

County Council Report February 2010

February meetings at the County Council have largely centred around the budget process, and agreeing the integrated plan for the coming three years. I attended a number of scrutiny committees which challenged cabinet members and senior officers on spending plans. This culminated in a meeting of the full County Council on 16 February when the plan was approved. Unsurprisingly then was a long and heated debate on the proposals before the budget was finally agreed.

Pending decisions at East Cambs District Council Council Tax rates for 2010/11 will be as follows:

Parish	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Burwell	971.40	1133.30	1295.20	1457.10	1780.90	2104.70	2428.50	2914.20
Reach	973.86	1136.17	1298.48	1460.79	1785.41	2110.03	2434.65	2921.58
Swaffham Bulbeck	968.94	1130.43	1291.82	1453.41	1776.39	2099.37	2422.35	2906.82
Swaffham Prior	969.18	1130.71	1292.24	1453.77	1776.83	2099.89	2422.95	2907.54
Average across District	973.67	1136.18	1298.49	1460.80	1785.42	2110.04	2434.67	2921.60

I took the opportunity of the full County Council meeting to ask a question expressing my disappointment and dismay at the revised bus timetable imposed by Stagecoach. In answering, Cllr Mac McGuire, Cabinet member responsible shared my disappointment and said that he would ask the Passenger Services team to discuss the changes with Stagecoach to see whether at least some of the evening and Sunday services can be reinstated. If Passenger Services cannot reach a satisfactory answer Cllr McGuire also offered to arrange a meeting with Andy Donald, Managing Director of Stagecoach.

I have reported a number of potholes following complaints from residents. Those I have reported seem to have been dealt with as have a number of problem drop kerbs.

David Brown

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There was no Planning Committee meeting in February, owing to a lack of applications to be considered.

External Partnerships Review Committee met on 8 February to consider the consultation regarding future secondary school provision in East Cambs. The recommendation from that meeting was:

- To support a new Secondary School in Littleport
- To support new Sixth Form provision in Ely
- To undertake a review of Sixth Form provision across the District.

There have been a number of preparatory meetings in the run-up to the full Council meeting on 23 February, where Council Tax rates for 2010/11 will be set. These included a meeting of Environment and Transport Committee, which considered a number of savings proposals, including stopping collecting plastic bottles at the kerbside whilst enhancing the collection of plastic bottles from the bottle banks so that people can continue to recycle bottles. The other major item discussed was some changes to car parking in Ely, including increasing the charge on the Angel Drove commuter car park to £3.00 per day, coupled with putting in some short-term parking bays and parking restrictions on the roads around Angel Drove.

David Brown

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Planning Committee - There was no meeting this month due to lack of business.

Quotient BioResearch, Newmarket Road, Fordham, Cambs. - Members were invited to a tour around the laboratories and see the state of the art equipment which is used in the in the fight to detect drugs in horse racing. There are more than 220 scientist employed at the site and is one of the largest in Europe with samples to be tested arriving from around the world. The next tours relating to large businesses in the area are Ds Smith Corrugated and G's (Shropshire's).

Newmarket Rugby Club - Due to the reorganisation of Scaltback Middle School, Newmarket the rugby club is having to move from its present site by 2012. Councillors from the areas where there are players using the club were invited down to watch a match and give suggestions as to possible sites where they could relocate to. Unfortunately due to the weather there were no fixtures on that Sunday but we were shown around the club where they have a membership of more than 400. They would like to find a site within 3 miles of their present site but it is proving very difficult due to the value of ground within the horse racing industry.

Older Peoples Partnership Board - I recently attended a meeting at Chatteris. The main item on the agenda was concerning the older population in relation to the new Local Transport Plan. The concerns raised would be for better access on buses for wheelchairs, mobility scooters perhaps a pathway for them and public transport to enable them to visit people in hospital.

Swaffham Internal Drainage Board - At the Budget Meeting it was agreed that the rate should be £0.24 for 2010/2011 the same as 09/10

Lavinia Edwards