

Cllr Liam Dewey-Beckett

Monthly Report - June 2026

Cabinet Member for Audit & Governance, Huntingdonshire District Council | County Councillor for Brampton Division, Cambridgeshire County Council | Chair, Health Scrutiny Committee

FULL COUNCIL & GOVERNANCE

Planning Applications - National Changes to Local Applications

From 31 October 2026, new rules under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 will change how planning applications get decided across England, including at Huntingdonshire. Most routine applications - like home extensions and minor changes - will be decided by planning officers rather than councillors, and councillors (as well as parish councils) will no longer be able to "call in" applications for committee debate. Committees will instead focus only on the larger or more contentious developments. The change is meant to speed up decisions, but some councils and campaigners have warned it could reduce local democratic oversight of planning. This is a national law that **must** be changed locally, but I'll be keeping a close eye on how Huntingdonshire implements this.

For further reading: this was discussed at last week's Corporate Governance Committee meeting. Minutes will be published here once available:

<https://democracy.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=10217&MId=8719&Ver=4>

Reform Councillors Trigger By-Elections at County Council and District Council

A by-election was called following the disqualification of Reform Cllr Andy Osborn (Roman Bank and Peckover), with polling day set for Thursday 25 June. Chris Tirrell (Reform UK) has since been elected to Cambridgeshire County Council.

Separately, James Sidlow (Ramsey and Bury), the former leader of the Reform group, has resigned his seat, triggering a second by-election at the county council, with polling day set for Thursday 16 July.

At **Huntingdonshire District Council** another by-election has now been called for the St Neots Eynesbury ward, following the resignation of Reform UK Councillor Tony Nelson. Polling day will be Thursday 20 August.

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE

Roundup of My Recent Activities

Since taking on the Audit & Governance portfolio at Huntingdonshire District Council, much of my focus has been on strengthening the council's risk management, internal audit oversight, and constitutional governance (work that doesn't always make headlines but underpins how well the council serves residents).

Risk Management

I've worked closely with officers to scrutinise the council's Corporate Risk Register ahead of Corporate Governance Committee meetings, looking in detail at how risks across cyber security, financial resilience,

safeguarding, housing, and Local Government Reorganisation are scored and tracked. This has included agreeing practical next steps with the Risk Manager, including regular sessions to better understand how individual risk areas are owned and managed across council teams.

Internal Audit

I've taken a close interest in the council's internal audit programme, reviewing progress reports and tracking how audit recommendations are being implemented across council services, to ensure issues identified are properly followed through rather than left on a list.

Constitutional Reform

A significant strand of work has been preparing Huntingdonshire for the new national rules on planning decision-making (the National Scheme of Delegation, introduced under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025), which take effect from 31 October 2026. As Chair of the Constitution Review Working Group, I've been leading the council's efforts to update our constitution in line with these changes, while also pressing for the council to go further where it can - looking at how to maintain good local oversight and transparency around planning decisions within the new national framework.

Throughout, my aim has been to ask constructive, probing questions of officers, support good governance practice, and help build a council that is transparent, resilient, and accountable to residents.

HEALTH SCRUTINY

My Work as Chair of Health Scrutiny: A Round-Up

As Chair of the Health Scrutiny Committee at Cambridgeshire County Council, my focus has been on holding local NHS services to account and making sure decisions affecting residents' health are made with rigour and transparency.

Scrutinising NHS Quality

I've led detailed scrutiny of Quality Accounts - the annual public reports NHS trusts must publish on patient safety, clinical effectiveness, and patient experience - for both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) and Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust (CCS). This has included chairing a Task and Finish Group examining CPFT's performance in depth, raising concerns about ward safety, rising complaints in children's neurodevelopmental services, and staff wellbeing, and pressing the Trust to provide better benchmarking data so residents and councillors can properly judge year-on-year progress.

Getting Up to Speed and Looking Ahead

I've also been getting to grips with the Committee's wider work programme, including meeting with the Director of Public Health and the Executive Director for Adults, Health and Commissioning to understand the key issues facing health and care services across Cambridgeshire. Building on this, I'll be starting to shape two strands of work: a reactive approach, writing to local NHS leaders on topical health issues as they arise, and a proactive approach, setting the Committee's agenda for the year ahead so that scrutiny is focused on what matters most for Cambridgeshire's health needs – this is where health scrutiny truly becomes a partnership and a 'critical friend' to health services.

Throughout, my aim has been to give local people a stronger voice in how NHS services are run, and to make sure scrutiny is rigorous, fair, and genuinely improves outcomes for residents.

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION

Trauma-Informed Training: A Powerful Experience

I recently attended trauma-informed training that used virtual reality to give councillors an immersive experience of childhood trauma in many different forms, following the journey through to young adulthood. It was genuinely moving - stepping into someone else's experience so directly brought home, in a way no presentation could, what children facing trauma actually live through. I found it emotionally impactful and came away with a much deeper understanding of why trauma-informed approaches matter so much in services for children and young people. I'd strongly recommend this training to anyone working with children – the county council team offer it across all sectors involving childcare and education. Please get in touch with me if you'd like details.

HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT

Bus Route 65: Standing Up for Our Bus Service

I've been raising serious concerns about proposals to close bus route 65, one of the only regular, scheduled bus services connecting Buckden, the Marina, the Offords, Great Paxton, and St Neots. The original case for closure pointed to low average passenger numbers, but I believe this masks a poorly designed timetable rather than a lack of demand - the route currently starts in St Neots and travels out to smaller villages, and the first service back to Buckden occurs just 13 minutes after the first usable route into St Neots. I pressed the Combined Authority to look again at redesigning the timetable rather than closing the route, and to be transparent about the public engagement with bus users it committed to carrying out back in January.

Shortly after I raised this in person to the Transport Committee, a consultation duly appeared..! You can have your say here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScskF6W3pUVNn6MUbTxvto98wWFRsTF8w_QkK7EA-W5ma3L8Q/viewform

I'll keep pushing on this because residents deserve a bus service that actually works for them.

Buckden Pothole Day

I recently spent the day in Buckden with Terry Price, our Highways Maintenance Officer, walking the village to identify potholes and damaged footpaths. Terry kindly sprayed up and ordered repair work for tens of sites across the area - it was great to feel we're really making progress on highway maintenance, and his proactive attitude and careful, informed decision-making made the whole exercise genuinely productive. The work will make a noticeable difference to residents getting around safely. I'm planning to repeat the exercise with Imran Khan, the Highways Officer for Brampton, to make sure the whole of my patch gets the same attention and is levelled up together.

EV On-Street Charging Trial

Cambridgeshire County Council is launching a trial of electric vehicle cable channels; letting residents without a driveway charge their EV safely at home, with the cable sitting inside a small pavement channel rather than trailing loose across the footway.

The trial runs in two phases, starting with 50 channels (10 per district), rising to 200 (40 per district) if successful. Eligibility broadly requires no off-road parking, a suitable property frontage, and regular on-street parking outside your home. Total cost is around £2,500–£3,000, though a government grant of up to £500 is available until 31 March 2027.

The trial hasn't launched yet, so register your interest here:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/electric-vehicle-charging/electric-vehicle-cable-channel-trial>

CASEWORK & COMMUNITY

Round Up

Alongside committee work, a good chunk of mine and Warren's (my Co-District Councillor for Brampton) time goes into individual casework raised by residents. Here's a flavour of what's been on our desks recently:

Millers Close, Offord D'Arcy - School Parking Safety

Following a joint letter and petition from residents concerned about dangerous parking and vehicle manoeuvres at school drop-off and pick-up times near Offord Primary School, I've been working through a staged plan with the council: quick wins like targeted parking enforcement and road safety messaging through the school, alongside medium and longer-term options such as a Traffic Regulation Order, a School Streets assessment, and exploring a proper drop-off facility. We've also been talking to the Parish Council and ward colleagues to make sure any permanent change works for the wider area, not just one street.

Active Travel - Brampton to Hinchingsbrooke Cycle Path

We attended last week's engagement session on the proposed Brampton to Hinchingsbrooke cycle path. Minor changes to the scheme are still possible, and we'll be following up with officers on feedback raised by Cllr Bainbridge and Cllr Shellens.

Hinchingsbrooke - Dead and Overgrown Trees

We're helping Hinchingsbrooke residents get dead and overgrown trees properly maintained. It's complicated by shared landownership between the county and district, overlapping maintenance contracts, and a Tree Preservation Order covering all the trees involved.

High Street / Church Road - Drainage

We've secured a thorough drain inspection and clearing for the bottom of the High Street, where it meets Church Road, to tackle ongoing drainage problems at that junction during high rainfall.

Brampton - Highway Boundary Mapping

We've recently received boundary information from the County. It's now on our to-do list to speak with the Parish Clerk and establish a single, agreed "source of truth" map between Brampton Parish Council and CCC Highways for vegetation maintenance responsibilities.

CCTV in Brampton

Warren has been pursuing enquiries into new CCTV cameras in Brampton, looking at how the system links into HDC's monitoring station and Cambridgeshire Police, and exploring whether it could also help address speeding concerns locally.

As ever, if you've got an issue you'd like raised, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

In person:

4th July - 10:30-11:30 - Co-op, High Street, Brampton.

5th September – 1030-1130 – Brampton High Street, Bench by the Coop.

I can also be contacted:

- by email at liam.dewey-beckett@cambridgeshire.gov.uk (County Issues – Buckden, Brampton, Grafham, Southoe, Offords)
- by email at liam.dewey-beckett@huntingdonshire.gov.uk (District Issues – Brampton & Hinchingsbrooke Residents Only)
- by phone on 07312 081892

Cllr Liam Dewey-Beckett

County Councillor for Brampton Division | Cabinet Member for Audit & Governance, HDC | Chair, Cambridgeshire Health Scrutiny Committee

FAQ's

Who is responsible for what?

Function	County	District	Town/Parish
Adult social care	•		
Allotments			•
Building regulations		•	
Births, deaths and marriages	•		
Burials, cremations and cemeteries		•	•
Children's services	•		
Community safety		•	•
Concessionary travel	•		•
Council tax and business rates		•	
Consumer protection		•	
Economic development		•	•
Education and related services	•		
Elections and electoral services		•	
Emergency planning	•	•	•
Environmental Health		•	
Fly tipping clearance		•	
Highways, roads, pavements, footpaths, Public Rights of Way	•		
Housing and homelessness		•	
Housing benefits		•	
Litter, bins, street cleaning		•	
Libraries	•		
Licensing		•	
Local planning		•	[•]
Markets and fairs		•	•
Parking	•	•	•
Parks		•	
Public toilets		•	•
Trading standards	•		
Trees	•	•	[•]
Waste and recycling collection		•	
Waste disposal and public tips	•		

[.] – Statutory consultee only