## District Councillor’s report for October 2025

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION**

The political leadership of East Cambridgeshire District Council has now launched a campaign in favour of Option B, with East Cambridgeshire along with Huntingdonshire and Fenland being run from Peterborough. Neither Peterborough nor Huntingdonshire is supporting this option.

If you believe it will be deeply damaging to East Cambridgeshire to cut off our influence over the places where we work, study, and receive health care, and to be run from a city miles away with which most of us have no connection, please respond to their survey at **https://tinyurl.com/eastcambs-lgr-survey**

**FULL COUNCIL MEETING**

A long Full Council meeting on 18 September.

1. New Homes Ombudsman: the Lib Dems proposed that the Council should require its Trading Company to join the scheme which gives people moving into new build homes the right to take complaints to the New Homes Ombudsman. This was rejected by the Conservatives, on the grounds that it wasn’t compulsory, and that the Trading Company had joined an inferior scheme which didn’t give access to the Ombudsman.
2. Ely junction: the proposal that the Council should continue to press the Government to invest in upgrades to the rail network north of Ely, to open it up to more rail journeys for passengers and freight was passed.
3. Corporate Plan: the Lib Dems made the usual observation that this was a work of fiction. (The plans for the £13M crematorium at Mepal were developed in secret for eighteen months without being in the plan. If a £13M project is hidden from the Council’s plan, what value can be attached to the rest of it?) There were some elements in it that the Lib Dems could support, such as the inclusive play project, and the need for a crossing at the A10 BP roundabout. It was pointed out that four years ago, the Conservative group had promised an army of uniformed volunteer traffic wardens — that has now shrunk to, possibly, part-funding one PCSO; the illegal and inconvenient parking continues in the villages and Ely.

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE RETIREMENT AND REPLACEMENT**

East Cambridgeshire District Council Chief Executive John Hill will be retiring at the end of this year, and the Council has set in motion plans to fill the vacancy.

Of the three members of the recruitment panel, two are Conservative despite both groups being equal on the council.

**STREAMLINING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING**

The Government is consulting on removing the requirement for statutory consultation as part of the process for determining large national infrastructure projects such as the solar farm at Sunnica, or the incinerator at Wisbech. This proposal is set out in Government’s Planning and Infrastructure Bill.

The consultation can be found on:

**https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-streamlining-infrastructure-planning**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING—A MISSED OPPORTUNITY**

Lib Dems on the Council’s Finance & Assets Committee voted against plans to hand over £72,000 of affordable housing funds to East Cambs District Council’s own company, East Cambs Trading Company, for use at Arbour Square Ely. The money came from developer contributions that must be used to create extra affordable housing. However, ECTC had already signed binding contracts to deliver all twenty-seven houses on this site as affordable housing for social rent.

Lib Dem councillors said this means the grant does not secure a single additional house—it simply gives taxpayers’ money back to a Council-owned company that has already committed to deliver the scheme. Local residents in housing need are being denied the extra houses this money should have provided.

**OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE** 29 September.

* The Council’s recycling rate is lower for the last two quarters than the equivalent periods a year ago.
* The Council has admitted that on most days the street cleaning service operates below the minimum number of staff.
* It was noted that many residents had received duplicate or even triplicate letters about the forthcoming changes to the waste collection service, and that there were instances of two letters with different collection dates.

**POLICE SURVEY**

Cambridgeshire Constabulary have created a short survey to understand how people currently report crimes and how the police can improve the process. It only takes 10–15 minutes, and as a thank you, you’ll have the chance to win a £100 shopping voucher in a prize draw.

**https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CIR\_Cambs\_Constabulary/**

Cllrs Charlotte Cane MP and John Trapp