

# Council's £14m loan to plug Northstowe gap

GUIDED busway bosses have been forced to take out a £14 million loan after cash linked to the new town of Northstowe failed to materialise.

The funds were expected to be paid by the developers of the 10,000-home community by the time construction of the transport link between Cambridge and St Ives was complete.

But as that date approaches, work on the new town is yet to get underway.

Cllr Kilian Bourke, from the opposition Liberal Democrat group on Cambridgeshire County Council, said: "The Tories costed this project with money they hadn't got but hoped they

would receive; this was a gamble and it didn't pay off.

"Now taxpayers have been left picking up the bill for the interest on this loan."

Northstowe's developers have reaffirmed their commitment to the project.

Roy Pegram, the county council's cabinet member for growth, infrastructure and strategic planning, said: "Even before Government awarded funding for the busway a full breakdown of the costs was made clear.

"When Northstowe is built developers will contribute £14 million towards the scheme, but due to the delays, the council has borrowed in the short-term."