**County Councillor Claire Daunton: Annual Parish Report 2023**

I have represented the Fulbourn Division since May 2021, thus am about to complete two years in this role. The Division includes seven communities: Fen Ditton East (Marleigh and Quy Waters), Fulbourn, Great Wilbraham, Little Wilbraham, Quy, Six Mile Bottom and Teversham.

I have attended all relevant meetings throughout the year, alongside being active and engaged in my several areas of non-council (non-stipendiary) work.

I liaise closely with my Ward colleagues and with the wider District and County team of colleagues, as well as with the clerks and chairs of parish councils across the division. I thank them all for their excellent, generous cooperation over the year.

Cambridgeshire County Council is run by a Joint Administration (JA) with Liberal Democrats now having 22 seats, Labour 9 Seats and Independents, 3. The opposition Conservative group has 27 seats.

The JA agreement is here:<https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cambridgelibdems/pages/5179/attachments/original/1620984611/County_agreement_2021_FINAL.pdf?1620984611>

This year the Council increased its portion of Council Tax in February, by 4.99 per cent in total—2.99 per cent for general services, and two per cent for adult social care.

Throughout the year I have served on the following committees and working groups:

* Adult and Health Committee, member
* Children and Young People Committee, member
* Communities and Social Inclusion Committee, member
* Cambridge and Peterborough NHS Trust, as County-appointed governor

This trust includes Fulbourn Hospital and I am glad to have a voice here

* Cambridgeshire Schools Forum, observer
* Libraries Working Group, member
* HGV Working Group, member
* Marleigh Steering Group, member

The committees have met regularly, with briefings on particular topics and training sessions in between formal meetings. I will write a little more below about their work, but first a word or two concerning the working groups on Libraries and HGVs. I have been pleased to take part in these groups both because of their interest and importance but also for the opportunity of close cross-party working.

There is much innovative work going on in the library and information sector to cater to a wide range of needs and interests and to make relevant the service, without losing its original ethos and purpose. The County has been at the forefront of innovation, in spite of restricted financing and we have some excellent library staff who are constantlu seeking ways to improve the service and reach out to a wider audience. The ‘Library Presents’ scheme has brought to libraries a range of learning and cultural activities which have encouraged users.

On the HGV working group C0unty Council officers and members worked closely with a range of partners to devise and implement a new HGV policy, bringing together in one place a range of diverse information concerning legislation and regulations. This will make it easier for communities to decide how best to deal with HGV traffic in their locations, whether that be the volume of traffic, type of traffic, parking places or other issues. We know that this is an issue across the county but it has different impacts and thus different approaches in different places.

**Adults and Health Committee**

The County is responsible for children’s and adult social care and public health commissioning. About 80% of the revenue budget goes to social care: much of this expenditure is tied up in long-term care contracts; individual care packages which can be highly complex.

**The County’s policy programme focus**: support for the workforce (introduction of real living wage, apprenticeships, career progression); a range of initiatives centred on prevention of ill-health and community level support for people to live independently in their own homes; and greater levels of support at ‘independent living’ schemes.

**Under government health and care reforms**, as of July 2022 CCC is a member of the Integrated Care System, the new framework for the local NHS which includes local authority social care in its decision-making for collective forward planning. Ours is the Cambs and Peterborough ICS.

**Like all local authorities CCC has been required to adhere to and prepare for government mandated reforms**. This has required considerable resource; though some reforms have now been delayed until after the next general election. From April local authorities will fall under a new CQC framework. The County has worked hard to establish good collaboration with its district and Peterborough partners, and the local NHS. All come together in the Health and Wellbeing Board and Integrated Care Partnership. District councils are recognized as holding important levers for positive change at community level, for example housing.

**Significantly increased government funding support and certain reforms of the sector are needed** to enable CCC to achieve its aims of keeping people well in their own homes.

In scrutiny sessions our committee has looked at a very wide range of issues: NHS dentistry; children’s hospital; major trauma centres; Royal Papworth Hospital; autism services, to name but some.

**Children and Young People Committee**

This committee is concerned with children’s welfare (including foster care and children in care where the county is the corporate parent) and education provision across the county. We have been particularly concerned this year with helping families deal with the increase in cost of living and the challenges that is posing. We have provided holiday vouchers to help families and worked with the Communities and Social Inclusion Committee on the Household Support Fund. In education we have been particularly concerned with significant budget shortfall in the area of special educational needs and disability (SEND) and have just received a significant grant from government to deal with the deficit and bring in new arrangements. Also in the area of education we have been looking at the challenges facing small schools where resources are stretched; and the challenges to the capital programme for new schools posed by the significant rise in the cost of building materials.

**Communities and Social Inclusion Committee**

During the year this committee has dealt with: the Household Support Fund for struggling families; grants for a wide range of groups and communities to help them with projects that support community welfare and cohesion; library provision across the county, both in new buildings and new services; the archives and local history service which has supported many individuals and groups; the coroner’s service; the registration service; Cambridge Skills, providing training and lifelong learning. The remit of the committee is wide and our meetings have dealt with a range of interesting issues, including the provision of Warm Hubs, improvements to the mobile library service and the move to Voter ID.

I do NOT serve on the Environment and Green Investment Committee nor on the Highways and Transport Committee, but my work as a county councillor has been affected and helped by decisions taken at these committees.

The **Environment and Green Investment Committee** has been working with landowners to encourage regenerative farming and it has also undertaken a tree survey and inventory across county-owned land. It has been occupied with looking at new waste contracts alongside green energy projects such as the Swaffham community heating system, the installation of LED lighting, the use of county buildings for the installation of solar panels.The Council awarded the first spending from its Just Transition fund, including £2.175M for a business case for the first phase of the Council’s plan for Cambridgeshire to reach Net Zero carbon by 2045. £1.75M was also awarded for flood work and nature restoration. On the hottest day on record in the UK, Joint Administration members of the City Council voted to sign Zero Hour’s Nature & Climate Declaration, while the tarmac melted in the council car park outside the building. The County Council is working with district councils on energy retrofits in homes with poor energy efficiency.

The remit of the **Highways and Transport** committee is vast and complex, including not just the maintenance of roads and footpaths, but also civil parking, drainage, signage, active travel, park and ride, speed limits and speed restrictions. This year several new policies have been introduced, including those on 20mph schemes and on HGV traffic; and a new local walking and cycling infrastructure plan has been agreed.

The condition of Cambridgeshire’s roads and pavements remains a serious challenge. This situation has been building for many years in which the council’s approach was one of ‘managed decline’. However, recent extreme weather has speeded up that decline very significantly. The peaty soil under the road surface has shrunk in hot dry weather, and expanded in wet weather, causing the surface to crater and split. Adding more tarmac to level the surface simply increases the weight and makes matters worse. The severity and extent of the problem is far beyond the maintenance budget of the council, so simply ‘freeing up some money’ is not an option. The council has been actively engaging with the Department for Transport to seek their support and funding. The freezing spell over winter caused many road and pavement surface defects, and failure of pothole repairs. We encourage residents to report faults online.

**The community of Great Wilbraham?**

Drainage: I have helped with the problem of drainage on Angle End and High Street. Improvements have been made but there is still work to be done – two ditches to be cleared. We must have a careful eye on the gulleys and keep them clear. Residents will let me know if they see any further work that needs doing alongside regular maintenance.

Some clearing of trees and shrubs, outstanding for some time, has either happened or will happen soon. This work has been a partnership of the county and parish councils.

There is some ongoing work to protect damaged verges and I continue to work with individual residents and/or the parish council on this.

Holes have been filled and drains cleared throughout the year, but there is no doubt that filling all the holes in the road has been a constant battle and continues to be so. In some cases – notably Temple End – a larger piece of work has been undertaken.

I have been liaising with the school on a County scheme which is designed to help schools with learning projects related to road safety and safe walking and cycling to school and being road-safety aware in and near the school. Teachers and children are fully involved.

The County provides funding for local highways improvement initiatives (LHI) and I have supported the parish council and TWG in the bids for this funding. I am also supporting fully the bid for funding to introduce a 20mph zone/limit in the village.

I continue to act with the parish council and TWG on matters related to HGV traffic, including liaising with nearby industrial complexes. I have worked closely with a District councillor colleague who has investigated planning permissions related to these sites.

I am working alongside the parish councils of Little and Great Wilbraham and the WEG on supporting the bid for a safe cycle route. The Wilbrahams have received a mention in a county bid to government for active travel monies and if this bid is successful. I hope we might see some real action over the next year.

I have been a member of the Wilbrahams Refugee Support group since its inception.

 I have provided advice and support to residents on a confidential basis throughout the year.

Claire Daunton

30th March 2023