
Report: County Councillor (Hardwick div.) District Councillor (Harston & Comberton) Cllr Michael Atkins October 2023

Highlights

- 20mph zones
- Making connections/congestion charging
- Reminder: changes to regular bin collections
- Contact information

News from the County

20mph zones

Putting aside some of the noises in the national media recently, the Council was delighted to announce the first tranche of new 20mph zones across the county, including Harlton village and 19 others. There were a further 56 applications which were not successful unfortunately, and work is ongoing to secure funding for more zones in the near future.

Hardwick school places

I've been made aware of a number of children who are having to travel to a different campus whilst attending the Hardwick and Cambourne Primary School, and whether there are in fact enough places available at the schools. I can confirm that the school can admit up to 105 pupils in each year, with up to 45 in Hardwick and 60 in Camborne, and that current numbers are within this limit and very likely to remain so in the future. At the same time, depending on parental preference as to which campus they wish their children to attend, it is possible that a campus might have (say) 38 children wishing to attend in a year group, which unfortunately is too large for a single class but not large enough to justify a second class, when a few children can attend the other campus instead. Class organisation is ultimately for the school to decide, although the Council will provide additional funding ('growth funding') if an extra class is required (on top of the per-pupil funding).

News from GCP & Combined Authority

Making Connections / Congestion Charging

At their meeting on 28th September, the GCP board decided not to proceed with the revised Making Connections proposals due to a lack of support from both politicians (including groups I belong to) and the public. All work on a congestion charging scheme has therefore stopped, and alternatives will now be revisited to tackle the current and imminent problems of congestion in Cambridge city, and a lack of public transport in the Greater Cambridge area.

Combined Authority bus contracts

The Combined Authority has reviewed the bus services it is currently supporting, and extended 51 of these to March 2025. This includes the Nos. 8, 1A, X2, and 18. The Citi4 services has not yet been

extended because the relevant passenger information was not received by the CA in a timely fashion, so we will have to wait a month or so for a decision on this service.

It has also been proposed to introduce a demand-responsive trial in the area around Northstowe and Bar Hill – I'm hoping if successful we can add our own area and so join this area to the current trial in Huntingdonshire.

News from the District

No. 18 Bus service

We are aware of continuing issues with this service, particularly cancellations without notice. Councillor Redrup and myself are continuing to press the Combined Authority and Whippet on improving reliability, and are investigating whether or not taxi fares can be reclaimed from the company.

Bin changes

A reminder that bin collection days changed for most villages last month – do check the letter you should have received or the Council website. Initial reports suggest that there were very few issues in the changeover, but if your bin is missed by 3pm, you can report it on the Council website and it will be collected.

4DW trial at South Cambs

You may be aware of further reports in some media about the four-day-week trial currently underway at the council. Having reviewed the available information and key statistics, I am personally satisfied that there has been no diminution in the level of service provided to residents in the trial so far, and note the substantial savings we have made by improving our ability to hire permanent staff and reducing our reliance on agency workers, particularly in the planning department. I think it is important that the trial be allowed to run its course into 2024, whereupon I expect a full review of its effectiveness and a clear public decision on the future.

Contact Details

Councillors and residents are welcome to contact me on any issue which is concerning them:

<p>Cllr Michael I. Atkins matkinslibdem@gmail.com https://www.facebook.com/cllrmichaelatkins 07968 264637</p>
