

## County Councillor's Report to Babraham Parish Council June 2021

From

**Maria King and Brian Milnes**

Following the May 6th elections, the Conservatives lost control of the County Council due to losing 9 seats to the Lib Dems. In four District Council by-elections, the Lib Dems won all four seats.

With their grateful thanks for the support shown from Babraham, the election returned Brian and Maria King to represent the *Sawston and Shelfords Division* of the County Council.

Since the elections, it has been announced that the previous opposition groups have combined and created a Joint Agreement to run the County Council. That agreement was ratified at the Full Council meeting held in the unusual surroundings of IWM Duxford on 18<sup>th</sup> May (required by the disappointing loss of legislation supporting virtual meetings).



Lib Dem Group Lead, Lucy Nethsingha is the new Leader of the Council, and her Labour counterpart Elisa Meschini is Deputy Leader. All 4 independents have joined the new administration.

The joint agreement contains a series of progressive policies aimed at COVID recovery and Climate Change redress. Some of the highlights are as follows:

### **1. Environment, sustainability, and the climate emergency**

We will put climate change and biodiversity at the heart of the Council's work and at the heart of its land management strategy. We commit to reviewing the Council's Sustainability

Strategy, with the aim of moving forward the Net Zero target for Cambridgeshire County Council towards 2030.

## **2. Communities**

We will tackle poverty, create opportunity, promote diversity, and do all we can to foster inclusion across the county. We will revive, further develop, and implement an anti-poverty strategy for Cambridgeshire. We will aim to offer more accessible services such as youth services and children's centres, to provide more help for young people and families. We will keep the county's libraries open, in public ownership, and ensure their services remain free for everyone on Universal Credit.

## **3. Health and care**

We believe all residents in need of care deserve this to be provided equitably and to be of high quality. We will champion the concept of independent living, using personal budgets and direct payments for those who choose, and explore directly provided residential care and community-based models where possible.

We will adopt a 'health in all policies' approach, as advocated by the World Health Organisation. Mindful of the importance of clean air for public health, we will increase air quality monitoring across Cambridgeshire.

## **4. Children and education**

We will campaign to keep state nursery schools open, to keep schools in local authority control, and for fair funding for Cambridgeshire schools. We will maintain free school meals for eligible children during school holidays, and work with schools and partners to widen the network of breakfast clubs in schools during term-time.

## **5. Transport**

We will focus on modal shift to encourage more residents out of their cars, along with infrastructure development, the encouragement of sustainable travel, and securing safe routes and connections for pedestrians and cyclists. We will seek to invest more in road, footway, and cycleway maintenance and routine gully clearance, and end the freeze on residents' parking schemes.

## **6. Finance, growth and commercial investment**

The new administration will immediately initiate a full review of Council finances, including major projects and the Council's Transformation Fund, and impose a temporary freeze on such schemes until the review has been completed.

The Council will pay the Real Living Wage for all its employees and work towards achieving Real Living Wage Foundation accreditation including all contractors, with monitoring to ensure continuous progress towards meeting it.

Brian and Maria look forward to serving the Babraham community and make ourselves available.

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