replenish in the immediate term with the 2% increase in levy funding; my concerns were acknowledged, but I ultimately was voted down.

**Wildlife Project Scrutiny:** I challenged the inclusion of a wildlife project, concerned it might divert funds from flood defences. It was clarified that the project is funded directly by central government, so it does not impact our flood management budget.

**Demand for Local Impact Reporting:** I called for future RFCC reports to show how local levy funds translate into flood protection—specifically so we can see how closely the proportion of protected homes reflects the financial contributions made by each council area.

**Strategic Direction:** The Committee reaffirmed its commitment to integrated water management, climate resilience, and catchment-wide collaboration, with a focus on maintaining existing assets and supporting nature-based solutions that enable sustainable growth.

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## Planning

### Brampton Landfill – Extension License Application

An application to ‘use land for reclamation of waste soils, demolition waste and green waste by screening methods and processing using a shredding machine and composting of green waste’ has recently been submitted to CCC, it can be viewed here, please submit your comments to me as soon as possible for me to review and formulate my response.

<https://planning.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=T4U8UFDY02000>

### Brampton to Grafham Quietway

Final objections raised were reviewed with a group in a Delegated Decision Meeting for the Brampton to Grafham Quietway project. The meeting was convened with the Head of Traffic Management and Parking Operations, project officers, the purpose of which was to determine the objections presented and mitigate any concerns where possible. The scheme was passed through given that objections mostly related to misunderstanding of the 20mph advisory order or were mitigated against and now formed part of the plans for the scheme.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/active-travel-in-cambridgeshire/projects-and-plans/quiet-lanes/grafham-to-brampton-quiet-lane-pilot-project>

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## HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

### 20mph Scheme goes through for The Offords

Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy have been successful in their 2024/2025 20mph scheme application. The scheme will see the Offord’s 30mph speed limits reduced down to 20mph. This recognises the villages historical and current efforts to make the village safer for residents. The scheme timeline can last as long as 18 months, so is likely to be in place by Summer 2027 at the very latest.

## Mill Road Closure

I have challenged Openreach on its disruptive works on residents. I've also complained to BT, TalkTalk and Sky (the main users of Openreach's cabling) to complain to them directly so that they can complain directly to them, A 30 minute + diversion with poor signage and minimal works ongoing on the site to warrant such an extensive scheme.

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## Environment & Green Investment

### Community Flood Resilience

A new flood resilience campaign – 'Prepare' – has been launched by Cambridgeshire County Council to coincide with the Environment Agency's national Flood Action Week (13–19 October).

Designed to help residents and communities across the county become more resilient to flooding by taking simple, proactive steps, the initiative follows a motion passed by the council earlier this year, which called for improved flood preparedness and clearer communication around flood responsibilities. It recognises that many residents are unaware of the risks they face and the actions they can take to reduce them.

The campaign is particularly aimed at residents in high-risk flood areas, riparian landowners, existing and potential community flood groups, local stakeholders, and parish councils.

The council's 'Prepare' campaign focuses on:

- How to check flood risk using online tools and maps.
- How to create a personal or household flood plan to stay safe and act quickly.
- How to assemble a flood kit with essential items in case of emergency.
- Who is responsible for the various types of flooding, for example surface water, river, and groundwater.
- Clarifying riparian ownership responsibilities (for landowners next to watercourses).

Mitigating flood risk is a shared responsibility, and the Council works closely with partner organisations including the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards and Anglian Water to manage this risk locally.

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## LOCAL GRANTS – CURRENTLY OPEN TO APPLICATIONS

### Community Watercourse Maintenance Grants

Community Watercourse Maintenance Grants of up to £10,000 are designed to support communities where the condition of local watercourses is increasing the risk of flooding. By providing funding directly, the County Council enables local people to take practical action to improve water flow, reduce flood risk, and enhance the surrounding environment. The grant can be used for vegetation clearance and debris removal, minor repairs to banks or

channels, equipment hire or contractor support, volunteer training and safety equipment, and other essential maintenance activities.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/planning-and-development/flood-and-water/community-flood-action-programme/watercourse-maintenance-grant>

## 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 December for projects starting March**

## The Cambridge Building Society Community Fund

The fund offers grants from £2,500 up to £10,000 to support organisations that are undertaking charitable work with a connection to homes or housing. We are within 15 miles of the St Ives Branch, meeting the eligibility criteria.

**Apply by 1<sup>st</sup> May**

## Other local and national grants can be found here:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/funding-opportunities-in-cambridgeshire>

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## Councillor Surgeries

10:30-11:30 on 6<sup>th</sup> December – **Grafham** Village Hall

10:30-11:30 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January – Outside **Brampton** Co-op, High Street

11:45-12:45 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January – Outside Co-op, **Brampton Park**

## I can be contacted at...

- By email [liam.beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:liam.beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)
  - By phone 07312 081892
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## Cllr Liam Beckett

County Councillor for the Brampton and Buckden Division