

CLLR FIROUZ THOMPSON

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the County Council took place on Tuesday 10 May. Cllrs Stephen Ferguson and Sebastian Kindersley were re-elected as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. A number of motions for debate were agreed, covering:

- tracking of progress of previous council motions
- school transport policies for special educational needs and disabilities
- street planters and green bus stops
- increasing recycling.

STRATEGY & RESOURCES

Senior leadership review The Chief Executive has launched a period of internal consultation on his proposals for reorganisation of the council's senior staffing structure. He states that the proposals 'will provide the Council with a clear and sustainable leadership structure, teams that are aligned and sit well together and are positioned to tackle the challenges we face, as well as providing the compassionate and inclusive leadership that this the organisation both needs and deserves'.

Anti-racism charter Cambridgeshire County Council is the first upper-tier local authority in the country to sign up to Unison's Anti-Racism Charter. <https://eastern.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/sites/7/2022/02/Anti-racism-charter.pdf>

ADULTS & HEALTH

Health & Wellbeing Board: The Council has been grappling with the national changes in health decision-making structures brought about by the introduction of Integrated Care Systems. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have chosen to address this by creating a joint Health & Wellbeing Board to replace the previous separate Cambridgeshire Board and Peterborough Board, and a joint Integrated Care Partnership, with mostly overlapping membership and with shared agendas.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Supermarket Vouchers: over 20,000 supermarket vouchers have been sent to families in Cambridgeshire affected by the pandemic and the rising cost of living. The vouchers were automatically sent to eligible families on 27 May in time for the May half term.

The County Council's Joint Administration agreed to finance the vouchers regardless of Government funding until the February 2023 half term. A total of 21,322 vouchers – each valued at £15 for the week - were distributed to eligible children and young people across the county who met agreed criteria. The voucher does not need to be used in a single shopping trip and once claimed will last for at least a year.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Green Investment Advisory Group: The Council's Green Investment Advisory Group—a group of councillors maintaining an overview of the Council's energy projects—has had its remit expanded to include considering the environmental impact of the Council's utilities procurements such as electricity, gas, and water.

New Heritage Centre for Northstowe under way: A new Northstowe Heritage Centre will showcase discoveries made during the archaeological works from the A14 upgrade and Northstowe New Town project. The centre, which is scheduled to open in October, will be adjacent to the new regional offices of Homes England and will feature local collections, especially those relating to RAF Oakington as most of Northstowe is built on the site of the former air base. The project is a joint collaboration between Homes England,

Cambridgeshire County Council and National Highways and will benefit residents of Northstowe, Longstanton, Oakington & Westwick and surrounding areas.

Designed as a venue for school visits, on-site archaeological activities and major heritage presentations, the Heritage Centre will have a distinct identity, influenced by local architecture and heritage, as well as the history of Northstowe and the surrounding area. The Centre will feature finds and information from the ancient Romans to the present day, including remains from the Roman town at Northstowe, the Anglo-Saxon villages along the A14 and evidence of woolly rhinoceros. It will also, house a flexible display area plus an outdoor space for activities and groups. The core design values of Northstowe - a new town built with a focus on environmental sustainability – will be reflected in the design of the Centre. Designed by Proctor & Matthews Architects, the modular building will be constructed from shipping containers using off site sustainable methods of construction, such as innovative prefabrication techniques and passive environmental sustainability measures. It may be relocated at a later date. Works are due to begin on site in June and finish in the autumn (2022).

Food delivery robots: Food delivery robots are taking to the streets of Cambourne as part of a pilot between Cambridgeshire County Council and Starship Technologies. Twelve thousand residents will benefit from quick deliveries from their local Co-op by a fleet of Starship' s robots. The project began on 17 May and is part of the Council's environmental agenda to reduce the number of short car journeys and improve air quality.

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY AND INCLUSION (CoSMIC)

Household Support Fund: support for people who are struggling to pay for essential items, food and utility bills will continue in Cambridgeshire thanks to an extension of the Household Support Fund. In March the Government announced the extension of the scheme, which initially ran between November and March, awarding Cambridgeshire an additional £3.58million to support children, families and pensioners.

Government guidance for this round is slightly different, so as a result, the County Council will be offering the following schemes using the funding:

- £1.96m for the provision of food vouchers with a value of £15 per child per week, for the 2022 May half term and summer holidays. Schools and childcare settings, including childminders, will be contacted directly and eligible parents will be notified.
- £1.2m to support households that include a person who has reached state pension age (66) by 30 September 2022 and are experiencing financial hardship in line with the requirements of the scheme.
- A boost for other services supporting those most in need

The County Council is partnering with Age UK to provide financial support for those of state pension age who are in financial need. People will also be offered wider support, such as access to benefits, support with securing the right energy tariff etc, to support them to manage their finances independently longer term.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/household-support-fund>

Homes for Ukrainians: The relevant Home Office database indicates that the number of visas nationally issued through the Ukraine Family Scheme continues to increase (45,700 applications, 37,500 visas issued, 19,500 arrivals) although the rate of applications appears to have slowed. Across Cambridgeshire we have seen 781 arrivals through the Homes for Ukraine scheme with highest numbers in South Cambridgeshire and the lowest in Fenland. In total there have been 1,720 visas issued in relation to Cambridgeshire. However, this should not be considered an 'expected' number of arrivals, as the actual numbers will depend on the changing situation on the ground in various parts of Ukraine and an unknown proportion of those issued with visas may choose not to travel to the UK. The work that county, district and city council staff have been doing to ensure we can continue to welcome refugees as quickly as possible and provide the vital support that they need.

We have made significant progress in recent weeks with the Homes for Ukraine scheme, with updates below:

- A total of 695 DBS checks have been completed on sponsors and guests, along with 612 accommodation checks carried out for safety
- Teams have also carried out 178 welfare checks 'in person' with refugees.

- A total of 169 school places have been allocated and last week saw the largest increase in allocations so far.
- Forty families have received contact from CCC's Easy Help Service for other support.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities-localism/support-for-the-people-of-ukraine>

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

20MPH policy: A working group has begun meeting to draw up criteria for applications for 20MPH limits and zones. These are expected to be completed in the next few months.

HGV policy: A draft revision of the Council's policy on heavy goods vehicles is to be considered by the Highways & Transport Committee in the autumn.

MONTHLY DIVISION REPORTS

Highways

- Next Quarterly Highways meetings takes place on Friday 24, these meetings have included Local Highways Officer, Local Highways Manager, Clerks from Oakington & Westwick and Over Parish Councils, Chair of Longstanton Parish Council, Vice-Chair of Oakington & Westwick and County Councillor.
- B1050 Roundabout: The Traffic Management was reinstated back in May to enable final works to be completed safely. These works have been agreed with Cambridgeshire County Council Highways team and when completed will enable the opening of the roundabout junction.
- Defects on and off ramps of the bridge over A14 on the Bar Hill roundabout and A1307: The bridge has been adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council from National Highways as part of the ongoing A14 handover. At the time of handover, the defect at the joints were not apparent. CCC is looking to do an emergency surface patch within the next week, when they will be undertaking ground investigations to determine what the soil make up is to try and ascertain what issues are with this fill material to go back to National Highways who built these bridges and embankments. The ground investigation reports will then form part of a discussion between Cambridgeshire County Council and National Highways over these bridge embankment defects. Dates for resurfacing this area is 15 and 16 June. Traffic management will be in place from 21:00hrs with lanes reduced to provide single lane traffic, and therefore keep access available and traffic flowing, the traffic management will be cleared away by 05:00hrs the next morning, both mornings so not to hold up the rush hour. Whilst marking this area up CCC Highways team did inspect the area over the A1307 leading to B1050 and are creating Traffic Management plan and will update further when they are target costed, ordered and road space booked, to be patched. The ground investigation work to look into why this is happening on the bridge will be completed later in June.
- A14 Trees: Following our motion at Cambridgeshire County Council, we are now liaising with National Highways, they are carrying out a survey which will be finished by the end of May, analysis will take a few weeks after and we have a date in the diary to meet on 22 June to discuss the survey analysis and next steps and the action plan.
- Traffic sensors: new boxes been attached to several lamp columns in the Northstowe/Longstanton area. These are new traffic sensors that are to count general traffic and also Northstowe new town related traffic in the area. They are paid for out of Northstowe new towns traffic monitoring S106 contribution, and the data received will come to Cambridgeshire County Council. This is modern technology and is quite different to how we have collected traffic data in the past. Cambridgeshire County Council will provide Northstowe Town Council and Longstanton Parish Council with the data, so that they can see its output if you are interested to see this. The locations where you will see the sensors are as follows:
 - B1050 Hattons Road, Longstanton CB24 3DX
 - B1050 / Stirling Road junction, Northstowe CB24 1BN

- B1050 / Pathfinder Way junction Northstowe CB24 1AU

Schools

- Next phase of Northstowe Education Campus approved in March at Children Young People Committee:
 - Provision of a Post 16 centre through extension of the main (Core) block
 - Expansion of secondary school to 8 forms of entry (FE) including repurposing of existing general teaching to specialist teaching
 - Provision of a 3FE (630 place) Primary School on land adjacent to the Area Special School

In May, Meridian Trust parents and community consultation took place, to extend the age range of Northstowe Secondary College (NSC) to 2-19 by opening a Primary and Nursery Wing (located the other side of the Martin Bacon School) forming the latest part of the development of the Northstowe Learning Community campus. To view the consultation presentation

<https://www.northstowesc.org/age-range-consultation/>

Enterprise E-car Club

A silver Nissan Leaf EV can now be rented again from the Longstanton P&R. Residents can rent the fully electric car for a few hours, a day or longer, with the aim of giving residents the option to reduce their car ownership but still have access to a vehicle when needed.

- Northstowe residents including Rampton Drift residents receives the first-year free membership and £50 driving credit.
- Nearby villages are included in the offer for Cambridge residents receive £20 first year's membership (£40 saving on annual membership) & £20 driving credit.

Costs are approx: 5p/mile including Insurance

Weekdays: £7.10 p/hr | £59.20 p/day and Weekends: £7.70 p/hr | £64.40 p/day

Further details on this link: [Enterprisecarclub.co.uk/NSTOWE150](https://www.enterprisecarclub.co.uk/NSTOWE150)

If you remove the code for Northstowe, you can add the code for Cambridge CAMB20

Should you have any questions, please email: northstowe@smartjourneys.co.uk

Longstanton

- Wilson's Road Bridleway South and North – feedback has been received from the Cambridgeshire Local Access Forum members which includes the British Horse Society, Ramblers, Cycling UK, Cam Cycle and Longstanton Parish Council. This feedback will go back to the Highways & Transport Committee.
- Bridge on Fews Lane/Central Open Space, Longstanton: works were completed by Cambridgeshire County Council supplier on the bridge. The team have removed all decking and replaced with new non slip treads decking.

Northstowe

- Links to Longstanton Park and Ride to Northstowe Phase 1: after several years of not knowing how this link was going to be provided we are really pleased to say that a contractor has been appointed and a budget agreed for the construction of the link road between Longstanton Park and Ride and the road within Northstowe Phase 1. As part of these works the contractor is also going to construct the path link into the waterpark from the park and ride site.
The appointed contractor is now undertaking some site investigation and clearance and is doing final details of the construction and design and finalising the cost. The project manager at CCC is hoping

that they should be on site in September with all the works completed for the new year. The CCC team have requested that the link to the waterpark is built as early as possible to provide this link as soon as possible.

This also means that there will be a lit route between the park and ride and Northstowe this winter which will be very pleasing to all those who walk and cycle this route.

We would like to thank the CCC team, specifically Tam Parry who has worked long and hard to find money that was not available.

- Guided Busway link to Northstowe/Rampton Drift: improving visibility will require vegetation to be cut back, and the speed of the buses to be reduced to 30mph. The scope of the other works is to improve the surfaces on either side of the crossing place. Unfortunately, it is not possible to remove the stepped nature of the crossing as the Guided Busway is on a curve and needs to be guided at this location. The County team are awaiting quotes from Highway's maintenance contractors to level either side of the busway. Also, additional costings are being drawn up to see whether lighting columns just on the Northstowe side of the crossing can be made sufficient to light the crossing point to enable the electric requirements to tap into the existing connection for the pumping station. Pleased to say that Homes England have committed to supplying this. We are currently waiting for a drawing for lighting column location. We hope that the above costs will then be covered under S106 for phase 2 Northstowe, therefore we are having conversations with the main builders for Phase 2 regarding this funding. Timelines are currently difficult to commit to until the order is in with the contractor to do the works. The future plans for leaving Northstowe to go towards Cambridge are on the busway will be via the busway through the town centre and out of Northstowe just north of Oakington when this road opens

Oakington & Westwick

- A14 Legacy Fund: Proposed TRO (Reference Number PR0786) - Cambridge Road, Water Lane and Station Road, Oakington and Westwick. Proposed speed cushions and road humps in Cambridge Road, Water Lane and Station Road in Oakington and Westwick. This fund was successful for the speed calming in Oakington, A14 Legacy team and Highways England handed over this scheme to County Council in July as the A14 team struggled to resource. Consultation with residents closed in March and no objections were received. Costings are still to be shared with Parish Council.
- Shared- use Path Improvements Oakington to Girton: In July, CCC finished the Phase 1 of widening the shared-use path along Oakington Road, between Brook and Gatehouse Road to benefit walking and cycling. We also tightened the junction at Gatehouse Road to improve visibility for path users and carried out some improvements to the pinch point into Oakington to improve the flow along the paths. This was funded by Highways England, as mitigation for the A14 works. Phase 2 will look to primarily be widening the path from Gatehouse Road to Oakington, subject to design. This will be funded by S106 money from Northstowe. The design has been developed and the cost estimate for construction is more than funds remaining. However, the scheme is still being championed by our project board, and it's looking promising that we will find additional money. We should be able to widen the path from the New Road junction up to the first houses, and we are hopeful we can stretch this past Mansel Farm. Whether we can widen the path in front of the main stretch of houses up to the crossroads is more uncertain at the moment. In the meantime, work cannot start until the Autumn due to birds nesting in the hedges, therefore, CCC are using this time to finish the design, apply for flood and water consent and purchase a small strip of land adjacent to the New Road junction.
- Westwick footpath from the nursery to the bridge has been included in the CCC 2022-23 Capital programme budget which was approved by the Highways & Transport Committee in March, exact timings tbc.
- Potholes on Water Lane were filled on 1 June.

Over

- Mick George Ltd Middle Fen Drove Swavesey Transport Management Plan: following a query about more HGVs travelling through Over at the last council meeting, I checked with CCC officers, and they have informed me:

Although it is quite likely that vehicle movements associated with the above site are taking place, the submission of the Transport Management Plan for approval is only required prior to the occupation of the new building which, as far as I am aware has not yet been constructed.

Mick George Ltd (MGL) will need to formerly submit the Transport Management Plan along with an application to discharge this condition before the use of the new building commences. Once we receive this, and any of the other discharge of condition applications that are required, we consult with any relevant statutory consultees / technical experts. We do not usually consult with local members or Parish Councils on applications to discharge conditions and public comments are not invited. However, schemes and details agreed as part of discharge of condition applications are made public following their approval and I will aim to keep you updated as and when the relevant details are approved.

- Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders: Due to the time restrictions placed on comments for these TTRO requests, Mandy Pink, Clerk has suggested that the Parish Council consider delegating the power to respond to TTRO request to me via an email communication with the Councillors. This will give the PC a chance to respond as timelines are sometimes only a few weeks. I hope that the Parish Council is in support of this.

- High Street, Over bus sign by Premier Express shop

I have been trying to find out what to do about the bus stop sign that no longer exists on the High Street by Premier Express shop (see image below from Google).

This is what has happened to date:

- Local resident at no. 34 contacted me after months of not getting anywhere with CCC/Stagecoach, to say that a bus stop sign had appeared at the end of her driveway, which is nowhere near where the bus stop was before, and she was concerned due to people waiting at the bottom of her drive.
- I managed to get Stagecoach to remove the bus stop sign from the post outside of her house.
- The Greater Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority officer has informed me that the bus stop was attached to a lamp column in that location until they were replaced and reduced in number a few years ago. It is likely that the pole was installed by Balfour Beatty when the column was removed. The current pole which is outside 28 High Street is too short for a bus stop sign and would need a replacement pole or an extension pole. Highways tam have looked in the warehouses but we have not found anything that we could use and neither does Stagecoach or the Combined Authority have any budget to use and buses does not fall under either CCC or SCDC.
- The least contentious solution is replacing the pole, but no funding has been identified to cover the cost. As the Parish Council would you be willing to cover the cost of a replacement pole, at the moment I have no idea of costs, but before I do is this something that the PC would be happy to support.

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

Email: firouz.thompson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

For those on social media we have a highly active Facebook group covering the whole ward here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2066298150052161/>