

Cllr Lorna Dupré

MONTHLY REPORT JUNE 2026

FULL COUNCIL

Following the disqualification of Andy Osborn (Roman Bank and Peckover), a by-election has been called with a polling day of Thursday 25 June.

Meanwhile, another Reform councillor—James Sidlow (Ramsey and Bury), the group's former leader—has resigned from the council. A by-election is expected a few weeks after the one in Roman Bank and Peckover.

Annual Council meeting

The council met on Tuesday 19 May. Two motions were debated—the lowest number I can remember, and the first time unlimited numbers of motions were allowed, subject to a limit of one motion per councillor.

Armed Forces Covenant

The first motion, from Cllr Yannifer Malinowski (Burwell) was on the Armed Forces Covenant. The Council restated its long-standing commitment to ensuring that serving personnel, veterans and their families are treated fairly and face no disadvantage when accessing public services.

There are over 22,500 veterans living in Cambridgeshire and a strong Armed Forces presence across the region. The motion set out a renewed programme of support, including:

- Signing a refreshed Armed Forces Covenant at the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee meeting on 25 June 2026.
- Increasing awareness of support available through Council services, libraries, the Forces Connect app and local networks.
- Publishing an annual report on delivery of the Covenant across Council services.
- Supporting continued funding for the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator role into 2027–28.
- Writing to the Minister for Veterans and People in support of the Royal British Legion's *Keep the Covenant Promise* campaign, calling for clearer guidance, sustainable funding, greater public awareness and stronger monitoring of the Covenant Duty.

Logistics and freight

The second motion, from Cllr Luis Navarro (Longstanton and Northstowe) was on logistics and freight, and asked the council to take a coordinated approach to better understanding and managing freight impacts.

The Council has resolved to request that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority commission a county-wide strategic freight study to assess the long-term impacts of large volumes of freight on highway capacity, road safety and congestion, surface water and flood risk, air quality, noise and public health, and community wellbeing.

The study will also look at opportunities to shift freight from road-only transport to rail and other options, supported by collaboration with Network Rail, National Highways, district councils, and other key partners. Our local MP Charlotte Cane has been very active in raising the need to resolve the rail capacity issues north of Ely to assist this, including procuring a debate on it in Parliament while we wait for the Government to commit to this vital piece of work.

I spoke at the Council meeting about the longstanding wish of Sutton residents for a weight limit through the village, and about the evidence we received when I chaired a working group on weight limits about the lack of good quality overnight stops for HGV drivers and the lack of clarity about which tier of government is responsible for overseeing this.

STRATEGY RESOURCES & PERFORMANCE

Quality of Life survey

Cambridgeshire County Council has launched its fourth annual Quality of Life survey, inviting residents to share their views on life in Cambridgeshire and the issues that matter most to them and their communities.

The survey findings provide valuable insight to support business planning, policy development, and decision-making, as well as helping to understand how changes to public services are affecting people's lives. This insight is used to help shape the council's Business Plan and Budget, tracking progress against the council's Strategic Framework ambitions over time.

The online and telephone survey will capture the views of around 5,500 residents and is being delivered in partnership with Cambridge Ahead and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

The twenty-minute survey is being carried out by independent market research company Thinks Insight, which aims to speak to a representative sample of approximately 1,100 residents aged 18 and over in each of Cambridgeshire's five district areas, ensuring a broad and balanced range of perspectives. Residents will not be asked for personal or financial information.

Residents will be asked about a range of topics, including life and community, transport, health and wellbeing, children and young people, and perceptions of the council and its services.

Previous survey findings have shown that many residents feel happy, safe and have a strong sense of belonging, with Cambridgeshire widely seen as a good place to raise children. They have also highlighted areas where residents would like to see improvement, such as road and pavement maintenance, the cost of living, and mental health and loneliness.

Alongside the random sample, all residents are encouraged to take part in the survey which will remain open into the summer and close on 5 August 2026. Responses will then be analysed and shared with councillors and the public in the autumn.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/quality-of-life-survey

ADULTS & HEALTH

'Virtual smart flat' goes live

Cambridgeshire County Council has launched a 'virtual smart flat' which uses Extended Reality (XR) to showcase ways in which new and existing technology can be used to help prevent, delay and reduce the need for formal community or acute care.

The equipment available ranges from simple pill reminders to sophisticated detectors, sensors, smart devices and trackers.

People will be able to access the virtual smart flat from home, on a desktop computer or tablet, from Wednesday 13 May. The Council also has a 'Smart Flat' in Huntingdon where you can try out the available equipment and technology.

Find out more about the council's TEC offering including a video:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/adults/staying-independent/equipment-and-technology/technology-enabled-care/tecs-smartflat>

Personal independence payments (PIP) review

On 19 March, the government launched the Timms Review of Personal Independence Payments for people with a disability or long-term health condition. The Review has now closed.

The Review sought feedback from the public on their experiences and knowledge of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), particularly from those with lived or learned experience of PIP, including disabled people, the organisations that represent them, carers, clinicians, experts, MPs, and other elected officials in the UK. The Review aims to report to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in autumn 2026 and to reporting its outcomes to Parliament.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Water safety campaign

As warmer weather approaches, a new campaign *Be Water Smart* has been launched by Cambridgeshire County Council to support families to enjoy water safely this summer.

Designed to equip parents with important lifesaving knowledge, *Be Water Smart* aims to raise awareness of the potential risks of swimming in open water, like lakes and rivers, and the simple, proactive steps parents can take to ensure children have the right skills and knowledge they need to stay safe around water.

The campaign will include encouraging parents to familiarise themselves with the Water Safety Code (stop and think, stay together, float and call 999 in the UK or 112 if abroad) and how to teach this to children to ensure they know what to do if they find themselves in the water unexpectedly.

The council's *Be Water Smart* campaign will focus on:

- How families can stay safe together in and around water.
- What to do if you or your child gets into difficulties in the water or comes across someone else who is in trouble.
- Raising awareness of the risks associated with swimming in open water, such as cold water shock and hidden dangers under the water.
- Helpful tips for enjoying the water safely this summer, including places where families can have fun in the water in a safe and controlled environment.
- Water safety activities and resources families can complete together.

At least a dozen children across the country have died in water during the recent hot weather spell, so this campaign could not be more timely.

Unclaimed child trust funds

The government is contacting thousands of 21-year-olds about forgotten Child Trust Funds in a bid to reunite account holders with their accounts, worth £2,200 on average.

Child Trust Funds were introduced in 2005, to be accessed by children once they reached the age of 18. The scheme ran for children born between 1 September 2002 and 2 January 2011.

The government is now undertaking an awareness campaign urging young people to locate their Child Trust Funds through the free *Find My Child Trust Fund* service on GOV.UK.

www.gov.uk/child-trust-funds/find-a-child-trust-fund

Fostering

Our local Fostering Ambassador Anne ran a Fostering information evening at the Lighthouse in Ely last month. Many Cambridgeshire children need families to look after them on a short-term or long-term basis. The more local foster carers there are, the more children in our care can stay connected to their schools, friends and communities - rather than being uprooted somewhere unfamiliar.

If this is something that might work for you, find out more at 0800 052 0078, email fostering@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or visit the website www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/fostering-and-adoption

ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN INVESTMENT

Grunty Fen landfill fires

The Environment Agency's assessment of the situation at Grunty Fen is expected to be published on or around 3 July. Charlotte Cane MP, Cllr Tom Hawker-Dawson and I will continue to keep residents updated as further information becomes available.

Recycling strategy and design guide endorsed

The Council has agreed to endorse the new *Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP) Waste Partnership Interim Resources and Waste Strategy 2025-2031* along with the new *Recycling in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (RECAP) Waste Management Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document*.

Woodland creation invitation

Cambridgeshire County Council is inviting communities, landowners and farmers to come forward if they have land suitable for new woodland, hedgerow creation, and nature recovery, as part of a campaign to rebuild the county's depleted tree cover.

Cambridgeshire is one of the most tree-depleted counties in England, with intensive agriculture and the loss of traditional hedgerows leaving habitats fragmented and wildlife increasingly isolated.

The Woodland Creation project, led by Cambridgeshire County Council and funded by the Forestry Commission, aims to reverse this trend by increasing tree and woodland canopy cover and expanding hedgerows across the county, to open up potential opportunities, such as agroforestry.

The Council is now inviting expressions of interest from community and parish groups, landowners and farmers with land of 0.5 hectares or more that may be suitable for tree planting, woodland creation, hedgerow improvement or wider nature recovery initiatives. Priority will be given to:

- Lower-grade agricultural land
- Sites next to existing habitats such as woodland, wetlands or meadows
- Land that can help connect ecological networks across Cambridgeshire.

Those interested are encouraged to complete the secure online form by 30 June 2026 for the 2026/27 planting season. Further information about the offers to support the delivery of these woodlands will be available over the next couple of months.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/climate-change-energy-and-environment/woodland-creation>

HEALTH SCRUTINY

Councillors on the Health Scrutiny Committee have been working in small groups to review the 'quality accounts' compiled by the various NHS providers. I have been part of a group reviewing the 'quality accounts' of Papworth and of the East of England Ambulance Trust.

NHS Quality Accounts are annual reports published by healthcare providers that deliver NHS services. They outline the quality of the care they provide, areas needing improvement, and the priorities for the upcoming year. They are designed to hold providers accountable to patients, the public, and commissioners.

I have now stepped down from the Health Scrutiny Committee as part of the annual changes of committee membership agreed at the AGM.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

New cycle training contract

The Highways and Transport Committee has agreed to seek a new contract to deliver cycle training for children across the county. This will ensure that thousands of children in Cambridgeshire will continue to benefit from high-quality cycling skills and road safety education, through to 2029.

The decision allows the Council to appoint a training provider to deliver the Bikeability programme, for an initial term ending in March 2029, with options for extensions. The programme will be funded through a mixture of funding options including a confirmed three-year grant from the Bikeability Trust on behalf of Active Travel England.

Highways officer

Our new Highways Officer Liam Eve has started in post and is already making a difference in several places in our area.

Bus survey

At the request of one of the bus operators, I carried out a survey on Facebook of the views of Sutton residents on where they would like bus services to go. I am grateful for people's input and have passed an anonymised summary to the bus operator.

Wild flowering

I managed to get a positive response from council officers to Witcham residents wanting to undertake wild flowering of local verges while the season was still upon us.

GCP busways

I met the new Programme Director for the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GPC)'s busways and had a useful discussion about the new busways currently awaiting the go-ahead.

Cambridge South station

Passengers will soon be able to take trains from the new Cambridge South station. Services will begin calling at Cambridge South on Sunday 28 June before the station's official opening ceremony takes place the following day.

Cambridge South is expected to welcome 1.8 million passengers annually. The station will benefit from up to nine trains an hour to the centre of Cambridge as well as a direct link to the city's Biomedical Campus. Passengers will also be able to take trains to London, Birmingham, Stansted Airport and international rail services via St Pancras, with up to twenty services calling at Cambridge South in peak hours.

Damage to traffic light detector units

Around 200 traffic light detector units were vandalised across Cambridgeshire since the early May bank holiday weekend, mostly in Cambridge.

The detectors, which are mounted on traffic signal poles, were deliberately vandalised through the cutting of their cables. Each incident typically cost around £250 to repair. In some cases, the damage was more serious, with whole units needing to be replaced costing anywhere between £250 and £1,500.

The equipment plays a vital role in keeping traffic moving safely and efficiently. Detectors identify vehicles and pedestrians waiting at junctions, allowing traffic lights to respond to real-time demand.

When the technology is damaged, traffic lights revert to a fixed-time setting, leading to increased congestion and delays for everyone, as well as potential safety issues.

Road updates

Straight Furlong Pymoor: officers have prepared a comparison of different options for addressing the verges and road edges on Straight Furlong, and have worked with me to ensure all information is presented clearly and completely for the parish council to consider and comment. I have also worked with the council leadership to ensure money is available to carry out the work.

Ely Road Little Downham: I spent some time working with officers to clarify the road space arrangements for work on Ely Road at the Lindum development.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

Sutton surgery

Cllr Mark Inskip and I hold our monthly surgery at Joy Bistro 65 High Street Sutton. Forthcoming dates are Monday 6 July and Monday 3 August, 18:30-19:30.

On Wednesday 24 June, subject to diary changes, I hope to be at the Coveney coffee morning at 10:30AM and Little Downham Book Café at 2:00PM.

I can also be contacted ...

- by email at lorna@lornadupre.org.uk
 - on Facebook
 - by phone on 07930 337596
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Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton divisi