

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

OCTOBER 2019

CLLR SARAH CHEUNG JOHNSON & CLLR ALEX MALYON

SECOND NORTHSTOWE DEVELOPERS MEETING

We met with Northstowe developers on 4th October at SCDC. This was a follow up meeting from the August meeting. At the August meeting the following was agreed:

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- They will write to their construction contractors reminding them of their obligations to abide by the transport plan (i.e. not to use Willingham to get to/leave Northstowe) and insisting that this is made clear to any sub-contractors.
- They will provide senior level contacts to whom breaches of condition should be reported.
- To research options for CCTV at the entrance to Northstowe (both inward and outwards facing) and to consult with specialist suppliers of this technology. There was agreement that CCTV was a key tool in the resolution of this matter and that SCDC should be the recipients of the data recorded.
- To implement either a log system or CCTV to monitor the individual sites for incoming and outgoing traffic. These would be used in conjunction with the CCTV at the entrance and would be freely available to SCDC Enforcement Officers).
- To install white noise reversing alarms on all vehicles.
- To proactively manage the noise issues and ensure construction is done only within the permitted times.

We reiterated that the complaints on noise in Northstowe was actively causing concern for potential house buyers as it is widely seen in social media. We are hoping this will act as sufficient motivators to resolve these issues.

At the follow up meeting SCDC Officers reiterated the likely course of action that would be taken by South Cambs if the breaches continued including, in extremis, the prosecution of company directors. All developers agreed that the situation was unacceptable and resolved to act. A plan has been devised with several parts to it. The following was fed back by developers:

1. All developers have written to their construction contractors reminding them of their obligations to the transport plan (i.e. not to use Willingham to get to/leave Northstowe) and that future breaches may result in the termination of contracts. Contractors were instructed to make this clear to sub-contractors.

2. L&Q Estates (the company in overall control of Phase 1) have been extremely helpful and are working with the County Council to have signage installed at strategic points, including on the B1050 at Earith Bridge.
3. L&Q have also accepted that CCTV should be installed at the entrance to Northstowe and they are speaking with specialist suppliers.
4. White Noise reversing alarms - Linden said they were not aware that this had to be white noise (!) but have committed to doing this.
5. We have emailed David Wilson separately and they have identified 2 vehicles which need changing and this will be done shortly
6. Speed bumps down Stirling Way - L&Q say these were meant to have been installed but were still not there on Monday.

Residents have asked for additional access be given through the David Wilson plot but they have refused from a health and safety perspective and say it would be irresponsible of them as developers to allow this.

UPDATE ON PIONEER PARK

You will be aware that the delivery of the formal park on Phase 1 Pioneer Park has been delayed. Work should have begun on this by 350 occupations which we have now far exceeded. Following considerable pressure from SCDC, including the threat of enforcement action and a campaign by Northstowe residents, we are pleased to say that work will now begin on the park on 14th October.

We, along with officers at SCDC will continue to put pressure on L&Q to ensure that the park is delivered to the specifications set out in the plans and that corners are not cut.

NORTHSTOWE COMMUNITY FORUM

The next Northstowe Community Forum will take place on 6th November. Please note the change of venue for this meeting- it will be held at the newly opened Northstowe Secondary College.

The agenda will be circulated shortly but will include updates on Phase 1, plans for the allotment and orchard, plans for the eBike scheme and an update on the proposed Community Governance Review. A representative from Stagecoach has also been invited to attend and provide an update.

NORTHSTOWE PHASE 3 CONSULTATIONS

Public drop in events were held at the new Homes England Offices in September. The poster displayed at the event which show the final masterplan for Phase 3 can be viewed via the Northstowe.com website. There is also a link here to provide feedback on the plans

EMERGENCY WORKING HOURS ENDED

We are pleased to report that the emergency hours for Northstowe construction, to allow delivery of the school have now finished as the children moved into the school on 7th October. We return to the original hours which are:

Mon - Fri: 8am-6pm

Sat: 9am – 1.30pm

Sun and Bank Holidays: No working

If work is being carried out outside of these hours, then please report this to SCDC enforcement. The most effective way to report is online via the SCDC website <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/report/>

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

South Cambs District Council (SCDC) will soon be undertaking a Community Governance Review for the Parish. The plans for this will be presented to the Civics Affair Committee at the end of this month and if approved the phase of publication consultation will begin in November and run through to early 2020. Officers from SCDC are currently visiting local Parish Councils to provide information about the proposed review. They will also be attending local events and drop in sessions during the consultation period- dates and locations for these to be confirmed.

Currently Northstowe is part of Longstanton Parish and local governance is provided by the Longstanton Parish Council (which we are very glad now has two Northstowe residents as Parish Councillors). As the new community grows, it is necessary to review whether this is the best arrangement and whether changes should be made to Parish boundaries or local governance. This process will involve consultation with the community and the general timescales and process will be:

- By law the Council should conduct a review of the community governance arrangements for the whole or part of its area for the purpose of considering whether or not to make any changes to Parish boundaries or size, and/or the creation of new parishes; and the review of the electoral arrangements for new and/or existing parishes.
- The council needs to take account of community identity and interests in the area and consider whether any linkages might be broken by the drawing of ward boundaries. This will involve seeking the views of the community and gathering evidence.
- When considering parish ward boundaries, the council should ensure they consider the desirability of fixing boundaries which are, and will remain, easily identifiable, as well as considering any local ties.
- The first part of the process involves publication of the 'Terms of Reference' under which a community governance review is to be undertaken. These will clearly specify what is under review and there will be a chance for the community to comment on them.
- There will then be a two-month period allowed for submission of views and evidence from the community. Draft recommendations will then be drawn up and published, followed by a further 3 months consultation period. Final recommendations will be prepared and presented to the Council.

- The whole process should last no longer than one year and any changes would then come into effect from the 01 April the following year.

NEW COUNCIL HOUSES FOR PHASE 2

It was recently announced that SCDC has purchased 81 new council properties as part of the first new neighbourhood of 406 homes to be built on Northstowe Phase 2a. These apartments will be either 1- or 2-bed and available at affordable rent. 60 will be apartments for the over-55s and we are particularly pleased that this will encourage inter-generational living.

The apartments will be built using Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) by Urban Splash. The homes are produced in factories and assembled on-site. MMC enables home building to be quicker and more efficient and will provide energy efficient homes which will be more affordable to heat.

SCDC is now aiming to build or acquire over 70 council houses each year and have so far exceeded that target.

NHS ENGLAND HEALTHY NEW TOWNS REPORT

NHS England recently published the report on the 10 Healthy New Town demonstrator sites, which included Northstowe. The report can be accessed here:

https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/innovation/healthy-new-towns/?fbclid=IwARofihhAEPWdZwaDNiN5HCL7_4kJLSb1782B4MR8oxGzCAqsU5taDFV78t4

DISTRICT WIDE UPDATES

UPDATE ON A14 NOISE ISSUES- HIGHWAYS ENGLAND DROPS APPEAL

In our last report we detailed complaints from Oakington residents about A14 piling works at night.

We sought advice from our fellow councillors in Histon who've been dealing with this issue for over a year. Please email all complaints to ldf@southcambs.gov.uk as well as [Highways England a14cambridgehuntingdon@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:a14cambridgehuntingdon@highwaysengland.co.uk) with details of the noise, times, videos.

It appears Highways England are meant to notify the parish council 10 days in advance of piling work, and we have asked for them to ensure this is adhered to in future.

South Cambs District Council are now demanding stricter thresholds for noise and vibration under Section 61 of the Highways Act 1980- something which was not being done in the past. This means that Highways England now must apply for permission for out-of-hours working and night works should be kept to a minimum, only taking place if the work would be too dangerous or disruptive during the day. It also means that Highways England should carry out 'best practical means', such as using noise-absorbing barriers or digging trenches to reduce the vibration from piling.

We are pleased to report that Highways England have dropped their appeal against South Cambs District Council's use of Section 61. This means the council can continue to stand firm on this and enforce the construction conditions.

GREATER CAMBRIDGE PARTNERSHIP CITIZENS ASSEMBLY

The Greater Cambridge Citizens' Assembly heard evidence from experts in transport, economics, environmental issues and public health as well as views from local stakeholders and examples from other cities over two weekends in September and October.

The Assembly concluded with the 53 members voting on a number of recommendations to transform how people travel into and around Greater Cambridge and measures to improve the quality of the air.

A report (link below) outlining the headline recommendations has been published by Involve, the charity which has facilitated the Assembly. The full report will be available in early November.

The Greater Cambridge Partnership's Executive Board will consider these recommendations at their next meeting in December, alongside further work on this issue.

Cllr Aidan Van de Weyer, chair of the GCP's Executive Board, said: "It has been fantastic to see people who live and travel around the area listen to the evidence and discuss the congestion and air pollution issues we face. The Citizens' Assembly has put forward clear messages and ideas on how to transform our transport system so more people can get to where they need to go more easily without having to use a car.

"I want to thank the members of the Citizens' Assembly, all the speakers and the experts on the Advisory Group for their hard work and dedication over these two weekends, and I look forward to discussing the findings with the other Executive Board members in December."

<https://www.involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-do-we-reduce-congestion-improve-air-quality-provide-better-public>

ZERO CARBON ENERGY GRANT

A reminder that the deadline to apply for the Zero Carbon Energy Grant scheme is 5pm on 31st October.

The Zero Carbon Communities Grant supports voluntary and community sector groups, charities and parish councils seeking to deliver bold, ambitious projects that engage communities and help the district shift towards a cleaner, greener future in support of the aim of zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Applications are invited for grants of between £1,000 and £15,000

We wish to encourage South Cambridgeshire communities of all sizes and levels of experience to apply for these grants and bid for a share of just over £91,000.

EXTRA RECYCLING- MISSED COLLECTIONS

We have had reports from residents that extra recycling that they are putting out is not being collected. There are sometimes reasons why the crews can't collect but if recycling is being put out correctly but not collected (see information below) then please let us know your address and we will ask the waste team to investigate. If you regularly need to put out extra recycling, then you can order a second blue bin. More info or to order a bin go to: <https://www.scams.gov.uk/.../recycling/how-we-collect-extra.../>

Collecting extra recycling:

Crews will collect one transparent sack with recycling (glass in the bin please) and/or one bundle of cardboard broken down to a size which would fit in the bin (with the lid closed) if there was space (please tape or tie together).

Please note that if we are experiencing delays (e.g. vehicle breakdown, roadworks, or particularly high volume of recycling on the round) we may take the decision to stop collecting extra recycling to prioritise completing a bin collection from each property.

- Black or coloured sacks and more than one sack will not be collected. Transparent sacks are available online and in supermarkets
- Put any glass inside your blue bin, not the sack, for safety reasons

Please don't:

- Leave cardboard out in the rain. Soggy cardboard gets stuck to other materials making it hard to recycle.

These guidelines have been introduced because we have new collection vehicles. They have higher openings than our old trucks, so we needed to change the way we collect extra recycling. The new vehicles with higher openings are:

- safer for staff
- help to prevent litter blowing out of the lorry
- make it easier to dislodge large items that sometimes get stuck inside the bins.

Crews will empty your blue bin and then refill it with your extra recycling and tip it again, rather than throw it in separately, which is no longer safe for them to do.

FLY-TIPPING

The council has recently launched a campaign to tackle the issue of fly-tipping across the District- over 900 reported fly-tipping incidents are reported in South Cambs each year. Unfortunately fly-tipping often comes from householders paying someone to remove waste for them. If you are booking someone you can check whether they have a waste carriers' licence via the Environment Agency website.

The Council will also take away up to three bulky items for a charge of £30, more details via <https://www.scams.gov.uk/bi.../bulky-item-collection-service/>

If residents witness fly-tipping taking place, then they should contact the police via 999. If found afterwards it should be reported online to the Council as quickly as possible so it can be investigated and cleared up. In both cases, people are being asked to note the exact location, time, what the items are and if safe to do so to take a photo.

NHS SERVICES IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE:

'Difficult decisions' - The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group has launched what it's calling The Big Conversation - a public discussion about how it should continue buying health services for our area, against the reality that it is currently spending considerably more than it can afford. The consequences are important for all of us - do please have a look and respond.

<https://www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk>

DRAINS & GULLIES

While it goes against logic, due to County Highways' slim maintenance budget, planned annual drainage and gully clearance no longer takes place and those drains that get cleared are done on a reactive basis, usually on the basis of someone having logged a blocked drain complaint on-line, here: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/roadworks-and-faults/>

EAST WEST RAIL NORTHERN ROUTE UPDATE

In response to local questions, a CamBedRailRoad spokesman reports: "We were expecting a Preferred Route Announcement on the EastWest Railway by the Summer Recess. This has now passed, and the current turbulence both at Westminster and in relation to the now-doubtful HS2 would indicate not a lot of announcing about railways anytime soon. However, EWR have written to CamBedRailRoad telling us that our Northern Option (St Neots – Cambourne – Northstowe to Cambridge North) is being assessed following the end of the public consultation.

"We are seeking clarification on the timings of announcements and the detail of the assessment. This is important because communities are living with a cloud of doubt about the eventual routing which is blighting land, property and lives. We are also in discussion with a wide range of organisations about a possible joint approach to any future legal action and have engaged a well-known firm of solicitors to work with us. More about our work at www.cambedrailroad.org."

COMBINED AUTHORITY CONSULTATION ON NEW LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN FOR CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH

A reader writes: "What is the point of the Combined Authority? Even the County Council has pointed out that the Consultation on the new Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough doesn't recognise the national 2050 zero carbon target nor the county's own climate emergency nor district policies on this. There are no details under the strategic overviews, no implementation plans, no indication of ownership nor targets and no indication of financial or ongoing maintenance apportionment. Why is the CPCA public consultation so naff?"

Why, indeed.

WATERBEACH NEW TOWN

A legal agreement has been reached confirming £141 million worth of new services, facilities and transport upgrades that will come forward as part of the first 6,500 homes at a new town north of Waterbeach. Back in May, South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Committee gave the green light to Urban&Civic's outline plans to develop the former Waterbeach barracks site. This is the western half of the site that is allocated for a new town in the authority's Local Plan.

The developer's funding towards community services and facilities will see many upgrades and community facilities come forward at different stages of the development including:

At least 30% affordable housing, three primary schools, a secondary school and a special educational needs school, a health centre and many open spaces with outdoor pitches – to include sports areas, children's play space and allotments / community orchards and three sports pavilions. There will be a contribution towards a new leisure centre, including a swimming pool, three community centres and a community hub with library.

A total of almost £16 million worth of transport upgrades in and around the village of Waterbeach are also included as part of the Section 106 process. Bridget is aiming to ensure that any new large scale development are self-supporting and self-sustaining. Dormitory villages full of commuters are no longer an option and housing has to be built near to where people live, work, play and learn. That also means that development in existing villages must be no more than the villages can support unless developers are making significant contributions to upgrading village amenities to cope with extra people.

BIODIVERSITY & SCHOOL FUNDING AT SOUTH CAMBS

In July, the District Council passed two motions, both unanimously supported:

The first – which aims to double the area of rich wildlife habitats, tree cover and accessible green space in South Cambs - laid out measures including the development of a mandatory biodiversity net gain policy and directing developers to use the Developing Nature Toolkit to use in planning new developments, as well as identifying areas for tree planting for carbon sequestration, flood management, air quality improvement and other environmental services.

The second instructed the council to make representation to the Secretary of State for Education and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, calling for them to take action to reverse, in full, the real-terms cuts to per-pupil school budgets since 2015 – meaning schools in South Cambridgeshire would receive £3,837,946 additional funding in 2020 – and fix the historic underfunding of Cambridgeshire schools by putting in place genuinely fairer funding through the National Funding Formula. Though the District Council is not directly responsible for education, schools are an important part of the communities they represent and the funding pressure they are under is beginning to damage those communities.

THE FUTURE!

We've just kicked-off the start of a very important process that will shape South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City for decades to come. It'll look at how we respond to climate change, increase biodiversity and green spaces, promote wellbeing and equality, deliver jobs, transport links, schools, health facilities, utilities and homes. This is our next Local Plan, which will be a combined plan for Greater Cambridge. We're determined to reach as many people as possible across the two Council areas, giving everyone the chance to have their say.

We're now at the stage where, together with Cambridge City Council, we've published a report that gives details of an upcoming "Issues and Options" consultation. Sounds dry but this consultation in November will give everyone in Greater Cambridge the chance to talk about the big issues that our next Local Plan needs to address.

We think the Local Plan is probably the most important document that most people have never heard of, because it touches so many aspects of our lives. Where we live, where we work, how we get to work, the types of places our children and grandchildren will grow up in, where they will go to school and so much more. It'll also be a key tool in helping us to achieve our ambition of a zero carbon South Cambridgeshire by 2050. The plan will eventually include strong policies to make sure that new developments support this goal and also improve nature and the environment around the area. So, with all of that in mind, please look out for this "Issues and Options" consultation in November.

Staff in our Planning Service, which we share with Cambridge City Council, are working incredibly hard to make this process as easy as possible for you to take part in. We think the whole process is going to take around three years in total and there will be plenty of chances to have your say, so please take advantage of them. It's so important to us that local people help to develop and test this plan. We've already done more than ever before by holding some early workshops with parish councils, residents' associations, businesses, developer

BREXIT

Generally we keep away from Brexit for all the obvious reasons. However, as Councillors we are increasingly being messaged by concerned residents with questions – most of which we cannot answer to any certain degree. The situation is also very fast moving.

However, we are concerned about the impact a No deal Brexit might have locally. Around South Cambs it is easy to think that most people have jobs in the high spec technical world – research, development and so on. We tend to forget that we are all lucky enough to live in a working countryside.

To that end we are alarmed about the impact a No Deal Brexit might have on our local farmers. The impact of leaving the EU on the farming and agricultural communities will be widespread and destructive. UK farmers are heavily reliant on funding from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In 2014 alone, 175,700 UK farm businesses received €3.2 billion in direct payments. Under the CAP, the EU also funds development in rural communities.

Brexit will impact food supply and the availability of food in the UK. With delays at borders due to custom checks, the delivery of perishable goods will be limited. In the event of a no-deal Brexit, tariffs will be applied to agricultural goods that transit between the UK and EU. The MFN no-deal Brexit tariffs will increase the cost of importing and exporting agricultural products. These additional costs will be passed onto YOU, the consumer. The UK Trade Policy Observatory analysis concludes that prices will increase by 5.8% for meat, 8.1% for dairy, 4% for vegetables, 3.1% for fruit, 1.8% for bread and cereals and 1.5% for fish. This will impact the poorest in society the most, where 16% of household income is currently spent on food. A no-deal Brexit will mean more income will be spent on food.

This is an affluent part of Cambridgeshire – and yet villages such as ours have thriving foodbanks. We are profoundly concerned about the impact on families who are already struggling.

HARE COURSING

A resident asked for details of why so much effort is put in stopping hare coursing by the Police. Hare coursing is the pursuit of hares with greyhounds and other sighthounds, which chase the hare by sight and not by scent. Dogs are tested on their ability to run, overtake and turn a hare which will invariably always lead to the hare being caught and killed. It is considered a blood sport on which large amounts of money are gambled – often live filmed and broadcast abroad – China, Hong Kong and so on. It is a completely banned and unlawful activity in England, Wales and Scotland.

Hare coursing on land is primarily a seasonal issue affecting the rural communities of Cambridgeshire. It has a very serious impact on farmland and farmer's livelihoods – ruining crops and wrecking fencing and hedges - to say nothing of the impact on the hares, of course.

Persons involved in this type of offending travel some distance to commit offences primarily in 4x4 type vehicles to allow them to drive over fields to follow their dogs or evade capture by police. Offenders historically caught involved in this type of offending are very frequently linked to wider criminality. So an arrest often leads to further crime being cleared up.

SAFER COMMUNITIES

Our leader Bridget Smith is a member of the Local Government Association Safer Communities Board. Bridget has been hearing from the Commission which is about to report on Modern Day Slavery. This is not something which happens elsewhere - it is happening on all our doorsteps and is often difficult to recognise. Even more concerning is to hear that some people in prison are actually victims of slavery rather than perpetrators of crime. An example would be young people arrested for County Lines drug running who are actually being controlled through fear and coercion by organised crime gangs. The Commission will be demanding better support for victims, more robust punishment of the criminals and improved means of identifying modern day slavery. In South Cambs we know to keep a close eye on agricultural work gangs, tarmacking enterprises and car washes. Bridget was told that if you are paying under £6.50 for your car to be washed it is unlikely that people are receiving the minimum wage. If you have any concerns it is vital that you report it. Here is the way to do it:

Telephone call 101 - www.cambs.police.uk/report - Textphone 18001 101 or anonymous reporting Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111

RIVERS AND WATER IN SOUTH CAMBS

The conservation officer at the Wildlife Trust has advised communities south of Cambridge that the River Granta at Clerk's Piece Stapleford has stopped flowing. All the brown trout in this reach of river have died alongside stickleback, bullhead and stone loach. Whilst we are experiencing a drought, the problem is being compounded by Cambridge Water Company continuing to take water for our own public supply from the chalk aquifer beneath. It is clear that with the huge amount of growth planned for this area we must lobby the water company and Environment Agency for better, and sustainable management of our water resources for the benefit of all.

If like us you find the sight of a dried up river unacceptable, please write to your local MP, Water Company and the Environment Agency asking how we are to achieve sustainable water management, and what proportion is to be left for the environment.

COUNCILLOR UPDATES AND SURGERIES

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/>

We have also been holding regular councillor surgeries for residents who would prefer to speak with us in person, dates TBC.

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

Contact details:

Sarah Cheung Johnson: cllr.cheungjohnson@scambs.gov.uk

Alex Malyon: cllr.malyon@scambs.gov.uk