

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

NORTHSTOWE 2018

CLLR SARAH CHEUNG JOHNSON & CLLR ALEX MALYON

NORTHSTOWE PHASE 3 CONSULTATION

Consultations on plans for Northstowe Phase 3 ran through November.

Northstowe developers and designers attended a number of sessions to hear views on the draft masterplan of the third phase of development. Representatives from Homes England, project masterplanners, planners and technical specialists were available to answer questions.

We attended a separate Councillor briefing and key points for us from this were:

- Phase 3b (North of Home Farm and behind the current Bloor side) traffic surveys are going on and will determine the size of the build there (1000 houses are planned) as well as the number of access routes to the B1050. New news is that there will now be a Primary School there. This has been deemed necessary by the County Council but it's the first time we have heard of it and took the developers by surprise as well. This causes us grave concerns on volume of traffic on that section of the B1050 which is already under pressure. We will be pushing to see this data from the traffic surveys and to ensure that the County Council doesn't allow this to happen without adequate modelling to review traffic coming from Willingham and beyond (which itself is building new houses) - which will not be alleviated by the Southern Access Road.
- Community suggestions on the design have fed into the draft plans for Phase 3 and the historic significance of the old Mill Road, the runway, military lake and old airfield road have been reflected in the proposed designs.
- The bulk of green space, open space is on the Oakington side, currently giving ample green separation. In fact as the design stands, the ratio of green space is at a much higher ratio than the government policy dictates.

If you would like to contribute to the second round of consultation you can complete the online questionnaire available at www.northstowe.com. The period of consultation will end on the 21st December 2018.

Boards with draft plans from the Northstowe Phase 3 Consultation can also be downloaded.

To find out more visit www.northstowe.com or contact northstowephase3@outlook.com

UPDATE OF NORTHSTOWE HEALTH CENTRE

Until 2021 all Northstowe residents will be served by the Willingham Practice, Longstanton branch. Willingham practice has plans to expand provision to allow for a larger patient list and have calculated

the increased number of GP & Nurse sessions to achieve this - approx 4,000 additional patients prior to opening the Health hub in Phase 2. A reminder that NHS money follows the patient, so if more patients register at the GP they get more money - there isn't a finite amount of money shared out amongst more and more people.

The GPs at Over, Swavesey, Milton, Cottenham & Girton have come forward with a proposal to jointly deliver primary health care from the Northstowe Care Hub from 2021. This is currently being considered by the NHS Core Commissioning Group.

Details on this can't be given at present but they do need to be in place by June 2019 so that the procurement process can start in April 2020 and services start to be delivered from the care hub in June 2021.

As a reminder Phase 2 Section 106 money (which developers provide to help build sustainable communities) includes a £14.55 million contribution to the library/care hub and community centre.

NORTHSTOWE CONSTRUCTION

There have been ongoing issues with breaches of planning conditions on Northstowe Phase 1. We continue to report these incidents to enforcement and to press for them to take action if the house builders continue to fail to respect working conditions.

If there are further issues on site then we would encourage residents to contact us or report directly to planning enforcement via SCDC website <https://www.scams.gov.uk/report-it/website>

As a reminder, the more information that can be provided the more likely enforcement will be able to act. They require exact dates, times, locations and if possible, details of what work you think may be carried out. It is useful if you are able to provide photos or video as evidence.

SUNDAY WORKING LINDEN SITE

Following discussions between the South Cambs Council planning officer and Linden site manager it has been agreed that work would be permitted on Sunday 2nd December from 8am - 4.30pm. The planning conditions to allow for work outside of standard hours with the prior agreement of the SCDC Planning officer.

Recognising this will cause residents inconvenience on a rest day from construction work, Linden have agreed to improve the landscaping of 3 Local Areas of Play (LAPs) on the Linden site, adding in low level planting and removing fencing which currently looks out of place on the site.

We know this was not an ideal scenario, particularly given that Linden have been breaching planning conditions already. We have sent a strong message back to Linden to advise them of this and will attempt to ensure that this does not start a precedent for further Sunday working.

OAKINGTON RURAL TRANSPORT HUB PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The consultation on the Oakington rural travel hub remains open and will run through until 7th Jan 2019. You can complete the online survey at:

https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/rural-travel-hub-consultation-2018-oakington?fbclid=IwAR3JQRlu3TxC6CwTnv8oQ_LtOZRks1w1tT3jbuiM1nSANUhSo4rTHZIJvkY

The travel hub team are asking for feedback on the proposals, including if you would like the pilot to go ahead and what facilities you think are required.

MOTION TO SCDC FULL COUNCIL ON REVIEW OF COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Sarah seconded a motion from Cottenham District Councillor Eileen Wilson calling on the Combined Authority to bring forward the outcome of the strategic review of commercial, subsidised and community transport. The motion passed with unanimous support from full council. This is the text of the motion:

The Greater Cambridge Partnership is consulting on a proposed Rural Travel Hub at Oakington, which is served by the Guided Busway. The aim is to link up public transport, cycling and walking routes. This proposal could provide an attractive alternative to car journeys, promote health and wellbeing as well as helping to reduce congestion in and around Cambridge. For a village like Cottenham, with planning permission for over 500 new homes and the potential for ever increasing car usage, the Rural Travel Hub could encourage people to choose public transport over cars.

There is, however, no provision for any form of public transport linking Cottenham to Oakington. Without such a transport link, it would be very difficult for residents who can't or don't cycle to access the Guided Busway, but even for those who do cycle, it would be a dangerous journey without a safer cycle route.

Further, any proposed Rural Travel Hubs require decent, onward travel options that are good value, timely and dependable. Instead, many residents along the Busway route find the service patchy, expensive and, at peak times, frustratingly impossible to board when buses arrive full. These proposals, however, do not make provision for additional services on the Guided Busway at peak times.

This Council, therefore, calls on the Combined Authority to bring forward the outcome of the strategic review of commercial, subsidised and community transport. It is only with these provisions that the residents of villages like Cottenham could, at last, look forward to having the integrated, streamlined public transport provision that will make car use the less favourable option.

STAGECOACH AND GUIDED BUSWAY

We met with Andy Campbell, MD for Stagecoach East to discuss issues with local bus services.

Key points are below but one action we recommend for residents is to continue to feedback issues and requests to stagecoach directly. Either via Twitter @stagecoach_east or email cambridge.enquiries@stagecoachbus.com - they are all collated and make a difference to their understanding even if it doesn't feel like the service improves.

Service reliability:

- He acknowledged there have been issues in the last few months with bus reliability which has been worse than in previous periods. This has been because of staff availability. Andy said hiring drivers for Cambs is tough, as the district is expensive to live in and their wages are not high. They have started an apprenticeship scheme and they are now fully staffed and say this should help the reliability of the service

Pricing:

- Andy said they would have to put the zone price differences somewhere on the line and whoever was on the other side of that would find it unfair. They have said if the congestion in Cambridge gets better they can considering moving to a 3 zone system to the City centre, second zone with Longstanton and surrounding villages and then beyond that for zone 3. However congestion is getting worse not better and we challenged if this might mean they'd actually end up raising the fares for outside the city (Histon/Oakington) versus inside the city and he didn't deny this would be a possibility.

- Andy also said it's not always well known that Stagecoach have to pay to use the busway, and this is an access charge as well as a cost per mile. This makes the service more expensive to run than if they use normal roads (that are then managed and maintained by the council with taxpayers money). This was because the plan for the original busway was that in order that it would not cost the taxpayer any money to be built, the operators using it would be charged. They currently pay in region of half a million a year to use the busway.

Additional services:

He wanted us to reiterate that due to monopolies rules laid down by the government, as a commercial business they are not allowed to run a loss-making route and cross-subsidise this from a route that makes a profit e.g. a Sunday evening service which doesn't make money can't be made profitable by adding in money from a peak time Mon-Fri service.

He also stressed that for those making longer distance journey you can interchange in the city centre where there are more frequent buses so if you can get on a bus even if it's not going to your final destination to get on anyway and change.=

Profits over People:

He also wanted to stress they are a commercial business but that no bus companies nationwide are making large amounts of money and it's a very tough business to be in. Many companies are getting close to critical and close to closing. The bulk of the money they do make is invested back into the business.

He said that 95% of what they run is entirely commercial (e.g. it pays for itself) and as a region, Cambs taxpayers money does not go into bus services as much as in other regions.

Capacity:

He knows the issues of buses being full, and for the next year has requested 20 additional buses from his Group HQ, some to replace existing older buses but most to add services including to the Biomedical Campus (Astra Zeneca will come online) and this will come on for Spring next year.

Passenger Information boards:

These are owned by the County Council and the messaging service is commissioned by them, which Stagecoach don't have access to. If Stagecoach cancel a service they have no way of telling this messaging service to display this on the boards in real-time which is frankly, poorly designed and thought through - we will follow this up with Counties.

In the meantime Stagecoach acknowledge they have not always been great at getting the message out about service issues and are working on an App for passengers that will display this real time information. This should be available in the 1st quarter of next year.

Ticketing:

Withdrawal of the multi-operator tickets was a decision made by Stagecoach Group (above him) as they decided there were too many ticket options and that this was confusing. He personally would like to have a 'carnet' - a book of tickets you can use flexibly. However, withdrawing these tickets has meant they can now offer return tickets and that saves roughly 20% on 2 single tickets.

Strategic solutions:

Andy thinks we need congestion charging (demand management) for Cambridge city and that the revenues should be used on transport improvement initiatives. Cambridge transport is going to be gridlocked eventually.

The Metro in his opinion is not going to help.

Unfortunately, he does not think Mayor Palmer's franchising plans will help solve the problem because it will a) cost a fortune to do a consultation and b) he will have to set up an entire transport company like TFL (Transport for London) and if that there is that kind of money available it should be used to subsidise existing commercial services.

We understand that his responses may not provide residents what they would like to hear but we felt he was pretty frank with his answers. Stagecoach are obviously operating within constraints, some financial, some regulatory, some practical.

I think it will be useful for us residents if we revisit this in 3-4 months time and see if it improves. Andy will have retired (he doesn't have a permanent successor yet) .

We have collated all feedback that we have received and will send this back to Stagecoach to analyse. Thank you to residents for providing their feedback, we will continue to monitor and try to get things better (as District Cllrs we have very limited powers - but we will try!)

COMPLAINTS ABOUT TRAFFIC LIGHTS B1050

We have received a number of complaints from residents about issues with the traffic lights on the B1050 between the Bloor side and main Northstowe site. In particular residents report that vehicles not stopping at the red light and that the time allowed to cross on the red man is not sufficient. We have encouraged residents to contact their County Councillor regarding this, to see if there is anything that can be done. A Northstowe resident, Peter Thomas-McEwen, has sent an email, supported by a number of other Northstowe residents, asking for this issue to be examined.

NORTHSTOWE HEALTH & WELLBEING VIDEO

Here's a video interview on health and wellbeing at Northstowe as NHS England invest £400,000 on a Healthy New Town's initiative.

Emily Hough, Director of Strategy at NHS England, joins Bridget Smith, the Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council and Peter Hudson, the Chairman of the Health Committee and Local County Cllr for Longstanton at Cambridgeshire County Council.

[https://www.facebook.com/SouthCambridgeshireDistrictCouncil/videos/2166551530284857/?_xts__\[o\]=68.ARCzgLLKtfOl6b3_qfcnYJZdQvZ17CXud2-wbHNJRzaUonnS-oWKYC8C_QcooZEaO4udxuAl8egB5flsyuE_HOVORjt2TFdVFcntoW5lEM352tISomGOnwA1VoVbrrhpGDyKAH1mzkrByPykYoDk48mgYiKkYV32Bz4ZGrg_tsiPhC_HQytKeymro8eEv-n_yevaGrISMiCPUjOEJ-OOmRHjQHeYe1OIVSh_uGorLz9Z5rC1e_bBMob2zDQdMStuKoO9oO3pLfokrSNlGkQ3LcuMh4l25jDR_e3fjkDncfiEyNH4o4UCBmoCoApVllmxS5JslMauCH7Jekj76jptkR6rPd7NbAu02uM&_tn_=-R](https://www.facebook.com/SouthCambridgeshireDistrictCouncil/videos/2166551530284857/?_xts__[o]=68.ARCzgLLKtfOl6b3_qfcnYJZdQvZ17CXud2-wbHNJRzaUonnS-oWKYC8C_QcooZEaO4udxuAl8egB5flsyuE_HOVORjt2TFdVFcntoW5lEM352tISomGOnwA1VoVbrrhpGDyKAH1mzkrByPykYoDk48mgYiKkYV32Bz4ZGrg_tsiPhC_HQytKeymro8eEv-n_yevaGrISMiCPUjOEJ-OOmRHjQHeYe1OIVSh_uGorLz9Z5rC1e_bBMob2zDQdMStuKoO9oO3pLfokrSNlGkQ3LcuMh4l25jDR_e3fjkDncfiEyNH4o4UCBmoCoApVllmxS5JslMauCH7Jekj76jptkR6rPd7NbAu02uM&_tn_=-R)

COUNCILLOR UPDATES AND SURGERIES

We continue to be keen to meet residents, especially for those who might find contacting us via email or social media difficult. We will be confirming dates for councillor surgeries in 2019 shortly.

We have started sending out email newsletters and have been posting regular updates on our Facebook group. Details are here:

- 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/>

DISTRICT WIDE UPDATES

COMBINED AUTHORITY

Mayor Palmer has now spent £7.5million to run the Combined Authority which is a huge increase over the £850,000 he predicted it would cost in his election leaflets. He now says "I can only apologise. I underestimated the cost of running such an important authority. I think, realistically, we were never going to be able to function on £850,000 a year".

Last week, the Chief Financial Officer of the Combined Authority was officially dismissed, making him the fourth chief financial officer to leave since it was set up in 2017. He was dismissed after making "misleading" statements about the finding of major projects, casting doubt over whether all the major projects could be achieved within the budget. However audit and scrutiny committee members have said they found the level of detail and professionalism of the CFO the best they had yet.

CAMBRIDGE ICE RINK

Councillors have approved additional loan funding of up to £550,000 to enable the completion of a permanent ice rink in South Cambridgeshire.

The District Council had already agreed in September 2016 to provide a £1.85 million loan to Cambridge Leisure and Ice Centre (CLIC) for the new venue, which is being built off Newmarket Road on the edge of Cambridge. The opening date has not been confirmed but they are hoping for it to be open as early as possible next year.

Councillors have said that the decision to support the additional loan was driven by the objective of delivering a high-quality community sporting venue that will benefit the health and wellbeing of residents.

Up to 25 new jobs are expected to be created by the rink. The 56 metre by 26 metre ice pad will meet the requirements of the International Ice Hockey Federation, allowing visiting teams from around the world to play ice hockey.

The additional funding was approved at a Full Council meeting yesterday (Thursday 29 November). This comes after the authority's Scrutiny and Overview Committee had already discussed in detail an independent assessment that states the additional funding will enable the building to be completed.

Building work on the site, which is being leased by Marshall of Cambridge to CLIC, began in November 2017. However, progress was halted following the discovery of 194 small grenades dating back to World War Two. Specialist contractors had to be brought in to assess the entire site and ensure it was safe for construction to continue. Building work re-commenced in late January, but the delay resulted in further costs.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ALLOWANCES PAYBACK

Following previous news on Council staff being asked to take 3 days on unpaid leave between Christmas and New Year due to the state of Council Finances, the leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, Steve Count has asked his fellow Councillors to reduce their allowances by £10 to show support off officers. He has suggested those that refuse will be 'named and shamed'. This is despite Cllrs voting to take a pay rise over and above that recommended by the Independent Review panel, with some taking a 30% pay increase. The Council is facing a £4.5 million deficit at the end of the year. This is in part due to the Council not raising Council Taxes by the amount permitted in previous years to cover the slashing of central Government funding, which has meant in this year alone a loss of £25 million it could have had in revenues. For the views of County Cllr David Jenkins (who previously covered Oakington) on this issue please go here: <https://cllrdavidjenkinscom.wordpress.com/2018/12/05/shame-on-you-mr-count/>

MOBILE WARDEN GRANT SCHEME

Community groups in South Cambridgeshire can now bid for a share of £20,000 as part of a scheme that helps keep older residents in their own homes, and tackles loneliness.

The funding is available from the District Council's Mobile Wardens grants scheme. Local groups that run these initiatives can bid for the money to help pay for them.

Mobile Wardens regularly visit elderly people, helping to keep them living in the community they know, and which knows them. They receive training to understand the needs of the people they visit and can help point out what other services they may be eligible for that could help keep them living at home.

The Wardens may also help with practical tasks like light shopping, booking appointments, form-filling and the collection of prescriptions.

For more details click here: http://www.scambsgov.uk/communities-invited-to-bid-for-grants-to-help-tackle-loneliness/?fbclid=IwAR16N3lv7yDQp1guMvrEFmMeEIRj6gmZxG42Z23Cy8-6hbIDSw_zRzKdqLs

DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN

The council has released its draft business plan for next year and are inviting the public to have a say here: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/businessplansocialmedia

DIGITAL THERMAL IMAGE CAMERA

Our easy to use thermal imaging cameras are available to borrow now, for free

They can help you work out where heat is escaping from your home so you can take action and save on energy bills. For more details see here: http://www.scambsgov.uk/community/community/the-sustainable-parish-energy-partnership/thermal-imaging-camera/?fbclid=IwAR09wkptHBT1SoQA5ZKVPn4k5gev5_OlpTFMmY1sdz5DMxfrdXWSjsi_H1A

BENEFITS FRAUDSTER FINED

A man from Bar Hill must pay more than £1,000 costs after admitting benefit fraud.

72-year-old Keith Wood, from Hillcrest in the village, didn't tell South Cambridgeshire District Council that he was working, receiving a private pension and had savings above the limit allowed while also claiming Council Tax Support. This led to him claiming a total of £2,539 that he wasn't entitled to.

Council finance bosses say it is a reminder to benefit claimants to ensure that they report every change in circumstance to them, because it can change the amount of support they are allowed to claim.

http://www.scams.gov.uk/bar-hill-man-fined-for-benefit-fraud/?fbclid=IwARoog1MyvFgpqJARr_IHRcY_eNqeVwk5ucbwThJ9P8C7dfKG1GNOIFUvU6E

REPAIR CAFES

The District Council helps volunteers to set up new Repair Cafes. If you are interested in setting up a Repair Cafe and would like support, or if you would like to volunteer as a repairer, please email spép@scams.gov.uk or call 01954 713070. For more details see here:

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/community/community/the-sustainable-parish-energy-partnership/repair-cafes/>

HEIDI ALLEN BREXIT BRIEFING

Our MP Heidi Allen held another Brexit briefing at Sawston Village College this week. Since our last update she has confirmed she will be voting against the Prime Minister's Deal and is calling for a Peoples Vote on the deal.

Heidi said she wanted to encourage MPs to put all possible options on the table as amendments in the vote next week in order to test the waters so the house could focus on two options. She said she believed that Norway and People's Vote were the two most viable at this stage. She then said that she was interested in what constituents thought she should be promoting as amendments and gave four options (including Mrs May's deal) to the vote. The results were:

5% Leave with no deal

3% The May Deal

7% Norway Plus

85% People's Vote

As you can see the support for no Brexit was overwhelming in the audience.

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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