

County Councillor report - Sawston & Shelford Division

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

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November 2022 update

Buses update

The Combined Authority's bus procurement concluded last month, with all eighteen routes which had been cut by Stagecoach, along with all of the five reduced services, seeing some level of service reinstated. Our services are now run by A2B services (as before) and Centrebus (replacing Stagecoach)

[Route 31](#)

[Route 26](#)

[Route 75](#)

The Combined Authority had set aside £1.7M for subsidies to operators to keep them running. Currently, the total cost is expected to be about £1.25M because bus operators were limited in what services they were prepared to provide. The Combined Authority will be monitoring how the new services are working.

As well as ensuring vital bus services continue between October and the end of March 2023, the Combined Authority is working to put in place a sustainable and affordable bus network from April 2023 onwards.

All this is a sharp reminder of the reality of the current deregulated bus system, and the problems caused by sixty per cent of bidding authorities in England, including Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, receiving no Government funding for their Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs).

The Combined Authority's Overview & Scrutiny Committee was told in a report from its lead member for buses that two reasons had been given for the failure of the Department for Transport to fund Cambridgeshire's Bus Service Improvement Plan:

1. in DfT's view we had insufficient commitment to road charging, active travel and bus priority schemes in our area; and
2. the DfT subsequently applied a deprivation index score to each BSIP submitted and given our high overall growth, this meant that the money tended to be allocated in the north of England rather than to us.

A refreshed Bus Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is due to be presented to the Combined Authority's Transport & Infrastructure Committee in November, alongside a refreshed Bus Service Improvement Plan and a case for Government investment.

Work is also continuing to further develop the business case for a franchised bus network in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, but this will need money for the necessary investment in the service.

Passengers with questions about bus services can email passenger.transport@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

Greater Cambridge 'Public Transport & City Access' consultation

The Greater Cambridge Partnership has now opened its public consultation on its proposals for a significant expansion of bus services in Cambridge and the city's travel to work area, including South Cambridgeshire, to be paid for by the introduction of a congestion charge in Cambridge in 2027/28. It is very important indeed that local residents here in South Cambridgeshire read the proposals, complete the survey, and let the Greater Cambridge Partnership know what the proposals would mean for them.

The survey closes at midday on Friday 23 December. The consultation website, including the survey, brochure, map book, frequently asked questions, and contact details, can be found at <https://consultcambus.engagehq.com/making-connections-2022>

Household Support Fund

The eligibility criteria for the third round of the Household Support Fund (October 2022 to March 2023) have been agreed. The amount available for the third round of funding is £3,581,424. This is proposed to be spent once again on school meal vouchers for the school holidays, and on direct one-off grants to eligible households. It is proposed that such grants should be raised from £100 to £110 to reflect increasing inflation.

Local Highways Improvements

The Local Highways Improvement process have now been agreed, and the new timetable is as follows.

- Application window opens Monday 31 October 2022
- Application window closes at 5:00PM on Friday 6 January 2023
- Feasibility studies undertaken February to April 2023
- Panel meetings May 2023
- Report to committee including prioritised list for approval June 2023
- Programming, design, consultation July 2023 to March 2024
- Pricing and construction March to August 2024

20MPH scheme

Proposals for the process to award funding for applications for 20MPH schemes will be reported to the December meeting of the Highways & Transport Committee. I have been pressing for this to be put in place as soon as possible.

HGV policy

The HGV policy has now been approved with a couple of minor additions about length and width restriction applications.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roadsand-pathways/heavy-or-abnormal-loads-on-the-highway/heavy-goods-vehiclehgv-policy>