

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

DECEMBER 2020

CLLR SARAH CHEUNG JOHNSON & CLLR ALEX MALYON

A reminder that information about South Cambs response to coronavirus can be found on the regularly updated coronavirus pages on the SCDC website: <https://www.scams.gov.uk/coronavirus/>

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW FOR LONGSTANTON OAKINGTON AND NORTHSTOWE

To confirm the Full Council meeting at South Cambs District Council voted unanimously on the below recommendations from the Civic Affairs Committee:

- land north of the Guided Busway going to Willingham Parish Council
- land west of B1050 (Bloor and future Phase 3b) to be within the new Northstowe Parish
- green separation between Oakington and Northstowe to be retained
- Longstanton Conservation area and paddocks to be retained by Longstanton
- And that the District Council will write to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to seek re-alignment of district and county boundaries.

(this was Option A in the Community Governance Review consultation - with the below amendment:

- The boundary was amended as recommended by Longstanton Parish Council to the hedgerow as per the map below, meaning this section of the Home Farm estate would remain in Longstanton. The map for this new parish boundary of Northstowe is below.

A new Town council is to be created called Northstowe Town Council, with the Town Council to have 15 town Councillors, to be elected in May 2021 for a 1 year term, to bring it in line with parish council elections for the whole district to May 2022, for a 4 year term.

The Community Governance Review of Longstanton and Oakington and Westwick was prompted by the new development at Northstowe, in recognition that the development would alter the spread of housing across the parishes of Longstanton, and Oakington and Westwick. With three centres of population, the current parish boundaries were felt to no longer reflect a "natural settlement pattern".

The intention of the Community Governance Review was to ensure the local governance arrangements would reflect the identities and interests of the community in the area, and to bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and more effective and convenient delivery of local services.

Cllr Sarah Cheung-Johnson, District Councillor for Longstanton, and Oakington and Westwick, said: "I'm so grateful to all the local residents who took the time to reflect on what would work best for our local communities and took part in our consultations. There has been a fantastic amount of engagement and that's been absolutely key in informing the decisions that have been made about how our communities want to reflect their identities and ensure they are represented through local

governance. Thanks too to the dedicated Council staff who have led the Review process – with the added pressures of running a consultation during the pandemic – and have given up many evenings and weekends to ensure residents were able to share their concerns and ambitions throughout.

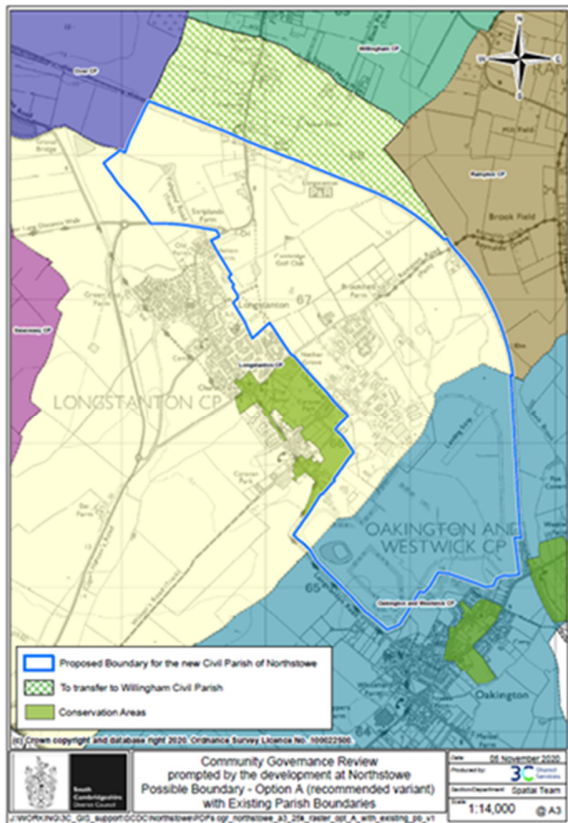
“But this is just the start of the process really. I’m now looking forward to supporting our existing parish councils as these changes take effect, as well as the new Northstowe Town Council as it establishes itself.”

Cllr Alex Malyon, District Councillor for Longstanton, and Oakington and Westwick, said: “I echo Sarah’s gratitude to everyone who took part in the Review, and especially to our hard-working parish councils who have invested such an enormous amount of time over recent years into Northstowe – from providing local insights during the planning process to supporting local residents during the Review. I am happy these new arrangements will make it possible for our local communities to have agency over their governance and look forward to working with the new Town Council and our excellent existing parish councils alike.

“We would like to encourage Northstowe residents to put themselves forward for the new Town Council. There will be loads of opportunities to find out more about what the role involves, and specific training and support for the new Councillors.”

Due to these changes, Longstanton and Willingham Parish Councils will also go to elections in May 2021, but for a 5-year term.

We remain District Councillors for all residents, including those who live north of the Guided Busway regardless of these changes.



NORTHSTOWE PLANNING UPDATES

Homes England released new Drone footage of Northstowe which can be seen here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aLSNaQfpQBo&t=2s&fbclid=IwAR3ta2-spuGCDw_cB5M-BLRGuphiWQ15Rs36jKuywoUcSIUtl-gMeKu-wgA

Wilson’s Road bridge - The non-motorised users bridge at the end of Wilson’s Road has gone in, there were videos so we will share a time lapse of this happening when we get this.

Pioneer Park – we are awaiting the legal documentation to be signed to enable the outdoor gym equipment to be installed at Pioneer Park.

MEETING WITH MARTIN BACON ACADEMY

We met with the Headteacher for the new Northstowe Special Needs school, the Martin Bacon Academy. They opened during the early part of lockdown in April and are already almost at full capacity, when they were only projected to be at 30% capacity at this point of their development. The school caters for children with complex needs as well as a small cohort of children with autism.

The government has provided no additional funding for schools to manage COVID-19, which has impacted all schools but especially Special Needs Schools, where COVID-19 measures require additional staff costs, the largest expense. Schools funding is outside of the remit of the District

Council, but Sarah and Alex will be supporting them for some community fundraising to get some older children's play equipment.

COTTENHAM CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC

We are extremely concerned about the plans to route construction traffic from the new Redrow Homes construction site via Oakington and have registered our concerns with the Planning Case Officer, Planning Team Lead for our patch and the Highways officer and have requested a meeting with them.

Unfortunately, like the PC, we were not consultees on the reserved matters application for this development though we did send our objections to the planner last year when this was submitted. We raised objections again about the traffic management plan. The initial outline planning application for this was approved in 2017, I do not know what objections were raised by councillors at that time, I was unable to find any submitted comments on the planning portal. Cottenham PC however argued strongly against construction traffic being routed through Cottenham.

The traffic management plan which currently routes traffic via Oakington was submitted as a discharge of conditions, which I understand is not subject to public consultation. The Highways Officer comments have recommended that the condition relating to the traffic management plan is not discharged by the planning officer as there is insufficient information. Unfortunately, they have not raised concerns about using the route via Oakington. As we do not believe that the condition has been discharged, we will continue to argue strongly against the proposed route.

DISTRICT WIDE UPDATES

COVID-19 19: HOW TESTS AND TESTING KITS FOR CORONAVIRUS WORK

On 23 November, the Government updated guidance for members of the public, patients, professionals, and industry on the different types of tests and testing kits for coronavirus to include information on about lateral flow tests. Lateral flow tests are rapid turnaround tests that can process coronavirus samples on site without the need for laboratory equipment, with most generating results in under half an hour.

Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-tests-and-testing-kits-for-coronavirus-covid-19-work>

PRINTABLE TIER POSTERS: MEDIUM, HIGH, AND VERY HIGH

The Government has published printable versions of a series of posters which can be used to communicate locally about the various tiers of restrictions (medium, high, and very high) which will apply in England from 2 December.

Materials: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-posters-medium-high-and-very-high>

BUSINESSES

(i) We have created a local business directory to help residents find out more about what local businesses are offering. Included in the listings will be details of Covid-secure measures that businesses have put in place, and information about current opening arrangements/online ordering/click and collect facilities. Businesses are able to add their details to the directory via the link above, and we will be promoting the directory from Wednesday onwards to help residents support local business in the run up to the festive period and beyond.

During December we will also be inviting businesses to tag us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram in their own posts with information about any festive offers or seasonal specials, so that we can help to share these promotions with our followers. Please do spread the word in your wards!

(ii) Businesses that were forced to close their doors during this month's national lockdown can now apply for new Government grants that are being distributed by the District Council.

With many unable to provide a face-to-face service, the new grants are designed to help get them through the month until they can begin trading again.

The grants, which are being administered by South Cambridgeshire District Council, are the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSO) and the Additional Restrictions Support Grant (ARSO). Any businesses who believe they are eligible can find information on how to apply, along with eligibility criteria, via the Council's website.

South Cambridgeshire District Council aims to support as many businesses as possible, either financially or in other ways, and so is also making available a third scheme, the Local Restrictions Discretionary Hardship Scheme (LRDHS), to support those facing extreme hardship but who are not eligible to claim under the first two schemes and/or have received limited state aid or financial assistance to date. Awarded at the discretion of the Council, application for this is via a written statement and supporting evidence. Further guidance on eligibility is also available via the above link.

The Government's LRSO scheme will provide grants of up to £3,000 to all rate-paying non-essential retail businesses, indoor and outdoor leisure facilities, entertainment venues and personal care concerns which were required to close by law on November 5 due to the nationally imposed lockdown restrictions.

The ARSO scheme is allocated at the Council's discretion and is for non-rate-paying companies which were either forced to close by law or, whilst still allowed to operate, have been severely impacted by the lockdown, such as those which form part of a supply chain to a closed business. Rate-paying businesses which can open but have also been severely impacted in this way are also eligible to apply for this grant.

The funding for the LRSO will be £1,334 for the four weeks of national lockdown for companies with a business rateable value on or below £15,000; £2,000 for those with rateable values between £15,001 to £51,000; and £3,000 for those with a rateable value of more than £51,000.

Businesses claiming under the ARSO scheme will receive the same payments based on rents or rateable values of below £15,000 per year for £1,334, from £15,001 to £50,999 per year for £2,000, and over £51,000 for £3000.

To be eligible, they must have been open as usual immediately prior to the second lockdown being imposed, and primarily providing 'in-person' (face-to-face) services to customers from their premises. They must also have been registered for business rates at their premises as of 4 November 2020.

Non-Essential Retail businesses include clothing stores, homeware stores, vehicle showrooms (other than for rental), betting shops, tailor, tobacco and vape shops, electronic goods and mobile phone shops, and market stalls selling non-essential goods.

Leisure and sports facilities include leisure centres, gyms, swimming pools, tennis and basketball courts, golf courses, fitness and dance studios, climbing walls, and archery, driving and shooting ranges.

Entertainment venues include theatres, concert halls, cinemas, museums, galleries, casinos, amusement arcades, bingo halls, bowling alleys, skating rinks, go-karting venues, soft play centres and areas, circuses, funfairs, zoos and other animal attractions, water parks and theme parks.

Personal care facilities include hair, beauty, tanning and nail salons, tattoo parlours and body and skin piercing services, spas, massage parlours.

Cafes, restaurants, pubs, bars and social clubs which have closed but have changed the way they operate to provide takeaway, or businesses offering click and collect or online services with delivery during the lockdown period, will still be counted as closed and eligible to apply for a Support Grant. Those which normally operate in that way however cannot apply as they are able to carry on trading as normal during the lockdown.

Other concerns which would normally have been in the closure list but have been able to remain open in some format due to a special exemption may also still be able to claim, such as hotels, hostels and guesthouses, community centres, halls, libraries and places of worship.

(iii) Are rural residents or businesses in your area looking for faster, more reliable broadband?

The COVID-19 pandemic has made us all more reliant on internet services. It is vital that people can keep connected when being asked to stay at home and work remotely where possible. But getting fast, reliable internet access can be a challenge – particularly when several people want to go online at the same time. The good news is that there's still time to apply for funding via the government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme to help residents with homes and businesses in our harder to reach rural areas install gigabit-capable, full fibre connections to their premises when part of a group scheme.

Gigabit-capable broadband connections offer the fastest and most reliable speeds available.

A group scheme means two or more premises need to want a better broadband connection installed by a supplier.

Groups of two or more rural premises with broadband speeds of less than 100Mbps can then combine 'vouchers' worth up to £1,500 per residential premise and up to £3,500 for each small to medium-sized business (SME) to support the cost of a registered supplier installing new gigabit-capable connections (to more than double current broadband speeds).

Vouchers do not give you actual money to spend - payment goes straight to the broadband supplier towards covering the installation costs.

Connecting Cambridgeshire has also secured extra top-up funding from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority to provide an additional top-up of £1,500 per premise to connect groups of rural properties getting less than 30Mbps (residential or business).

Premises that qualify for the top-up will have a total value of £3,000 per residential property and £5,000 per business awarded to the registered supplier.

Eligibility is checked via the postcode search on the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme website. If the postcode is eligible, results show suppliers in the area registered to the scheme. Contact them to discuss your needs, telling them you want to use the voucher scheme. They will then advise you and guide you through the process. This scheme only remains open for new applications until 31 March 2021 - or until the funding runs out (the supplier then has a year to complete the connection). Connecting Cambridgeshire cannot advise on exactly which supplier to use; however, the team can help to support residents with the application process.

Several rural communities are already planning to use the vouchers to improve their connectivity. Find out more about one particular village on our website. If you require further information, please contact the Connecting Cambridgeshire team on contact@connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk.

COUNCIL FINANCE: UPDATE FROM LEAD CABINET MEMBER

The council has brought its fraud investigation activities into a single function reporting to the Head of Finance. It will investigate both internal and external fraud and will work with internal audit. Meanwhile internal audit has been assisting with the delivery of Covid grants to businesses to mitigate the risk of fraud and error. We have more than doubled the number of parishes covered by the Mobile Warden Scheme to 46 out of 85. The scheme gives support to parish councils, community groups and Age UK to support older people to live independently and South Cambs' financial support has been secured to 2024. The council's Community Chest grant scheme remains open for formal community groups and not for profit organisations to obtain grants of up to £1,000 for specific projects that promote healthy and active communities, enable inclusive communities, develop skills, enhance the natural environment, meet local need and leave a legacy for the community or ensure equality of access. The scheme is not open parish councils except the smallest because they have the ability to raise a precept for such projects.

GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN

The findings of initial expert assessments of a range of broad spatial locations and growth level options have been published. These are interim findings which will be developed further as the Plan is

progressed, and a range of other studies are also being developed. No decisions have been made yet about what the eventual strategy will be.

Some of the initial findings include:

Under the standard method set by national government, the minimum number of new homes that would need to be built in the area is around 1,900 per year. This is about 180 more homes per year than we currently have in our development pipeline.

The case for planning for between 2,200-3,000 homes per year, to help reduce pressure on house prices and commuting into the area. This would mean finding sites for up to 1,250 extra homes per year.

Our evidence suggests there could be real challenges in achieving very high levels of house-building due to market forces, but that the minimum level set by the government's standard method will not support the current forecast growth in jobs in the area, potentially leading to higher house prices and more commuting in.

New and innovative modelling suggests that the carbon emissions associated with each new home in Greater Cambridge would be between 6-13 tonnes of CO₂ per year, depending on the type and location of the home. If ambitious zero carbon policies are brought in, this could reduce emissions to around 2-9 tonnes per home.

If ambitious zero carbon policies are brought in, almost no CO₂ would be produced by the building's energy use itself and less than 1 tonne of CO₂ per home would be generated by the carbon needed to build the home in the first place (this is calculated by spreading the upfront carbon emissions of the construction over the anticipated lifespan of the building). The rest of the carbon emissions are created by the travel patterns of the residents, which is why new homes in villages are likely to create over three times as much carbon as new homes in denser urban areas.

Water supply analysis shows that the minimum required level of growth could be plausibly achieved through adjustments to current water resource management plans, such as greater water efficiency, reducing leakages and shifting to more sustainable water sources. Medium or high growth levels would need new regional scale infrastructure, such as reservoirs and transfer schemes, and this will inform plans currently being developed by the water industry. Under normal means of provision, these will take time to implement, and this could be a 'deal breaker' that means high growth levels cannot be achieved within the period of the new Plan.

From a water management perspective, the best place to build new homes would be in new settlements, or to build large developments on the edge of Cambridge. This is because they can be designed from the outset for efficient and integrated water management, rather than having to 'bolt on' to existing infrastructure in the city or existing villages where there may be existing flood risk, wastewater and water quality constraints

About 19% of Greater Cambridge's land area is green or blue infrastructure, which means the network of natural and semi-natural spaces, including water bodies. This compares to farmland, which accounts for 74% of the land in Greater Cambridge. This figure has been developed through a detailed analysis which included asking community representatives to complete surveys about green spaces in their area.

There are many opportunities to improve and expand the green and blue infrastructure network, but the river corridors in particular would create the most benefits for biodiversity as well as communities.

Initial viability testing suggests that market-led development in Greater Cambridge should be able to pay for 40% affordable housing as part of the mix in each major development, but there is further work being developed to look at the costs of infrastructure and potential policies such as zero carbon measures.

For further details and the documentation linked to this stage of developing the plan, see

<https://www.gretercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/greater-cambridge-local-plan/where-to-build-and-how-much/>

MESSAGE FROM ANGLIAN WATER

As you will be aware, Anglian Water is proposing to relocate its Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant, to deliver a modern, carbon-efficient waste water treatment plant that will continue to provide vital services for the local community and the environment by recycling water and nutrients, and producing green energy, now and into the future. The relocation project will also enable the city and surrounding areas to grow sustainably, unlocking the development potential of the existing site and its surrounding area, which has great walking, cycling and public transport links making it a highly sustainable location for new homes.

South Cambs District Council and Cambridge City Council recently consulted on a draft Area Action Plan for this part of North East Cambridge, which could create 8,000 homes and 20,000 jobs over the next 20 years in a new low-carbon city district. We are working in partnership with them to achieve this vision by unlocking the current wastewater treatment plant site for redevelopment would help deliver 5,600 of those new homes.

We recently held our Phase One consultation on early proposals for the relocation project, from 8 July to 14 September. We were pleased to receive a great level of feedback considering a wide range of issues and we are grateful for the thousands of comments from residents and other stakeholders who took the time to engage with the process. Thank you to those of you who provided your feedback to the consultation. We note that responses often raised several specific points, which are all being carefully considered by the project team. The comments received are hugely valuable to our site selection and early design processes for the project.

On 25 November we will be publishing our Phase One consultation summary report which shares the feedback received and explains how we are using it to inform our site selection and design processes. Please find an advance copy of the report attached for reference. This will be made available to view and download on our project website (www.cwwtpr.com) and is also being delivered by Royal Mail to the circa 14,500 homes and businesses within our core consultation zone. We are taking the time to carefully consider all responses before we conclude our site selection process. These responses together with environmental, planning, operational and programme assessments will help us to choose the best-performing site to take forward into our Phase Two consultation next year, and we will announce the selection of the chosen site when we conclude our selection process in late January 2021.

We will also report all feedback received during this consultation, and the further two phases to follow, in full in our final Consultation Report. This will be published with our application for a Development Consent Order (DCO), planned for 2022/23.

NHS CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS AND HEALTHCARE WORKERS TO SUPPORT VACCINE ROLL OUT

The NHS in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are on the hunt for thousands of vaccinators and support staff to help protect millions of people from COVID-19 quickly when a safe and effective vaccine becomes available.

By bolstering its workforce the NHS will be able to offer the public potentially life-saving protection from coronavirus in a range of locations, focusing on the most at-risk groups first, whilst at the same time keeping A&Es, elective surgery, GPs and community services going.

For more details: https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/news/ccs-news/2020/11/24/your-nhs-needs-you-people-across-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-urged-to-join-covid-vaccine-team?fbclid=IwAR2CxFiCUhMShnfDIgg7jr7bQFoB9LVNhfkwFf62_p1RkdRoYA5Hb5VXxtA

VACCINE ADVICE FROM WILLINGHAM MEDICAL PRACTICE

The Willingham Medical Practice issued the following very helpful vaccine advice:

With so much news in the media surrounding a potential Coronavirus vaccine, our Local Medical Council have outlined some FAQs for our patients:

Headlines last week spoke of "Covid vaccine by Xmas from GPs". What does this mean for me?

Whilst we certainly would want to be involved in any vaccination campaign, we do not have any information ourselves yet and contrary to media reports no 'deals' have yet been done, but we expect more information soon.

But isn't it just like a flu jab?

No, not by a long stretch.

Flu jabs are delivered in their own little syringes and kept refrigerated. They can safely last in a vaccine fridge for several months. We can keep them and use them, either in dedicated flu clinics or opportunistically if we see you for something else. We can run the clinics a bit like a conveyor belt, as I am sure many of you will have experienced. We can get many people vaccinated in a very short period of time. People then leave the practice immediately. Once a year, job done.

So, what's different about a new Covid vaccine compared with the flu jab?

These new vaccines are not yet ready, and we do not know when they will be. They are completely different. They need to be stored frozen in special dry ice, colder than a home freezer (about -70°C). Surgeries do not have those freezers. So, they will be delivered whilst they are defrosting for use. However, they can only be stored in a vaccine fridge for a few days before expiring. They don't come in their own little syringes. We will have to carefully draw them up from a main vial, dilute and mix them for each individual which will probably take from start to finish about 20 minutes, needing two members of staff (one to draw up, one to check - this is established safe practise with these preparations to minimise error). Once the patient has received their Covid-jab they must wait for 15 minutes to ensure no serious reaction -these vaccines are brand new, and whilst there is a huge regulatory framework to ensure their safety, we will have to take extra care. This will be difficult as we have to maintain social distancing and we don't know how quickly these clinics will take place. It will be nowhere near as quick as a flu clinic.

Will this be at my local GP surgery?

To begin with, NHS England thinks that areas will have one central Covid-jab centre. This might be in a local practice. It might be yours, it might not. You may have to travel. How the chosen centre will continue to look after its patients ongoing and urgent health needs, we do not yet know. No details of those plans have been shared yet.

Is it just one jab?

No. You will need two. They will be 3-4 weeks apart, but you must not have had any other vaccinations in the previous week.

How many patients will get it the vaccine when it is ready?

Government says it wants 40 million people vaccinated (that is 80 million appointments). Putting that into context, every year there are 40 million A&E attendances and 360 million GP appointments. This is going to take a long time. There are no spare GPs or practice nurses. We don't yet know how we are going to plan for this on top of what we are doing now - managing hundreds of acute and chronic patients every day: on the phone, over video and being brought into the surgery by invitation.

Will it be available by Christmas?

No one knows. But if it is, there will be a very small number of doses and we think the Government might suggest protecting Care Home residents first.

Whatever you read in the paper or online, do not forget - this is going to be very difficult. We need to make sure there is a safe system and a safe vaccine first.

Even when it comes, it will not prevent Covid, it will only make its effects milder. So please bear with us - we are in the dark too.

And there is still every reason to think 'Hands, Space, Safe' for a long time to come.

COUNCILLORS UPDATES

Monthly email newsletter - with updates on local news as well as wider district issues which will impact us all. To sign up please go to: https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/email_signup_longstanton

(Note to help us manage GDPR it is easier for us to host from the LibDems webpage, but we absolutely promise this link will NOT subscribe you to LibDem news)

For all the latest news & updates so far please go to: https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/longstanton_news

For those on social media we have a very active Facebook group covering the whole ward here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2066298150052161/>

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about these, or any other matters.

Alex Malyon and Sarah Cheung Johnson

District Councillors for Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe

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