

Cllrs Lorna Dupré and Mark Inskip

MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2021

Mepal Outdoor Centre

The District Council's Finance & Assets Committee voted by a majority to apply for planning permission to demolish the remaining structures at Mepal Outdoor Centre. Ironically the decision was made in the same week in which the Council's Operational Services Committee received the report of its youth consultation, showing that provision for local young people was 'depleted and sketchy'.

The Council's spending to date on its crematorium proposals for the site will shortly approach a quarter of a million pounds—without a planning application yet in sight or a single brick laid.

Garden Close Sutton Tree Preservation Order

We are delighted that the District Council's Planning Committee agreed unanimously to uphold the Tree Preservation Order for 57 trees on the site behind Garden Close. The application was referred to the Committee because planning applicant Abbey Homes had objected to it.

A proposed amendment to remove this protection from some of the trees on the site was thankfully defeated by seven votes to three. Lorna addressed the Committee to support the protection of the trees.

Bus, walking and cycling

The District Council's bus review working group met on 10 March and received a long and unordered list of all the comments residents had made about walking and cycling in the district. Councillors agreed that this list needed to be sorted into geographical areas, and mapped, in order to be prioritised.

The Finance & Assets Committee only 'noted' the working group's request for £30,000 to undertake feasibility studies on new cycle routes, but agreed that quotes for a number of route feasibility studies should be sought.

The most dangerous crossing in the district for pedestrians and cyclists is the newly redesigned BP/A10 roundabout, according to local residents. A huge amount of money has been spent to make sustainable travel more difficult.

Annual Council meeting

Due to the refusal of the Government to extend the legislation which permits online council meetings, the District Council has had to move its Annual Meeting

from 20 May to 22 April in order to avoid having to hold it in person. The difficulty of holding a meeting for 28 councillors, officers, press, and public in a way that would enable everyone involved to socially distance was simply too great.

Face to face appointments

From Monday 12 April the District Council will be offering limited face-to-face appointments at The Grange in Ely for enquiries that cannot be completed by phone, email or virtual call.

These appointments currently relate only to:

- EU Settlement Scheme interviews
- Meetings regarding homelessness which cannot be completed using phone, email or virtual call
- Training for taxi drivers
- Essential appointments with a member of customer services
- Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE) interviews

Appointments must be pre-booked:

- online (at <https://self.eastcambs.gov.uk/MyServices> and choose Face To Face Appointment Request)
- by calling 01353 665555
- by emailing customerservices@eastcambs.gov.uk

Customers will be required to wait outside for their appointment as no internal waiting areas are available, and only one customer will be allowed into the building for the appointment, unless the customer is vulnerable or exceptional circumstances apply.

Customer details will be recorded and held for 21 days in accordance with Test and Trace arrangements.

Parents now eligible for self-isolation payments

Parents or guardians of children who are required to self-isolate may now be entitled to claim the £500 self-isolation payment. The Government's new rules say: "You might be able to get a payment of £500 if you've been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, or you're the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate.

"If you're eligible for either the Test and Trace Support Payment or a

discretionary payment, you'll receive the £500 payment in addition to any benefits and Statutory Sick Pay that you receive currently."

Single issue Local Plan review

The Council is undertaking a Single Issue Review of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015. The first consultation runs until 23:59 on Friday 7 May 2021.

The review is known as a 'Single Issue Review' because it focuses on one aspect of the Local Plan only. One area has been identified as being in need of update, namely Policy GROWTH1 which uses an out of date housing requirement figure. The vast majority of the Local Plan 2015 will not be amended.

The Single Issue Review Stage 1 consultation document is the first formal stage of the review process. Its main purpose is to seek views as to whether the right issues are covered and that all suitable options for accommodating change are considered.

The document sets out six Proposals on which comments are welcome

- by email to planningpolicy@eastcambs.gov.uk
- by post to Strategic Planning Team, East Cambridgeshire District Council, The Grange, Ely CB7 4EE

More information, and the consultation link, are at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/local-plan-review>

Meet your councillors

We are continuing to offer online Meet Your Councillors events to replace our face to face ones in the Community Room at Sutton School. The next ones will take place on Tuesday 13 April and Tuesday 11 May from 6:30 to 7:30PM. Email mark@markinskip.org.uk to book a slot.

Cllr Lorna Dupré

Cllr Mark Inskip

District Councillors for the Sutton ward