

Cllr Lorna Dupré

MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2021

COVID-19

Cases

COVID-19 cases in Cambridgeshire rose sharply to mid-July, but fell between 17 and 24 July. All Cambridgeshire districts except Fenland have reported a decrease in case rates per 100,000 between 17 and 24 July.

One COVID-related death was registered in Cambridgeshire in the week ending 16 July—up one on the previous week.

Vaccinations

Information about walk-in vaccination clinics is available at thevaccinators.co.uk. Alternatively, appointments can be booked online at www.nhs.uk

Testing

Mobile rapid testing vehicles continue to visit sites across the county, offering on-the-spot lateral flow tests as well as test kits to take away and complete at home. You can also order kits to use at home. More information at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/rapidtesting

Information

Do check the Council's public health information messages about COVID which are updated regularly.

- <https://twitter.com/CambsCC>
 - <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-overview>
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A10/A142 BP roundabout

I have continued to lobby for action to provide safe crossing of the A10 for pedestrians and cyclists near the BP roundabout at Ely. This includes an online meeting with the Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough in which I outlined the dangerous situation left by his predecessor. I also asked a formal question about the roundabout at the July meeting of the Combined Authority's Highways & Transport Committee. A local resident asked an almost identical question at the same meeting, so it is clear that this matter is high on the local agenda. The Mayor undertook to get his officers to talk to County Council officers and report back to him.

Local Highways Improvement bids

The closing date for bids for 2022/23 is now the end of September, and the application form is now on the Council's website at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Local-Highway-Improvement-Application-Form-2022-23.docx>

Highways works

A10 Littleport to Ely

The County Council will be carrying out repairs on the A10 between the A1101 Wisbech Road Roundabout Littleport and the B1411 Ely Leisure Centre Roundabout, Ely. The road will be closed between 9:00PM and 5:00AM over approximately thirty nights, including some weekends.

The work will be carried out in two different sections:

SECTION 1

Location: A1101 roundabout to Grange Lane roundabout for up to 10 nights

Date: 1-8 and 14-15 August 2021 including weekends

Alternative routes

- 1-8 and 15 August: C152 Grange Lane, Littleport — C315 Ely Road / Crown Lane / Wellington Street / Station Road Littleport and vice versa.
- 14 August ONLY: C152 Grange Lane, Littleport — C315 Ely Road / Crown Lane / Wisbech Road Littleport and vice versa.

SECTION 2

Location: Grange Lane to B1411 Leisure Village for up to 20 nights

Date: 4-24 September 2021 including weekends

Alternative route

- C315 Ely Road / Crown Lane / Wellington Street / Station Road, Littleport.

Gravel Head Bridge

The recent works to Gravel Head Bridge have left a significant ramp at the entrance onto the bridge, despite tweaks to try to improve matters. I have taken this up with council officers, as it is evidently very unsatisfactory.

The engineers have responded saying "We are aware there is still a bit of a ramp onto the structure but it is within tolerances for traffic approaching at an appropriate speed. To resolve the dissatisfaction experienced by the road users we shall be looking replace 10m of surfacing from the ramp which will ease the harshness when crossing the bridge. Once I have firm dates I will email all interested parties with details."

I will continue to keep a close eye on this as it is clearly not acceptable.

A1123

The County Council's Highways & Transport Committee has decided not to pursue at this time the suggestion of declassifying the A1123 and A1421. This would have cost the council a quarter of a million pounds each year in lost Government grant to maintain our roads, and would have done little or nothing to reduce traffic on these roads.

However, it is clear that something has to be done to address the significant traffic on the A1123, and the Council has therefore undertaken to work with communities along the route on practical local measures which could be taken to discourage traffic from this route where possible.

Peer review

One of the first actions of the Joint Administration was to ask the Local Government Association to carry out a 'peer review' of the Council. This involves a team of experienced officers and councillors from other authorities spending time with the Council as 'peers' to provide challenge and share learning. The 'peers' were with us for a week in the third week of July. We will receive a comprehensive report and recommendations from the peer team and then identify our own action plan to respond to their findings.

Councillor allowances

An Independent Panel has carried out the required review of councillors' allowances on the County Council. It has recommended very little change, but will revisit this in twelve to eighteen months' time when the new administration is more settled and people are more used to the demands of their roles.

Sunnica

The Council has instructed its Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State to express its concerns about the size and scale of the proposed commercial Sunnica solar farm, and its impact on the local landscape and local communities. The installation will spread across the boundary between West Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire, and feed into battery storage near Burwell.

EU Settlement Scheme

My motion to the Full Council meeting on 20 July, calling on the Council and its partners to provide support and advice to EU citizens living in Cambridgeshire and making late application to the EU Settlement Scheme or still waiting to hear the outcome of their application, was approved unanimously.

Farmgate

The County Council's Audit Committee has received further updates on the progress of 'Farmgate'—the investigation into the award to then County Council deputy leader Roger Hickford of the tenancy of a county-owned farm.

The Council's Constitution & Ethics Committee has received a highly expurgated copy of the report by global accounting firm Mazars, and further legal advice—all in confidential session. In light of the ongoing investigation, the Council has drawn up guidance to councillors on handling conflicts of interest, which has been recommended by the Committee for adoption by Full Council.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Combined Authority's new Chief Executive has been named as Eileen Milner, who currently leads the national Education & Skills Funding Agency. She will take up her new position in the autumn.

The Government announced on Friday 30 July that it was withholding 'Capability Fund' money from the Combined Authority, saying that "Further assurances are required before funding is confirmed". This money is intended to enable local transport authorities to promote cycling and walking in their areas by the development of infrastructure plans, including drawing up bids for capital funding that are compliant with local transport note LTN1/20, and carrying out behaviour change activities, such as training and promotion. At the time of writing it is not known, not even by the Mayor, what assurances the Government is seeking, or what they relate to. As Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee I have written to the Combined Authority's Chief Executive for more information.

The Government has provided the Combined Authority with £2M to progress the Outline Business Case for dualling the A10 between Milton and Ely.

Meet Your Councillor

Sutton ward district councillor Mark Inskip and I will be holding our virtual surgery via Zoom from 6:30 to 7:30PM on

- Tuesday 10 August 2021
- Tuesday 14 September 2021

Please contact Mark at mark@markinskip.org.uk to book your timeslot.

Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton division