

CLLR FIROUZ THOMPSON

AT THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Early Years providers

Earlier this year, I presented a motion to CCC Full Council, Childcare in Domestic Premises, prompted by my experiences during the Phase 1 Northstowe development. The motion gained unanimous approval from the Council. Follow-up motions were taken by LibDem Councillors Natalie Warren-Green to South Cambs District Council and Ingrid Flaubert to Cambridge City Council, both of which were also unanimously supported.

These motions tackled the issue of house builders imposing restrictive covenants on their properties, which prohibited residents from running home-based businesses, including childcare services. Our innovative approach led to a round table discussion with the County Education Officer, the Minister of Children and various house builders. The Telegraph recognised our efforts as pioneering, and soon after, the government took action. On 21 August, the children's minister wrote to developers, social landlords, and housing associations, urging them to allow childminders to operate from their properties. This marks a significant local achievement, with our influence extending to national policy.

I remain committed to advancing this cause to increase the number of childminders. Accessible childcare in our community is vital. Unfortunately, Northstowe recently lost its only childminder.

If you know of anyone considering becoming a childminder, please reach out. There is a £600 grant available to assist with setup costs, and you won't have to repay it. <https://tinyurl.com/4gy5fxcB>.

Anti-racism Charter

Chief Executive, Stephen Moir was a guest speaker at the UNISON Eastern webinar on Monday 14 August, where he discussed the implementation of the Anti-Racism charter. The council signed the Charter in May 2022, becoming the first upper tier local authority to do so.

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION (COSMIC)

Cambridgeshire Priorities Capital Fund

This fund consists of £1.5M left over from the previous administration's £5M Communities Capital Fund. £1M will be made available for community capital projects to improve or upgrade community buildings and assets, while supporting the council to achieve at least three of its strategic ambitions.

- Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes.
- Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable.
- Health inequalities are reduced.
- People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs.
- People are helped out of poverty and income inequality.
- Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised.
- Children and young people have opportunities to thrive.

The fund will open for a single round of applications during the 2023/24 financial year, with an upper bid limit of £40,000. Cambridgeshire based voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations will be

eligible to apply, as will district, town and parish councils, and businesses if they can evidence the public benefit of their project.

The remaining £0.5M will be reserved for the County Council's own community based assets, where this will support the council's commitment to decentralisation.

Stage 1: Expression of Interest: Applicants must submit basic information about their organisation, local community and the project. This is so we can determine eligibility. All Expressions of Interest must be received by **24 September 2023**.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Approval given for new special free schools

The Government has given the go-ahead for Cambridgeshire County Council to establish two new special free schools in the county. One is a 210-place, multiple needs school in March and the other a 60-place school in Gamlingay for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

The next stage in the process is to invite multi-academy trusts to apply to run the new schools.

[Approval given for new special free schools - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Flood Group conference

Following the success of last year's first Flood Group Conference at Alconbury Weald, the 2023 Conference will take place on **Thursday 21 September in St Ives**. The County Council's Community Flood Action Programme has been shortlisted for a national award.

Free home efficiency service launches

Heat Pumps for Friday Bridge is a new free service that, in partnership with the Council, is offering residents of Friday Bridge advice and support to help them improve the efficiency of their home heating systems and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by installing a heat pump.

Council leads plans to transform Cambridgeshire's local energy system

New plans to transform Cambridgeshire's local energy system will cut carbon emissions and build energy security.

With excessive heat being experienced across Europe, the impacts of climate change are becoming more apparent. Here in Cambridgeshire, over 40% of our greenhouse gas emissions are directly linked to burning fossil fuels for energy: using gas to warm homes, putting petrol or diesel in cars, or for generating power for us to use at home, work or to create the things we buy.

Developing a Local Area Energy Plan is anticipated to help the County get ahead of the curve on the route to a greener society and attract investment into a future cleaner energy system.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Sustainable Travel Zone / Congestion Charge update

On 25 August, The Greater Cambridge Partnership has published its [Assembly Papers](#) which includes [Making Connections](#). This will be discussed as a stand-alone item at a special Highways and Transport Committee meeting on Wednesday 11 October. The special Highways and Transport committee will be held in public at the council's New Shire Hall headquarters, and also live streamed on the council's [YouTube channel](#).

Key amendments include:

- peak time only charging – with six hours charge time instead of 12
- 50 free days for car users

- 50 per cent discount for locally owned SMEs
- low-income discounts
- further hospital exemptions
- no charge for motorcyclists.

1 September: A statement from the Joint Administration at Cambridgeshire County Council post-publication of the Greater Cambridge Partnership's updated Sustainable Travel Zone proposals:

"The Joint Administration that leads the County Council shares the aims of improving public transport provision across Cambridgeshire and the quality of the environment. We have always recognised the high levels of public concern about elements of the Making Connections proposals. This is why the results of the GCP consultation and listening to the feedback from the public, businesses and representative groups will guide our future decision-making.

"It is important that County Councillors have the time to properly debate and scrutinise the best way forward, in the light of the responses to the public consultation. We will continue to do that conscientiously and in a constructive manner. As a ruling administration, we remain committed to working together within the Council, and with partner organisations, to achieve the objective of better public transport in a way that attracts public support."

Cambridgeshire Matters Newsletter

Cambridgeshire Matters is Cambridgeshire County Council's monthly newsletter which aims to share good news, highlights and updates from across Cambridgeshire to help our network of district, city and community members stay informed.

Find out about the great work that is taking place to support everyone in the county.

[Cambridgeshire Matters - July 2023 \(govdelivery.com\)](https://govdelivery.com/newsletters/cambridgeshire-matters-july-2023)

[Cambridgeshire Matters - August 2023 \(govdelivery.com\)](https://govdelivery.com/newsletters/cambridgeshire-matters-august-2023)

MEETINGS ATTENDED and COMMUNITY WORK 6 July to 3 September 2023

Local meetings:

SARW Comms meeting (7 July), Highways Quarterly meeting with Oakington & Westwick and Over Parish Councils (7 July), NSC Headteacher (10 July), Oakington & Westwick Parish Council meeting (10 July), Northstowe Community Forum (12 July), SARW Comms meeting (14 July), Northstowe Temporary Community Centre opening (17 July), Northstowe Early Years meeting (19 July), SARW Comms meeting (21 and 28 July), Starship Robots (14 Aug),

Council meetings:

National Highways (13 July), Environment & Green Investment Committee – Confidential section (14 July), NSC meeting (14 July), Full Council (18 July), Monthly Northstowe catchup – Highways Development (19 July), South Cambs Community team (20 July), Personal Safety Training (27 July), Highways catch up (31 July), Childminder Recruitment (14 Aug), South Cambs Community team (14 Aug), Highways meeting in Over (16 Aug), Heritage meeting (18 Aug)

Community work:

Urban Splash meeting (17 Aug)

Parish/Town Council monthly reports, Column write ups within Northstowe News, Longstanton Life (currently on hold) and Oakington & Westwick Journal, Northstowe Town Council Market Working Group – arranging food trucks, promoting on social media and volunteering, Northstowe Foodies, Arranging Food Pantry beside the Mobile Library (2nd Friday of the month).

Private case work:

Most Councillors will have private case work that they are dealing with, details of which cannot be shared due to GDPR – current themes are Bar Hill Asylum Seekers, Early Years, ASB, Youth, Potholes.

WARD NEWS

HIGHWAYS

New Local Team

Local Highways Officer: Neal Stephens

Local Highways Officer: Aaron Boddington

Quarterly Highways meetings

Dates currently in the diary are Friday 6 October 2023 and Friday 5 January 2024.

South Access Road West (SARW)

The Wilson's Road bridleway diversion order is in place, but it cannot be completed until the S38/S278 agreement for the dedication of the new Bridleway route and opening of the Wilsons bridge infrastructure is in place. The documentation will also transfer the freehold title of land to CCC. Draft for this agreement is what is holding up the current opening of the SARW as well as the lighting in terms of illumination/angle of the column heads at the second roundabout, these need to be checked in the evening to ensure that the brightness does not affect The Drift residents in Oakington. The inspection will be with Arcadis/Sisk/Balfour Beatty Living Places. I am not certain that this has yet taken place.

On 24 August, I was informed that Homes England will look to put a Letter of Undertaking in place to maintain the PRow in advance of the s38 agreement being completed, as the agreement may take a while.

LONGSTANTON Incl. B1050 Surface Treatments

All the works on the below roads are now completed on

- B1050 Old Hattons Road, Longstanton
- B1050 Bypass, Longstanton
- Hattons Road, Longstanton *
- Home Farm Road, Longstanton *
- School Lane, Longstanton *

* Please note: Surface Dressing is a grey granite stone and Highways had asked for the surface dressing to have a Lockchip treatment sprayed on to, which would have sealed in the loose chippings and coloured the grey surface black (much like B1050 dressing). This treatment has to be carried out 48 hours after the dressing itself, and unfortunately the contractor couldn't resource this due to the change in program dates that were requested with all the works taking place in the Longstanton/Swavesey area. The loose chippings were soon after cleared.

STARSHIP ROBOTS – food delivery from Longstanton Co-op

We at County and SCDC have been working with Starship Robots to start the food delivery from Longstanton Coop to Longstanton and Northstowe, following the success of the pilots in Cambourne and Cambridge City. We have spent the last month helping Starship with SCDC to map roads, unfortunately some roads in both Longstanton and all of Northstowe are unadopted this will mean that contracts will need to be put in place with L&Q and House Builders – a contract is in place with County Highways. The current proposal is to have the robots waiting beside the Co-op on the Nelson Crescent Green – if this area is confirmed, Starship Robots will be writing to Longstanton Parish Council to ask for permission. We believe the introduction of the Robots will be a great addition to the community and will help with the parking in and around the Coop.

Timings are currently TBC, nearer the time of launch there will be a demonstration for the local Councillors and the community.

LONGSTANTON

- High Street overgrowth of hedges onto footpath – We are liaising with Sab and CCC have written to nos. 1, 2 and 4 Ladywalk to cut back their hedges within the boundaries. We have also asked for a quote from Brookfield Groundcare in the hopes that someone local would take on the work locally and they will be cut back in good time every year.
- Trenches – there are 2 trenches on the High Street (by Mitchcroft Road and Telephone Box) and 1 on School Lane that require attention, these have been raised with the Maintenance Manager and may require closure of the High Street, which will bring in costs outside of the Local Highways Officer's budget.

NORTHSTOWE

- Northstowe Delivery Group meeting was cancelled in August and next meeting will be in December.
- I volunteered at the Northstowe Running Festival on Sunday 2 September which brought some 600 runners to Northstowe to compete in Half Marathon, 10k, 5k and Family Run, it was a great day for all involved and with my Northstowe Foodies hat on, I brought 8 drinks/food trucks for the occasion.

OAKINGTON AND WESTWICK

- Transport to Impington Village College for September 2024 – following my replies to the parent's group which were shared with the Parish Council, I have had no further queries. I understand that one parent to date who appealed has had success in acquiring a seat on the bus for their child, I am only aware of this as the parent has copied me in their correspondence with County Education Team.
- Little Flames nursery is set to open their doors in Oakington on 4 September and we understand that everything is in place, and they have passed the Ofsted Inspection. Will be great to have the new edition of our community and look forward to working with them to grow their business.

OVER

- GCP St Ives Greenway – the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Joint Assembly at its 7th September meeting will be discussing the Over Spur as part of proposals to deliver it as a Phase 2 scheme, as opposed to a Phase 1 scheme which would be delivered in 2025. This means that, if agreement is reached by the GCP Joint Assembly and Executive Board, the Over Spur would be put forward for delivery at a later date if funding is made available to progress the scheme. The decision to present the recommendation to the Joint Assembly and Executive Board was taken after a cost review of GCP projects demonstrated the pressure that inflation is having on the affordability of schemes, and the value for money impact that each scheme is offering. Further information on the scheme assessment is set out in the papers that are now available from the GCP website (as Agenda Item 7), please see the link attached:
https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccs_live/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/2122/Committee/36/SelectedTab/Documents/Default.aspx

Further information on the Over Greenway Spur is available from the attached link: [GCP St Ives Greenway: Over and Fen Drayton | Consult Cambridgeshire \(engagemthq.com\)](https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/engagemthq/over-and-fen-drayton-greenway)

COUNCILS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND KEY GOVERNMENT FUNDED ORGANISATIONS

If you have a problem or concern do not worry too much about who can solve it just ask the question and we will endeavour to signpost to the right person. The organisational structure of Cambridgeshire is complex, but it is important to identify where responsibility lies.

<p>County Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Education, Transport, Highways, Heritage, Social care, Libraries, Trading standards, - Waste management, Maintaining their estate.</p> <p>Some of these services are shared between Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council but any concerns should be directed to the county council.</p>
<p>District Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Council tax payments and benefits, Household bin collections, Housing and housing benefits, Council leisure facilities, Environmental health, Residential planning.</p>
<p>Parish/ Town Council</p> <p>Responsibilities: Looking after community buildings, Open spaces, Allotments, Play Areas, Bus shelters.</p>
<p>Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)</p> <p>'The local delivery body for a City Deal with central Government worth up to £500 million over 15 years, to vital improvements in infrastructure (decarbonising transport), supporting and accelerating the creation of 44,000 new jobs, 33,500 new homes and 420 additional apprenticeships.'</p> <p>Partnership between Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, University of Cambridge.</p>
<p>The Combined Authority, Cambridge and Peterborough, our elected Mayor</p> <p>'A combined authority (CA) is a legal body set up using national legislation that enables a group of two or more councils to collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries.'</p> <p>What our mayor does – Business support, skills, housing, transport, environment, international, digital connectivity, resilience, research, and strategy. New homes.</p>
<p>Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridge and Peterborough</p> <p>To support and challenge the Chief Constable to provide effective and efficient policing services for the area.</p>
<p>Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority</p> <p>The Fire Authority is the governing body responsible for delivering a fire and rescue service to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It is made up of Cambridgeshire County Councillors and Peterborough City Councillors.</p>

CONTACT DETAILS

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the above, or any other matters.

Firouz Thompson, County Councillor for Longstanton, Northstowe, Over and Oakington & Westwick
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For those on social media we have highly active Facebook groups:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2066298150052161/> - Longstanton, Oakington and Northstowe

<https://www.facebook.com/libdems3rdMay18> - Over & Willingham