

Cllr Lorna Dupré

MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2023

PRIORS FIELD GP PRACTICE

Following the strong community response to the news that the Fenland Group Practice would be 'retiring from the contract' at Priors Field surgery in Sutton from the end of March, NHS Cambridgeshire moved swiftly to find a solution.

Malling Health moved in on Saturday 1 April, under a temporary contract. Apart from a brief telephony problem early on Monday, the transition has been smooth and patients have been very complimentary indeed about the service.

The practice will be staffed by locums as the contract is only for twelve months, but these have been booked for at least the next six months to provide continuity. Six staff from the previous contract are continuing in post. An interim practice manager has been appointed and began on Sunday 2 April.

NHS Cambridgeshire is continuing the search for a permanent solution for GP services in Sutton to serve residents of Sutton and the surrounding villages.

FULL COUNCIL

By-election

A by-election for the Soham South & Haddenham seat on Cambridgeshire County Council will take place on Thursday 4 May, the same day as the local elections, following the resignation of Cllr Dan Schumann.

Voter ID

The motion I submitted on the Government's decision to introduce new Voter ID requirements for elections was passed at the meeting of the full council (though a corresponding one which I proposed at the District Council was voted down).

It called on the Council to write to Government about the negative effect of the rushed changes which will deny many people their legitimate right to vote; and offered County Council facilities such as libraries and family centres as locations where residents could be encouraged and helped to get the photo ID they will need to show in order to be able to vote in the elections on Thursday 4 May.

Congestion charge petition

A petition was submitted calling for a referendum of all Cambridgeshire residents on the proposals by the Greater Cambridge Partnership for a 'sustainable travel zone' in Cambridge including a congestion charge. There was also a motion calling for such a referendum, at a cost of £1.5M.

I opposed the motion for the following reasons.

1. A referendum doesn't resolve this complex set of inter-related issues, about climate, and air quality, and the use of public space, and how to offer everyone who needs it the opportunity to move around the county efficiently, affordably, and safely, and about who should pay for that.
2. A referendum would give a vote to many people whom the issue does not affect at all, and deny a vote to many people whom it affects significantly.
3. The 24,000 responses to the GCP's consultation will contain a lot of information about what people want, and what they don't. This will be the basis on which the GCP will decide whether or not it wishes to progress with its current scheme, or some other scheme, or no scheme at all.

If the GCP does decide it wishes to progress with a scheme, and if it involves any form of road pricing, it will be up to the County Council (not the District Council, as some politicians are pretending) to vote on that. Nobody yet knows what such a scheme—if the GCP chooses to progress with one at all—might look like.

Opposing a referendum does not necessarily mean supporting the GCP proposals. I could not support the proposals as they stand, and have been saying so since the summer of last year. A major rethink is needed.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Local Highway Improvement schemes

Solar studs along the B1411 Ely to Little Downham have been installed at last.

West Fen Road

West Fen Road remains closed between Coveney and the A10 due to a collapsed culvert which is believed to be the responsibility of the Internal Drainage Board. This closure will last for some weeks until the culvert is repaired. It is very important indeed that the closure is respected and barriers are not moved.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLOR

Surgery arrangements for 2023/24 will be confirmed after the elections on 4 May. Meanwhile, I can be contacted

- by email at lorna@lornadupre.org.uk
- by Facebook Messenger
- by phone on 07930 337596

Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton division