

District and County Councillor Report to Hauxton Parish Council June 2021

District Council Notes:

Covid Update

In May rates of Covid-19 slightly increased in Cambridgeshire, but at 15 Covid-19 cases per 100,000 population for the week ending 15 May, we are still below the England average of 21 and the regional average of 17.5. Hospital admissions remain low and there have been no deaths since the end of April.

With more indoor mixing allowed, larger outdoor gatherings, hugging between family and friends and foreign travel, there is a real risk that rates might start to climb.

There is a push for rapid testing to become a normal part of people's everyday life for the time being. There are several ways people can get a rapid test: they can be collected to complete at home or ordered to be delivered to home; people can also take a test at one of their local rapid testing sites; many employers are offering testing in the workplace and of course secondary school pupils access tests from their school. People can also now access rapid testing at a number of venues across Cambridgeshire. There are three new mobile testing vans which will provide people with the chance to take a rapid test or collect a testing kit for home use at convenient locations. The nearest stops for Hauxton are Scotsdales (Great Shelford) and Sidney Street (Cambridge).

East West Rail (EWR)

The District Council response on the East West Rail consultation was approved (subject to the inclusion of some further technical comments) at the cabinet meeting towards the end of May (see item 8 on the agenda here:

<https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=293&MIId=9188&Ver=4>)

The response express no preference on route alignment, broadly because EWR have not provided enough information in order to make such an assessment (particularly with respect to environmental and landscape impacts).

We continue to make the case that closing the road between Hauxton and Little Shelford is unacceptable and we urge all residents and the Parish Council to do the same.

The consultation closes on the 9th June.

Hybrid Meetings

As the Parish Council will no doubt be aware, virtual meetings for formal council business have come to an end. South Cambs Hall cannot accommodate many councillors and officers with the current restrictions (leading to the expensive use of the Conservation Hall at IWM Duxford for the Council AGM). For some committee meetings, like cabinet and planning, South Cambs have introduced hybrid meetings, with formal decision makers (such as members of the planning committee) required to be in the room, while others (such as those making representations) can contribute remotely.

Free outdoor activities to support young people's wellbeing

Wild Minds is our free programme of wellbeing activities to support 14-17 year olds with things like anxiety and low mood, or to build self-esteem and confidence. The programme was set up over the last two years in response to the current context around the mental health of young people within the UK; NHS mental health services have experienced greatly increased referrals over the last 10 years, increased wait times for specialist support, and increasing thresholds to gain access. It offers:

- Free outdoor activities at Milton Country Park (all equipment will be provided too)
- Group based activities including bush craft, survival skills, paddle boarding, yoga and mindfulness – no experience is necessary for any activities
- An hour and a half sessions, each weekend, for eight weeks
- Support from both skilled instructors and youth workers

The course has been developed by South Cambridgeshire District Council together with Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust and is supported by a Clinical Psychologist.

The next eight week course, beginning on Sunday is full but there are places available for both the mid-July and October. Teenagers can register for free here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/wildminds>

Zero Carbon Communities Grant

Up to £100,000 of funding is available for local groups to apply for funding to spend on ambitious projects that reduce carbon emission and promote behaviour change towards low carbon lifestyles. Non-profit groups or organisations that are based in the District, and parish councils, can apply. Other groups, such as social enterprises and community interest companies can apply as part of a partnership led by a parish council or not-for-profit group. More information on the grants and how to apply can be found on the website here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/nature-and-climate-change/zero-carbon-communities/zero-carbon-communities-grant/>

New District Councillor

We're delighted to welcome Fiona Whelan to the team of councillors representing Hauxton following the by-election on 6th May – it's great to be back up to a full complement of councillors and Fiona's experience in local government is a really fantastic addition to the team!

Ian Sollom cllr.sollom@scambs.gov.uk

Fiona Whelan cllr.whelan@scambs.gov.uk

Tony Mason cllr.mason@scambs.gov.uk

County Council Notes:

Following the May 6th elections, the Conservatives lost control of the County Council due to losing 9 seats to the Lib Dems. In four District Council by-elections, the Lib Dems won all four seats, the ward including Harston was won by Fiona Whelan who joins Ian Sollom and Tony Mason as your representatives.

With their grateful thanks for the support shown by a significant majority, the election returned Brian and Maria King to represent the *Sawston and Shelfords Division* of the County Council.

During the campaign and currently, the East-West Rail Consultation proposal and consultation dominates most, if not all conversations. The consultation runs until the 9th of June. Please encourage as many residents as possible to complete the consultation.

Since the elections, it has been announced that the previous opposition groups have combined and created a Joint Agreement to run the County's Administration. That agreement was ratified at the Full Council meeting held in the unusual surroundings of IWM Duxford on 18th May (required by the disappointing loss of legislation supporting virtual meetings).



Lib Dem Group Lead, Lucy Nethsingha is the new Leader of the Council, and her Labour counterpart Elisa Meschini is Deputy Leader. All 4 independents have joined the new administration.

The joint agreement contains a series of progressive policies aimed at COVID recovery and Climate Change redress. Some of the highlights are as follows:

1. Environment, sustainability, and the climate emergency

We will put climate change and biodiversity at the heart of the Council's work and at the heart of its land management strategy. We commit to reviewing the Council's Sustainability Strategy, with the aim of moving forward the Net Zero target for Cambridgeshire County Council towards 2030.

2. Communities

We will tackle poverty, create opportunity, promote diversity, and do all we can to foster inclusion across the county. We will revive, further develop, and implement an anti-poverty strategy for Cambridgeshire. We will aim to offer more accessible services such as youth services and children's centres, to provide more help for young people and families. We will keep the county's libraries open, in public ownership, and ensure their services remain free for everyone on Universal Credit.

3. Health and care

We believe all residents in need of care deserve this to be provided equitably and to be of high quality. We will champion the concept of independent living, using personal budgets and direct payments for those who choose, and explore directly provided residential care and community-based models where possible.

We will adopt a 'health in all policies' approach, as advocated by the World Health Organisation. Mindful of the importance of clean air for public health, we will increase air quality monitoring across Cambridgeshire.

4. Children and education

We will campaign to keep state nursery schools open, to keep schools in local authority control, and for fair funding for Cambridgeshire schools. We will maintain free school meals for eligible children during school holidays, and work with schools and partners to widen the network of breakfast clubs in schools during term-time.

5. Transport

We will focus on modal shift to encourage more residents out of their cars, along with infrastructure development, the encouragement of sustainable travel, and securing safe routes and connections for pedestrians and cyclists. We will seek to invest more in road, footway, and cycleway maintenance and routine gully clearance, and end the freeze on residents' parking schemes.

6. Finance, growth and commercial investment

The new administration will immediately initiate a full review of Council finances, including major projects and the Council's Transformation Fund, and impose a temporary freeze on such schemes until the review has been completed.

The Council will pay the Real Living Wage for all its employees and work towards achieving Real Living Wage Foundation accreditation including all contractors, with monitoring to ensure continuous progress towards meeting it.

Brian and Maria look forward to serving the Hauxton Community and make ourselves available.

- Maria King maria.king@cambridgeshire.gov.uk 07764 609 061
- Brian Milnes brian.milnes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk 07971 886 113