

## County Councillor Monthly Report - Sawston & Shelford Division

(includes Sawston, Little and Great Shelfords, Stapleford, Babraham, South Trimpington, Hauxton, Harston, Newton and Haslingfield)

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### Local Government reorganisation

All principal local authorities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough need to respond to the Government no later than Friday 21 March to outline what they are considering for new, larger, unitary councils for our area.

The criteria continue to include an expectation that the new councils will cover populations of at least 500,000 unless there are special circumstances; and that existing district council boundaries will be the building blocks, again unless a strong argument can be made against this.

A further submission will need to be made to the Government in the autumn. There will be advantages to moving to a unitary council system, not least more clarity and accountability over who is responsible for services such as street lights or waste. But it's clear that the Government is wanting a quick solution, rather than taking the time—and consultation—to do it at a slower pace.

### Old Shire Hall

The sale of (old) Shire Hall in Cambridge is on the agenda of the Assets & Procurement Committee for Friday 7 March. The premises was put back on the market for disposal in February 2024, and attracted fifteen bids. Following evaluation this number was reduced to a shortlist of four.

An exclusivity period with Bidder A ended in October 2024 without a sale being completed. Subsequent discussions took place with the other bidders on the shortlist. An unconditional long leasehold bid from Bidder E has been recommended for acceptance, together with draft Heads of Terms.

Pending Committee approval, the Heads of Terms will be agreed, and an exclusivity period will be entered with Bidder E, with a view to exchange contracts within this three-month period.

### Stapleford School chosen for a new Government pilot scheme

Fourteen primary schools across Cambridgeshire are set to run a free breakfast club as part of the pilot for a new Government scheme in April. In total 750 schools across the country have been selected to take part in an 'early adopters' scheme which will test the delivery of the programme before it is implemented nationally.

The pilot is set to launch in April and will run until July, before it is introduced across the UK. The schools chosen for the pilot will offer a free breakfast to all pupils and at least 30 minutes of childcare before school. The fourteen Cambridgeshire schools selected are:

- Buckden CofE Primary School, St Neots
- Peckover Primary School, Wisbech
- Mepal and Witcham CofE Primary School, Ely
- Hartford Junior School, Huntingdon
- Hartford Infant and Pre School, Huntingdon
- **Stapleford Community Primary School, Cambridge**
- Upwood Primary Academy, Huntingdon
- St Laurence Catholic Primary School, Cambridge
- Great Wilbraham CofE Primary School, Great Wilbraham
- Meldreth Primary School, Royston
- The Spinney Primary School, Cambridge
- Kings Hedges Primary School, Chesterton
- Northborough Primary School, Peterborough
- St John Henry Newman Catholic VA Primary School, Peterborough

The Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson said that the free breakfast clubs would help break the link "between background and success" for families. The scheme has been welcomed by the headteachers' union, though they fear that the funding allocated by Government will fall short of the cost, and have said it is 'crucial' that concerns are addressed before the national rollout.

### **Security support for domestic abuse survivors**

The council has renewed a scheme which helps survivors of domestic abuse to feel safer and more secure in their own homes.

The scheme provides additional security measures which can delay or prevent a perpetrator from entering a property. It supported 525 people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough between April 2023 and March 2024.

Measures offered depend on the level of risk, and may include window alarms, additional bolts, lock changes, security advice, video doorbells, dummy cameras, and response lights. The service is available for all types of housing, whether owned, privately rented, or social housing.

The contract will be funded by a Safe Accommodation grant from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), enabling the council to carry out its statutory duty.

### **Capital maintenance and improvement works**

On Tuesday 4 March the Highways & Transport Committee approved proposals for spending on capital maintenance and improvements. This includes the additional £8.146M from Government for highways maintenance.

The total capital budget for highways maintenance and improvements in 25/26 is £59.332 million. This is funded through a combination of grant funding and council investment.

Specific items for our Division in the coming year's programme include the following carriageway reconstructions:

- A1301 Great Shelford Tunwells Lane from Grahams Road to and inc. traffic signals
- A505 Pampisford Causeway Roundabout at A1301
- B1368 Harston London Road From junction with High Street to number 70
- Haslingfield Scotts Yard Fountains Lane to end
- Sawston St Mary's Road Church Lane to Huddleston Way
- Sawston Hall Crescent Huddleston Way to end
- Sawston Huddleston Way Church Lane to end
- Great Shelford Granhams Road A1301 to speed limit
- Haslingfield Fountains Lane High St to New Rd

A full list of proposed capital maintenance and improvement works for our division and the rest of Cambridgeshire can be found at [DRAFT 5yr CHMP 2025\\_26 to - 2030 31.xlsx](#)

### **Bus franchise**

The Mayor has now signed into effect a decision to introduce franchising of bus services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This would put control of routes, fares and timetables into democratic hands, and enable profit-making routes to subsidise socially needed but less used ones.

### **Mobile Libraries and support with SIM cards**

The mobile library will be visiting Harston on Wednesday 5th March. We have a great range of books for all ages. We also distribute free NHS hearing aid batteries and walking stick ferrules and also sell stamps.

Thanks to the National Databank we are now able to issue free SIM cards to anyone over the age of 18 who is on a low income. Come and chat to our staff for more information.

Bring your library card or you can sign up on board. Come and see what we have to offer.

### C3 – 1st Wednesday

- Newnham, Pinehurst/Grange Road 9.30-10.15am
- Newnham, Gough Way (layby nr 67) 10.25-11.10am
- Newton, The Green 11.30-11.55am
- Thriplow, Middle Street/Shop 12.10-12.35pm
- Thriplow, Sheralds Croft Lane 12.40-1.00pm
- Gt Chishill, The Church 2.00-2.40pm
- Heydon, Fowlmere Road 2.50-3.20pm
- Fowlmere, High Street 3.35-4.10pm

