District Councillor's Report for The Mordens Ward SCDC

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

I was extremely disappointed by the Government's decision in July to delay Local Government Reorganisation in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough until October. The Government simply cannot keep kicking this down the road. Every delay creates more uncertainty for residents, who deserve to know what local government will look like in the future and who will be responsible for delivering the services they rely on.

Instead of allowing councils to focus on improving roads, supporting communities and delivering the services residents expect, Local Government Reorganisation continues to dominate everything. The Government needs to stop dragging this process out, admit its current approach is not working, and provide a clear way forward. Residents deserve action and certainty, not more delays and confusion.

Roads and Highways update

Looking after our local roads remains one of my top priorities. I've continued reporting a variety of highway problems across the ward, including potholes, damaged road surfaces, faded junction markings and footpaths that require attention.

I've also raised concerns about damaged road signs, flooding, fly-tipping and other defects that affect the safety and appearance of our villages. While the county council is responsible for maintaining the highway network, I continue to report issues, follow up on outstanding cases and press for action wherever improvements are needed.

Thank you to everyone who continues to let me know about problems in their area. Your reports make a real difference and help ensure issues are brought to the attention of Highways. If you spot a pothole or another highway defect, please do report it as well - the more evidence Highways receives, the stronger the case for repairs. Faults can be reported here: Report a highways fault | Cambridgeshire County Council

At the South Cambridgeshire District Council's full council meeting in July, I put forward a motion for the cabinet to explore whether cameras mounted on bin lorries could help identify potholes and damaged roads as they travel their normal routes. This motion was rejected by the administration, which I find disappointing as my motion was only asking them to explore, not for a commitment - but I will keep pressing this as we should do all we can to help fix our roads.

As well as continuing to report highway defects across the ward, I remain committed to pressing the county council for long-overdue safety improvements on the A505. Throughout the summer I have continued lobbying for urgent action, including pressing for overgrown verges to be cut back to improve visibility at dangerous junctions.

I have also been following up on the commitment made by Highways to bring together elected representatives from along the A505 corridor to work collaboratively on improving road safety. With local knowledge and a shared determination to reduce the risks on this route, it is vital that all councils and stakeholders are involved in finding practical solutions that will make a real difference for residents and motorists alike.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan

Over the last few years, you would have already heard a lot about the Local Plan, and following the last round of public consultation the latest proposal with some changes will be going to final consultation this summer ahead of being submitted to Government in December. This consultation is on the soundness of the plan, rather than whether we agree or not what is proposed. Whilst I have some concerns about some of the proposals in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, it is vital that residents and businesses have their say too. I would encourage all to take part in this final consultation over the summer. It will be an 8-week consultation period, starting 3rd August and running to 25th September. You can find the details of the Local Plan, changes (Appendix E) and the consultation when live from 3rd August here: Greater Cambridge Local Plan

Support for families over the summer

During the summer holidays, I've been sharing a range of free and low-cost activities to help parents, carers and families make the most of the school break without breaking the bank. From local events and outdoor adventures to community activities and family-friendly days out, I've been highlighting opportunities taking place across our local area. If you're looking for ideas to keep the children entertained over the holidays, you can follow my Facebook page here: https://www.facebook.com/cllr.h.williams

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Following June's Greater Cambridge Partnership and Cabinet meetings, I sought clarification over whether money raised through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would stay in our area or be transferred to the GCP. I was told that most of it would go to the GCP. I support the principle of CIL, particularly as it could give parish councils greater flexibility and investment in local projects. However, I do not support money generated by development in

our villages being diverted to address the GCP's funding gap. Funding raised locally should be invested in the infrastructure our communities need, including improvements to our rural transport network.

Neighbourhood Plans – giving communities a stronger voice

The recent adoption of the Heydon Neighbourhood Plan is an excellent example of what local communities can achieve when they come together to shape the future of their village. This is the first of a smaller parish. At the referendum, 92.1% of those who voted supported the plan, with a 40.86% turnout, showing strong backing for a locally led vision.

Neighbourhood Plans give communities a greater say over how their area develops, helping to protect the character of villages, valued green spaces, heritage and landscapes, while ensuring that future development reflects local priorities and needs.

There are also financial benefits. Should a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) be introduced in Greater Cambridge, parishes with an adopted Neighbourhood Plan would receive 25% of CIL receipts from development in their parish, compared with the standard 15% for those without a plan. This would provide additional funding that can be invested in local infrastructure and community projects.

For parishes considering preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, Heydon demonstrates the real benefits they can bring, giving local communities a stronger voice in planning decisions while securing greater investment for the places where development takes place. If your parish is interested in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, one thing to be aware of is that there is a cost to parish councils. I'd be happy to discuss how I can help and you can also read through the council's extensive guidance here: Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit. It is worth noting that parishes can work together for a joined Neighbourhood Plan.

Community grants and funding

There are a number of funding opportunities available for local groups, organisations and parish councils. These grants can support a wide range of community projects - from improving local facilities to running events or environmental initiatives.

I would strongly encourage any local group with an idea or project to explore what funding may be available. More information can be found on the council's website: https://www.scambs.gov.uk/grants-and-funding

Thank you

I'd like to end by saying a huge thank you to everyone who supported my charity walk in aid of The Farming Community Network (FCN). Thanks to your incredible generosity, we have now raised £940 for this fantastic charity, which provides free, confidential support to farmers, farm workers and their families during difficult times. Thank you to everyone who donated, shared the appeal or offered encouragement. Your support will help FCN continue its invaluable work for our farming communities.

Thank you again for taking the time to read this update. If you have any concerns, ideas, or issues you would like to raise, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

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