

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

NOVEMBER 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

The Civic Affairs committee have proposed that a New Town Council be created for Northstowe:

- 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

(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.

Our statement for the Civic Affairs Committee (which neither Alex nor Sarah sit on) is below:

We would like to start by thanking the officers for their incredible hard work throughout the community governance review – Clare Gibbons, formerly Liz Davy and latterly Ellen Bridges. It has been a long process, with the added pressures of running a consultation during the pandemic and they have given up many of their evenings and weekends to ensure residents had an opportunity to engage fully with the process. This has raised many strong feelings in our communities which they have dealt with professionalism at all times – they have absolutely been a credit to this council. Their hard work has been borne out in the number of responses we have had to the consultation.

We would like to recommend, as local members, that the committee propose that Option A is taken forward. The was the option was favoured by both Oakington and Longstanton Parish Councils. While we understand that in both stages of the consultation there was support for option C from Longstanton residents, it was clear that there was significant opposition to this from Northstowe residents, in particular those who live to the west of the B1050. They feel strongly that they are residents of Northstowe and would like to be members of a newly created Northstowe parish.

Further, with plans for Northstowe Phase 3b and the Endurance and Digital park developments, adding an additional 1000 or more Northstowe homes and 2400+ residents to Longstanton Parish would

significantly impact the character of the village and potentially lead to the need for warding of the Parish to allow effective representation.

Unfortunately, this does mean that residents north of the busway would become part of the Willingham parish. We understand the strength of feeling from some residents living North of the guided busway, who feel a strong connection to Longstanton, and we are sorry that this is a change they will not want. However, the circumstances of a growing Northstowe and the strong support for development of separate Northstowe Parish mean, we believe, that Option A is the best compromise for all communities involved.

For Oakington residents, the main issue throughout the consultation has been the green separation land between Oakington and Northstowe. We would support the view of Oakington Parish Council and residents that this land should remain within Oakington Parish boundaries. We appreciate that for ease of administration, Homes England would like this land to be within a future Northstowe parish, but we are confident that any management arrangements could easily be designed to accommodate this land remaining in Oakington Parish. Having the green separation land within the Oakington parish would give the community reassurance that this separation would be maintained and that they would have a say in how it was managed. Northstowe developers must work with all Parish and potential new council's either way and do not believe having all Northstowe development within one parish hinders that.

For the same reasons we would also like the committee to give serious consideration to the views of Longstanton Parish, also strongly argued for by a number of Longstanton residents, that the boundary as proposed in Option A is amended from the boundary at the B1050 Over Road to the historic field boundary, to allow the Home Farm land to remain within Longstanton Parish and support their comments on the boundaries along the paddocks remaining within Longstanton, which would be strongly opposed by Longstanton residents. We reject Homes England proposed boundary lines on page 50 - on top of the above comments - they have excluded Longstanton Park & Ride as well as Digital and Endurance parks which makes it clear their submission is driven primarily by their own development and now on behalf of future residents of Northstowe.

For items 7 d-g of the agenda our views are the following:

d - yes to creating polling districts

e - to name Northstowe Town Council, and given the speedy growth in resident numbers and number of planning applications and development work ongoing, that we start with 15 members

f - no wards necessary yet although when phases 2/3 have significant enough numbers of residents for this to be reviewed

g - date of arrangement to begin 2021, with a 1-year term to 2022 and then move to be re-elected in line with other parish councils

Full agenda pack is here: <https://scambsmoderngov.co.uk/.../Public%20reports...>

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.

This recommendation will go to Full Council in November to be voted on by Councillors.

NORTHSTOWE PLANNING UPDATES

Kingfisher Pond – As per discussion at the last Longstanton Parish Council, we await HR Wallingford’s report before any formal work on this is done. However, South Cambs Planner for Phase 1, South Cambs Ecology officer and Northstowe resident Hugh Venables met with Alex to discuss what could be done with the Kingfisher Pond going forwards.

Pioneer Park – named by Northstowe residents as they describe themselves as pioneers – was formally opened. This is large formal park next to the school and contains a play area as well as a MUGA. The slope on the MUGA has been questioned by residents but this is as per planning documents, to allow adequate drainage at 1:100 slope. It is intended for informal kickabouts – formal sports pitches for competitive games will be delivered.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Following the MP’s vote not to extend Free School Meals to vulnerable children during school holidays during the crisis period caused by the pandemic, we contacted our local schools to understand how many children were eligible for the scheme and what we could do to assist. As part of this, we are raising funds to provide free meals during the holidays for children in our schools in Longstanton, Oakington & Westwick, Northstowe and Over.

Like many of you we were dismayed by the decision by the government not to back Marcus Rashford’s campaign to support families and feed children during the school holidays. People in our community have already been asking us how they can help or kindly offered to donate towards the cost of providing meals, so we have set up this fundraiser so people can contribute.

We are raising funds for the 100+ children in our local schools who normally receive free school meals during term time. We want to fund meals through until the Easter holidays next year. We have been in touch with local headteachers and we will be working with the schools to make sure that the money gets to the families who need it.

Please note any additional funds raised over our target will be used towards running this scheme over future school holidays as needed.

If there is a change in Government policy on this, which we will also continue to campaign for, then all money raised will be donated to our local Foodbanks.

You can donate by following the link to the GoFundMe page:

https://www.gofundme.com/f/free-school-meals-for-school-holidays?d=:signedDonationId&utm_medium=email&utm_source=product&utm_campaign=p_email_m_pd-5332-donation-receipt-adyen&utm_content=internal

POLICE CUTS

Police cuts have been announced by Cambridgeshire’s Police Chief Constable.

Changes must be made in a bid to save £1.7m next year. Chief Constable Nick Dean said the force will receive a proportion of the 20,000 extra police officers promised by the government but Cambridgeshire "also needs to make considerable cost savings to avoid using financial reserves".

Public facing proposed changes include:

- Reduction of PCSOs from 80 to 40 but with the guarantee of at least one in "every single neighbourhood".
- Removal of the community safety team, resulting in the reduction of six community safety officer posts across the force
- Closure of nine enquiry offices (NOT the police stations) with the promise of an appointment-based service in each area to enable the public to speak with an officer.

Sergeant Emma Hilson, from our local policing team provided this statement:

"Dear Residents, I am conscious a number of you have made contact regarding Wednesday's press release detailing the proposed changes to Neighbourhoods Policing across Cambridgeshire in the coming months.

Many of you are asking "Why?" Or "What about our communities?".... Which is completely understandable.

It will be tempting to pick up the phone to your local officer to question them about these very difficult decisions. I would like to make a small plea, if I may, that you spare a thought for the individual themselves before you pose these questions to them. Not only are they dealing with all the emotive matters that naturally come with the role, they are now considering the personal impact of Wednesday's news. If you have direct questions that you wish to ask then please contact myself or one of the other Neighbourhoods supervisors, and we will answer your query or direct you to the Neighbourhoods change team accordingly.

Please be reassured that nothing has changed for our communities since this news broke on Wednesday. On Thursday, the team did as they always do after a tough set of circumstances... they talked it through, brushed themselves off, put their hats back on got back out into your communities. They are still out there policing our area in the same way that they did last week, last month and last year, with the same level of commitment to you all as they have always had.

There will be transition period in the future as we manage the staffing changes across the area. However in the meantime please help us to support your communities. We cannot police without your help. In order to tackle the issues that are causing you the most concern we still need information direct from you via our main reporting channels 101 or www.Cambs.police.uk/report There are many local initiatives run and supported by Cambridgeshire police that help us keep your communities safer places to be... Speed watch, HGVwatch, safer places schemes, neighbourhood watch to name but a few. Please do not be afraid to ask about these schemes.

Finally, as a team we have been overwhelmed with the support from the local communities particularly during the pandemic. From us to you - Thank you for your continued encouragement."

Emma

Sergeant 0964 Emma Hilson

South Cambridgeshire Neighbourhoods Policing Team

LONGSTANTON FLY-TIPPING

Work on prosecution is ongoing, we are currently well within the timelines for this

4 VICARAGE ROAD, OAKINGTON

Area manager for Oakington visited the site and spoke at length to residents – thank you to those who took the time to speak to him. However, his response is not what we or the community wanted:

Following my site visit to Vicarage Close I have discussed your request in more detail with colleagues, including Nigel Blazeby (Head of Development Management). Whilst we appreciate the degree of local concern within Vicarage Close regarding the state of the property and garden, we do not consider that it adversely affects the amenity of the area to the extent that a S215 notice is required. As discussed, my interpretation of Councils' use of these powers generally in domestic circumstances is where, for example, waste / fly tipping or construction waste, abandoned furniture, rubble, abandoned vehicles, damaged facias, crumbling brick etc are readily apparent. The state of the fencing around the property is admittedly in poor condition, but this is more readily apparent from the rear garden area where I would normally regard this as a civil matter between property owners and not a wider public amenity matter as experienced from the Close. Having looked at the property, whilst it is in need of some maintenance, including the clearing of guttering and re-staining of the front fascia etc, it does not appear derelict; most of the windows, brickwork and roofing appear in sound condition. My advice would be for residents to persist in their engagement with Bush, particularly if the house is to be put up for sale shortly, to get the garden at the very least cut back.

CITIZENS ADVICE

Citizens Advice Bureau were until Covid, running an outreach at Willingham and Longstanton GP they had to stop this, but advice can be accessed virtually or over the phone. This can be done via the GP surgery, or directly via email to northstowe.coadvice@cambridge.cab.org.uk or by going online via this link: www.willinghammedicalpractice.nhs.uk/news.aspx?pr=D81084

DISTRICT WIDE UPDATES

BRIEF COVID UPDATE

BUSINESS SUPPORT

South Cambs are preparing for the Local Restriction Support Grants and Discretionary Grants and the Business Support Team is working closely with the Business Rates and Policy teams to deliver and administer these. However, we are waiting on further detail from Central Government on both schemes, and we cannot process anything until we have this. We are already updating web pages (<https://www.scams.gov.uk/business/coronavirus-information-for-businesses/>) and have sent out the business newsletter today with the latest info for business. We will keep everything up to date over coming days and weeks. Please direct business grant queries to our open for business inbox at openforbusiness@scams.gov.uk

We have already had a flurry of calls and emails from very anxious businesses asking for further financial support and/or clarification on whether they need to shut down and what they are eligible for.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

In communities, we have five patch leads, including one from Housing and one from Benefits. Again, this was a lesson we learnt from the last lockdown, so we have those skills in the team supporting community groups. This already means we can link up better with benefits to ensure we are filling all the gaps for immediate support whilst applications for grants can be processed.

The best news this time is we have our network of community groups in place. They are willing and able to support people and we have been able to work with them to provide small upfront grants. This will mean local communities can step in and help with emergency food supplies. The aim of this is to be more responsive and effective. We had an amazing SCDC food bank last time, but this is something groups can now take on as they have the structures in place. For any queries to the team, please use: duty.communities@scambs.gov.uk

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PREPARATIONS

The Government has (on 3 November) updated the guidance on preparations for Remembrance Sunday with information for councils in England on how to ensure those hosting local Remembrance events can do so safely.

Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-preparations-for-remembrance-sunday>

GREEN ELECTRIC WASTE VEHICLE

Bin collections in South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City are going state-of-the-art green as the two Councils covering the area take delivery of their very first all-electric bin lorry.

Now out around the streets on bin collection days, the lorry is the first all-electric addition to the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service – a partnership between South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils. The Dennis Eagle 'eCollect' is now part of the Shared Waste Service's fleet and being used to collect residents' recycling.

It marks the start of a drive to replace all the waste service's collection lorries with electric or hydrogen vehicles as their existing trucks come to the end of their working lives.

The Shared Waste Service is one of the first waste collection services nationally to invest in green vehicles which have zero emissions and contribute to better air quality when out on the road.

The new fully electric Dennis Eagle 'eCollect' has five specially designed battery packs storing 300kWh of energy and capable of supplying 200kW of power to electric motors, making it substantially quieter than existing bin collection vehicles. Fully loaded it will weigh around 26 tonnes and will typically take around seven to eight hours to recharge, easily completing a full day of collection rounds and returning to the depot with charge remaining in the battery.

The new vehicle has cost around £400,000 and while this is more than a traditional diesel bin collection lorry, the Councils expect the whole-life cost to be at the very least the same – if not less – than a diesel vehicle due to reduced servicing, fuel and general running costs.

Note – Green Bin collections will carry on as usual during Lockdown

MANAGING HOUSEHOLD WASTE AND RECYCLING CENTRES

Household Waste and Recycling Centres (HWRCs) should remain open in line with the guidance updated last month. The key principle of this guidance is to protect human health while maintaining safe systems of working.

This non-statutory guidance is to help local authorities keep HWRCs open throughout Covid restrictions. It sets out issues for local authorities to consider to support the operation of HWRCs in line with public health requirements. This guidance might be amended from time to time to align with other government guidance on coronavirus.

Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-to-local-authorities-on-prioritising-waste-collections/managing-household-waste-and-recycling-centres-hwrCs-in-england-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic>

MESSAGE TO THE HOUSING INDUSTRY ON CONTINUING TO WORK SAFELY

The Housing Secretary, Executive Chairman of the Home Builders Federation and Chief Executive of the Federation of Master Builders have written to the housing industry to make clear that house building – and its supply chains that support it – should continue working securely.

The Government is clear that work can continue if this is done in line with public health guidance.

Correspondence: <https://bit.ly/3kUsPfn>

COUNCILLOR 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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