

# Cllr Lorna Dupré

## MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2023

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### ADULTS & HEALTH

#### Priors Field

NHS Cambridgeshire issued the following update at the end of September about ongoing decisions regarding Malling Health's interim contract at Priors Field surgery.

"As you are aware, we have been continuing to work on a longer-term solution for primary care provision in Sutton, and work on this is ongoing.

Alongside this work, we have formally agreed to enact the second year of our interim contract with Malling Health to provide primary care services to the patients of Priors Field Surgery until 31 March 2025. These services will continue to be delivered from Priors Field Surgery's current location, and this lease agreement is also in place until 31 March 2025.

We remain committed to working with the local community to ensure Sutton and the surrounding areas continue to have primary care services that meet their needs both now and, in the future, and we will keep you updated with further news on longer-term solutions as they progress.

The latest updates can also be found on our dedicated webpage – [www.cpics.org.uk/sutton](http://www.cpics.org.uk/sutton) – this includes the feedback reports from the most recent public meetings that took place in June 2023 alongside the PPG report."

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### ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

#### Major planning applications update

The decision from the Secretary of State on the Sunnica solar farm application has been delayed. Instead of the expected announcement date of 28 September, the new date is now 7 December.

#### How do you recycle your household plastics?

To be in with the chance of winning a £50 voucher, take the Pledge2Recycle survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/QBCK2XL> and share your thoughts. The survey is being conducted by RECOUP, the UK's leading independent authority and trusted voice on plastics resource efficiency and recycling. Learn more about how you can better recycle your household waste with Pledge2Recycle at <https://pledge2recycle.co.uk/>

## Sustainable Farming Incentive 2023 fund

Applications are now open for the Sustainable Farming Incentive. The SFI pays farmers for taking actions that support food production, farm productivity and resilience, whilst protecting the environment. More information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-application-dates-for-sustainable-farming-incentive-2023>

## Help to insulate your home

If your home has an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D to G, and if you are in council tax band A-D (in England) you may qualify for cheaper (or even free) insulation.

The government has launched a £1 billion scheme to help some families insulate their homes. Families in lower council tax bands with less energy-efficient homes will be offered upgrades such as roof, loft or cavity wall insulation.

You can use an online checker for the scheme to find out if you are eligible. The tool will ask a series of questions – including how you heat your home, whether your home has solid or cavity walls, and if you are receiving any benefits. You can be a homeowner, landlord or tenant (either renting privately or from a housing association). If you're a tenant, speak to your landlord before you apply. You'll need their permission before any insulation can be installed.

**<https://www.gov.uk/apply-great-british-insulation-scheme>**

A separate online checker has also been launched for the Home Upgrade Grant, which will help people in off-gas-grid homes with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D to G. The grant provides energy efficiency upgrades and low carbon heating to households in England.

**<https://www.gov.uk/apply-home-upgrade-grant>**

If you use the online checkers you will then be referred to either your energy supplier, for support from the Energy Company Obligation programme and Great British Insulation Scheme, or your council for the Home Upgrade Grant.

## Flood action conference

Community flood groups, local authorities from across the Great Ouse catchment and surrounding areas, and industry representatives came together on Thursday 21 September for Cambridgeshire County Council's second flood action conference.

Speaking from the conference, I recorded a short video about how the council is preparing for climate change, including the importance of protecting our communities from flooding, and the role community flood groups can play:

**[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QanX6Cx5kKE&ab\\_channel=CambridgeshireCountyCouncil](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QanX6Cx5kKE&ab_channel=CambridgeshireCountyCouncil)**

## **A14 and Northstowe archaeological finds display**

Cambridgeshire County Council has decided a way forward to display archaeological finds from recent digs at Northstowe and the new A14 construction, after a project funded by National Highways and Homes England was put in jeopardy when the contractor went into administration.

The Council has decided to find alternative venues to deliver an exhibition and will be considering different accessible venues in parts of the county linked to the areas where the artefacts may have originated.

## **Smart street lamps**

Cambridgeshire is one of six areas to be granted funding to test smart street lamps that can house EV charging hubs and boost wireless coverage including 5G. The County Council has been awarded £220,000 to install 'smart poles' on which to host various smart city infrastructure.

## **Open Radio Access Network**

Cambridgeshire County Council has also been awarded £6,523,645, plus £2,699,740 of commercial funding—a total funding amount of £9,223,385—to trial new mobile technology to improve mobile connectivity in busy locations where many people are trying to use mobile devices at the same time.

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## **HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT**

### **Sutton crossings**

The two crossings on The Brook have now been installed and are working well. I have given positive feedback to the council highways team.

### **Weight limit for Sutton**

Cllr Mark Inskip and I had a positive meeting with a county council officer earlier this month to identify the additional data the council will need in order to consider a weight limit request for Sutton. We now have a plan of action which Mark can put to the parish council.

### **Co-op verge**

I am grateful to our Local Highways Officer Phil Harty for responding so promptly following a request to clear the overgrowth around the Sutton Co-op. This will enable wild-flowering of the area.

### **Weeds and street sweeping**

At the County Council's Highways & Transport Committee meeting on 3 October I raised the issue of the relationship between weeds and street sweeping. Residents have complained about debris from unswept streets (district council) being caught up in weeds from uncleared gutters and gulleys (county council). I was pleased to be reassured that county council officers were entering into

discussions with district council officers about how better to align management of our streets, kerbs, gulleys and gutters.

### More 20MPH schemes get the green light

Twenty more 20MPH schemes across East Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire have been given the go-ahead in the latest round of funding from the County Council.

In East Cambridgeshire, Burwell and Wicken were successful in their bids for village-wide schemes. Witchford, Isleham, Upware, Sutton, Chippenham, Stuntney and Wilburton missed out this time.

The County Council is keen to find additional funding to increase the number of applications it can support. With eighty-eight applications received, it is clear that road safety measures are very popular with residents and local communities.

### No waiting in Witchford

Proposals have been made for No Waiting orders on lengths of the following roads in Witchford.

- Common Road
- Field End
- Granary End
- Victoria Green

The public notice, draft order, drawing, and statement of reasons can be found at <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/traffic-regulation-orders/permanent-traffic-regulation-orders> (reference number PRO934). The deadline for comments is 12 October.

### Free vehicle checks

A series of free vehicle checking events is being organised around the county throughout October, in support of the national campaign for safer vehicles.

Members of the public are invited to attend a free vehicle check session, where they will be taught how to conduct a simple check on their own vehicle and spot potentially dangerous problems. The check consists of examining tyre condition and tread depth, ensuring correctly working external lights and correct washer fluid levels. To assist members of the public, a free top-up of screen wash will be offered to every participating vehicle, as well as free resources to help with subsequent checking.

The events are being delivered by the Vision Zero Road Safety Partnership, of which Cambridgeshire County Council is an active member. The partnership

aims to reduce the number of road traffic collisions across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and for zero deaths on the county's roads by 2040.

More information on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CambsRoadSafety](https://www.facebook.com/CambsRoadSafety)

### **Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP)**

At its Board meeting on 28 September, the Greater Cambridge Partnership decided not to proceed with the revised Making Connections proposals, as they clearly did not have sufficient public or political support.

The day before the Board meeting, I was a signatory to the following statement, which reflects my position on the rejected proposals, and on what now needs to be done.

“Cambridgeshire is a fantastic place to live and work, but not always so fantastic to get around. The Greater Cambridge Partnership's proposals are a sincere attempt to improve that situation and were rightly explored fully in consultation, but they have become counter-productive. It is clear that they would negatively impact too many people whilst bringing too little benefit to others.

It's time to find new ways forward, building on those elements of the GCP's work that have clear public support: better public transport and better cycling and walking; cleaner air and a safer, less congested Cambridge; a city accessible to all.

For these improvements to take place, our roads do need to be less congested and we do need to find sustainable sources of funding. However, we are clear that the congestion charging element of the Making Connections consultation is not the way to achieve this and must stop.

With policy from the Conservative government changing every week, residents and businesses in Cambridge need some certainty from their local political representatives. We make our commitment that the proposals as set out in the Making Connections consultation for funding the improvements to public transport will not be taken forward this year or in subsequent years.

Doing nothing is not an option. We need to work with partners to find those new ways forward. We give our strong support to the work being done at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority on bus reform, and will work with partners to push for improvements to our local bus services to move ahead as swiftly as possible. We owe our young and older people the commitment to ensuring that they have access to the same educational and work opportunities and health services, whether they live in our villages, towns or cities. We must reduce

the level of car dependency in our county, not only for environmental reasons, but also to tackle the unequal access for those living in rural areas who do not have access to a car.

In the immediate term, there are also many ways to improve active travel by providing safer walking and cycling routes, sustainable solutions to last-mile deliveries and behaviour change programmes to support individual and business transitions to greater use of active travel and public transport.

Looking further ahead we emphasise the need for a long term and ambitious transport vision. This would include better buses, trams, light rail and trains; transport hubs where people can safely transfer between buses, trams etc and from bikes or cars; and combined tickets for our journeys. We will work together to put pressure on the government to fund the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements which can transform train services to the east and north, spreading opportunities to those in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland. We will continue to encourage East West Rail to work with communities to ensure a strong business case for excellent, electrified rail links towards Cambourne, St Neots and Bedford. We will work with the Combined Authority to find solutions to link Wisbech into rail services, whether these be via heavy rail, light rail or trams.

Our area is one of enormous opportunities, we are determined that those opportunities are available to more residents, young or old, wherever they live in our amazing county."

### **LEDs in street lights**

A programme to replace the lighting in the County Council's street lights with LEDs is hoped to repay itself over six to eight years and reducing the council's energy consumption.

### **Roadworks and repairs**

The A141 Fenland Way in Chatteris has been resurfaced, with works now completed after starting in August. As part of the council's pledge to create a greener Cambridgeshire, materials used in the project helped to reduce the impact on the environment—in this case cutting carbon emissions by approximately 9.5 tonnes.

The resurfacing of Fenland Way is just one of four major projects under way across the county. Work on the A141 Warboys Bypass is due to finish this month. The last two projects will be in South Cambridgeshire (A10 at Milton) from October to December, and East Cambridgeshire (A1101 Bates Drove in Littleport) in March 2024.

## Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The long-awaited revision of the Combined Authority's Local Transport & Connectivity Plan for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough was vetoed at the September meeting of the Combined Authority Board.

Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald, leader of Peterborough City Council, exercised his right of veto to scupper the plan—apparently to the complete surprise of his own council Chief Executive, and without speaking in the meeting to explain why. The Plan had already been delayed from the July meeting of the Board, when Cllr Fitzgerald had threatened to veto it.

After the September meeting, Cllr Fitzgerald suggested that his vote had something to do with Combined Authority plans to force congestion charging and low traffic neighbourhoods onto Peterborough. However, this would be impossible even if anyone wished to, as Peterborough City Council is the highways authority for the city and thus responsible for any such decisions.

Meanwhile, the Board decided to approve the extension of 51 bus service contracts to March 2025, and of the Ting 'demand responsive transport' contract in Huntingdonshire to March 2024. These 51 services include the Ely Zipper, the Zipper 2, and the 125 from Little Downham. Services recommended for further review include the 8A from March to Cottenham.

The Board also agreed to commission a review by an independent auditor of the bus franchising assessment—a step forward towards the aim of improving bus services across Cambridgeshire.

## MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

- **Sutton:** Cllr Mark Inskip and I will be in the school Community Room on Monday 6 November and Monday 4 December, 6:30-7:30PM.
- **Witchford:** Cllr Dr Caroline Shepherd and I will be in St Andrew's Hall in Main Street on Monday 16 October and Monday 20 November, 6:30-7:30PM.
- **Little Downham:** I hope to be at the Book Café in the Village Hall on Friday 3 November and Friday 1 December from 10:00 to 11:00AM.
- **Coveney:** I hope to be at the Coveney coffee morning on Wednesday 1 November.

I can also be contacted

- by email at [lorna@lornadupre.org.uk](mailto:lorna@lornadupre.org.uk)
- on Facebook
- by phone on 07930 337596

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## Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton division