

District Councillors' Report to Parish Councils: November 2020

Covid-19 Update:

The numbers of infections and hospital admissions as a result of the pandemic are increasing in the district. It is not currently an exponential rise as in some other parts of the country but an obvious cause of concern as the hospitals in the region are now reaching capacity. The NHS cannot afford to close down other services as they did in the Spring and they are also in some cases treating patients who are now more seriously ill than if they had been able to treat them earlier. Having said this anyone who is feeling unwell should still contact their GP in the first instance or clearly call 999 in an emergency.

Assistance from SCDC to assist during this second wave and the Winter months ahead:

The Council has put aside £50 000 to assist with the community response should any villages suffer a spike in cases over the coming months. Upfront grants are being made to Covid response groups of between £100-£400 (depending on the size of a village) to enable them to re-equip volunteers with hand sanitiser and basic PPE, and with the re-printing of leaflets. The funds are also available to help with providing emergency food or electricity card top ups for those who find themselves having to self-isolate and in financial hardship whilst they apply for housing benefit, Universal Credit or to the Council's own hardship fund. This is intended as an emergency stop gap measure and to be administered through the parish councils or the community groups themselves.

Cambridge is showing a higher % of positive tests than the rest of Cambridgeshire, but the University is testing routinely, and we were told that 86% of those testing positive were asymptomatic.

Further support available to residents:

The government self-isolation grants offer £500 to people who have been asked to self-isolate and who meet the Government's eligible criteria.

Grants of £500 are also available to self-isolating people who don't meet the criteria of the above grant, but who meet the criteria of SCDC's discretionary scheme.

Pre-cooked meal delivery scheme: As of the end of October the Waterbeach scheme has been paused. We were working in conjunction with C3 Churches who continue to run the twice weekly food hub at St John's. Their volunteer chefs are now off furlough and have returned to work. The meals were being cooked and frozen in C3's kitchen in central Cambridge. SCDC would like to continue and to extend the scheme. I am on the lookout for appropriately qualified chefs who can volunteer some time on a weekly basis and also new premises where the food can be cooked and chilled/frozen before delivery.

GCP Waterbeach to Cambridge transport consultation:

All households in Landbeach, Milton and Waterbeach should now have received a brochure including maps suggesting proposed route alignments for this public transport scheme. At this stage all of the options proposed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership would be for a segregated offline system which would support autonomous vehicles and be CAM compliant – in layman's terms it wouldn't run along already existing roads and would not require a driver and would have to synchronise with the mayor's metro plans. Understandably there is much fatigue around public consultations having had a glut of them over the Summer and indeed over the past few years. However, please do take part in this early consultation and also fill in the free form box at the end of the survey which provides an opportunity to make different suggestions about route alignments and indeed suggestions for unsegregated schemes. The more people who make their views known the

better. The back of the brochure details all the ways to have your say, the online survey being at: www.greatercambridge.org.uk/W2C-Consultation The consultation closes at **midday on Monday 14th December 2020.**

Cllr Judith Rippeth

North East Cambridge

The report back on the consultation reaffirmed their plans: going forward they want a Community Forum including most of the same people as were invited before, to be involved in future work on the details. They did confirm that Milton Parish Council would be fully consulted and receive briefings about the further work being done and individual applications. The Area Action Plan has little weight at the moment, and will not have much weight before the application we saw for 700 Build to Rent properties is due to be determined. This is disappointing as there has been a huge amount of evidence on the type of development they expect in this area. We district councillors are to meet with this developer (Chesterton Partnerships) to tell them what we think of the idea.

Network Rail

There is a consultation currently, until 1st Nov, on their plans for increasing capacity between Ely and Cambridge. See <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes/anglia/ely-area-capacity-enhancement-scheme> and <https://scams.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=11458>

This involves level crossing closures, and reprovding access where there is no alternative route, and the South Cambs response explicitly includes Fen Road, Chesterton, which is really encouraging. There is no mention of Fen Road, Milton, though. This is a long process leading to a Transport and Works Order in 2023 to be decided in 2024. There will be more specific consultation in 2021 regarding the individual level crossings. We may need to think about whether a foot/cycle bridge or culvert at Fen Road, Milton might be needed (and indeed how that may interface with CSLT plans for their sport lakes which provides such a link).

Fen Road Motocross track (field beside Fen Drove, Milton)

The enforcement notice giving 28 days to remove the earthworks was finally served on 12th October. Nothing seems to have happened yet.

Council Housing

We have just signed a contract for another 7 council houses in Meldreth, with the developer from Gibson Close, Waterbeach. In the last 3 months South Cambs Housing has received 27 new completed houses in Gt Abington and Foxton, and we are on schedule with 39 being built in Hardwick, 4 in West Wickham, 5 in Teversham, 10 in Impington and 36 opposite Comberton Village College. The numbers of homeless people we are housing in B&Bs and temporary accommodation are high and continuing to rise, so moving some existing tenants on into these new homes will really help.

Connections Bus Project AGM

Anna and I attended the AGM. Andrea (youth worker) has been doing some detached youth work including at Impington VC at leaving time in the afternoon, and talking to local young people there. She is also running a babysitting course just for Histon PC at the moment, and finds it works very well. Could we perhaps fund this for 14 young people in Milton? Zoom is now becoming a useful tool for this.

For work in the Milton Youth Centre (or even in the Community Centre to space out) they are only allowed to have one year group at a time which makes it very difficult. And operating their buses in villages with no premises is just impossible to do in a socially distanced way.

Cllr Hazel Smith

Street Traders and Licensing

There has been an increase in the number of street traders and hot food vans, responding to the wish for more eating out options under Covid-19. Unfortunately this has prompted queries in local villages where street traders have been operating without consent. SCDC Licensing has recently advised me:

"There are a complicated issues involved with some street traders and we have sought to find a solution which works within the legislation and our agreed Council policy but also recognises the difficult times we are in. It also needs to work for the proportion of street traders who have paid for consents and always operated legally.

We have agreed that we will not routinely use our enforcement powers, on condition that businesses, where required, do apply for consent by 1st January 2021. We will then process these (which includes DBS check, Parish, Police and Highways consultation) and issue a consent free of charge for the first 6 months. If the business at that point (approx. mid-August) wishes to continue, we will then charge them pro-rata for the remaining 6 months of the normal 12 month consented period.

If we receive complaints or if the consent is not applied for or is refused then we will work in line with our enforcement policy. This is being communicated to those businesses who have already received notification that they are trading outside consent. Existing consented traders will receive a 6 month extension to their consents."

Guidance can be found here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/licensing/types-of-licence/other-types-of-licences/street-trading-licences/>

Cllr Anna Bradnam