

Councillor Peter McDonald Duxford Division & Ward:
District Councillor for Parishes of Duxford, Hinxton, Ickleton, Babraham, Pampisford.
County Councillor also for Foxton, Fowlmere, Shepreth, Thriplow, Heathfield, Heydon, Chishills,
Whittlesford

Report for Parish Councils – March 2021.

South Cambs Budget/Council Tax

The Council agreed a £5 per year increase for the average band D home for the next financial year. The increase will see the average band D home charge for South Cambridgeshire District Council increase to £155.31 per year.

South Cambridgeshire District Council estimates that the cost of dealing with the pandemic so far has been approximately £2.35 million. This is mainly due to increased spending on PPE, additional staff members to help in several areas such as community response, processing business grants and Council Tax support and new software for administering grants. The Council has received £1.9 million in Government grants to help it deal with increased spending due to Coronavirus.

Due to the continuing financial pressure on the Council, the proposals include around £5.1million worth of savings during the next four years, with £2.2million in savings and income already identified.

Around half of the Council's annual budget of just under £20 million comes from local Council Tax.

Covid 19 Support for Business in Lockdown 3.

Grants Status: £8,932,592 paid has been paid to 3,863 business since November+ grants opened. The majority continues to be the main LRSG schemes and the Closed Business Lockdown payments. Hardship: we are not yet seeing signs of hardship applications slow down, in fact, we had a flurry of 70 in first week of March. This week, we've had a flurry of activity from Taxi Drivers, Driving Instructors and Mobile Hairdressers in particular. Echoing last week's email, there continues to be a wider variety of applicants in general, mostly micro businesses and many sole traders. For example, in March we've had a clinical psychologist who mainly works within education settings ask for help, as have we a bookmaker.

Bourn Airfield Outline Approval

Plans for a new village of around 3,500 homes on the former World War Two Airfield at Bourn have been supported by South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Committee.

40% of the new homes will be classed as affordable – in line with the Council's Local Plan policies. These homes will be a mixture of affordable rent, shared ownership, rent to buy and discount market sale. A wide range of new community facilities will come forward, including a new secondary school, two primary schools, community centres and playing fields.

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A £20-million package to support local transport upgrades is part of the plans and includes walking, cycling and bus routes and electric car charging points. There will be woodlands, wildlife habitat areas, grassland, allotments and community orchards.



The Committee met Friday 19 February to discuss the application from developers Countryside. They voted to support proposals for the new community on 210 hectares of land between Cambourne and Caldecote. The site is one of the new settlements that was allocated for development as part of the Council's 2018 Local Plan, with this application being the next stage in bringing the plans forward.

The area is a mixture of previously developed land and agricultural fields. As part of the development, there will also be shops, offices, healthcare, nurseries, library, place of worship and a hotel.

The development will be governed by a range of conditions covering transport, protecting the environment and ecology, the quality of the buildings and more. Additionally, the Greater Cambridge Partnership and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority continue to work on delivering a new public transport system that will link the development with Cambourne and Cambridge.

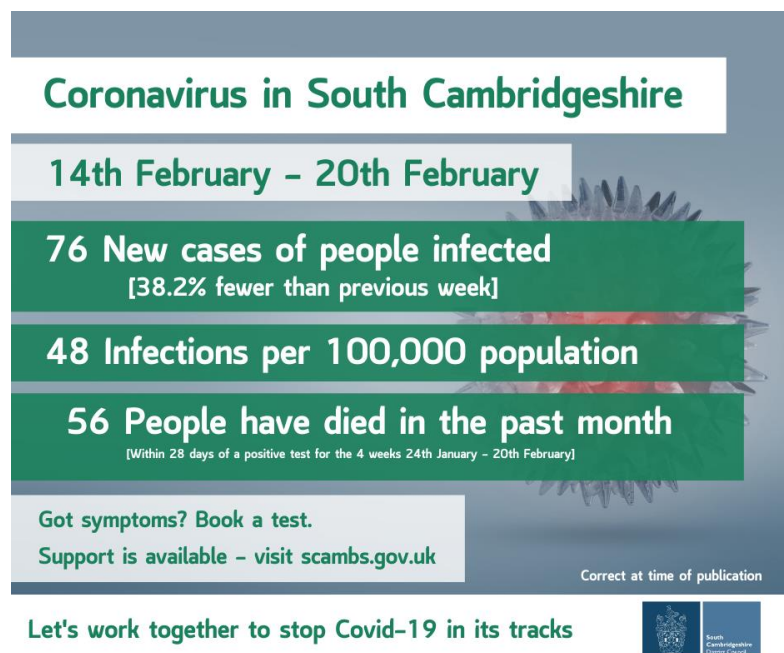
Earlier this year, the District Council's Planning Committee [approved plans](#) for new commercial buildings on the former Gestamp Factory on the airfield. The applicant estimated that the redevelopment of this old factory site would create up to 800 new, full time jobs.

[A Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#), which gives more detail on how the new village should come forward, was adopted by the Council in September 2019 following a public consultation. The SPD says the new development should be well connected with traffic-free, active travel routes and high-quality public transport, both locally, to Cambridge and ultimately St Neots. It also outlines how it should be vibrant, prosperous and inclusive with housing for all, schools, sports and leisure, community uses, shops and jobs.

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Cambridgeshire County Report

C19 Case Numbers Cambridgeshire



Vaccination

You can see the daily data here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-vaccinations/>

Rapid Covid-19 home testing kits for households with children

Households with school-age children can now test themselves twice a week from home using rapid Covid-19 home testing kits.

With up to one in three individuals with coronavirus showing no symptoms, it means some can potentially spread Covid-19 without knowing it. Regular testing of people who are unable to stay at home and don't have symptoms means that people with Covid-19 can be detected early and can self-isolate.

As children and young people return to the classroom, we need to be sure that potential Covid-19 cases are found as quickly as possible and that measures are put in place to prevent them from spreading throughout the school community. Although cases are declining generally, we all need to continue to play our part to keep the virus under control and ensure children and young people can remain in education.

Rapid Covid-19 home testing kits will be available for asymptomatic:

- adults living in households with primary and secondary-age pupils, including their childcare and support bubbles;

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- school staff and adults working in the wider school community, including bus drivers and after school club leaders, as well as members of their households.

Testing is for adults only. Secondary school and college pupils will also undertake regular testing which will be provided via their school or college. Primary school pupils are not being offered rapid testing at this time but parents and carers should access a PCR Covid-19 lab test for them via the national booking system if they develop symptoms.

- [Find out where you can collect home test kits](#)
- Or, if you are unable to collect, you can [order online to be delivered to your home](#)
- Or by calling [119](#)

LGBT Adopters & Foster Carers

Cambridgeshire County Council is supporting this year's annual LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Adoption and Fostering Week (1-7th March) to help raise awareness about the need for more adopters and foster carers throughout the county.

The campaign 'Build Your Family' encourages LGBT+ potential adopters and foster carers to consider expanding their family and sharing their life with a child or young person, either permanently through adoption or more short-term through fostering. The campaign seeks to tackle some common misconceptions surrounding the process, and raise awareness among people who identify as LGBT+ of the adoption and fostering parenting routes that are open to them.

There are around 745 children and young people in Cambridgeshire who need foster carers and the greatest need is for teenagers and brothers and sisters.

LGBT+ Adoption & Fostering week is organised by New Family Social, a charity that supports LGBT+ Adopters and Foster Carers across the UK.

If you are interested in fostering and want to find out more: call 0800 052 0078, email fostering@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/fostering.

If you feel adoption is better suited to you then please call 0300 123 1093.

Laptop Campaign

There is County-wide schools laptop campaign. A campaign to help disadvantaged children across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to get internet and laptop access is gathering pace, with the first batch of equipment being delivered to schools this week.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council launched the 'Laptops for Children' campaign earlier this month in partnership with the Youth Panel, Cambridge Digital Direct, Cambridge 2030 and the Cambridge Culture Foundation, aimed at purchasing laptops and 4G routers for vulnerable young people.

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Around 8,000 children in the region do not have use of a computer or broadband, meaning they cannot access lessons and online resources, putting them at risk of falling behind with their studies.

Just over two weeks after launching the campaign, an impressive £567,845 has already been raised thanks to support from businesses and individuals, as well as funding from both authorities. A first batch of over 1,000 laptops and 460 routers have been purchased and will be distributed to schools from this week.

A total of 352 laptops have also been donated to drop-in centres and libraries across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. These will be checked and updated before being distributed to schools.

The campaign will continue to secure sufficient funding so that every young person in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has the necessary equipment to continue learning. Both councils are writing to businesses and Chambers of Commerce this week to drum up further support.

For more information on the campaign and to make a donation visit [our GoFundMe page](#).

Meanwhile locally I have secured 15 machines from the Genome Campus which have so far gone to Thriplow and Whittlesford schools. A few machines still remain.

Thakeham

We held a Parish Call on March 2nd to update on progress and next steps for the action group. Two key things happened in February:

1. MHCLG published a bid of £50k for stakeholder engagement for “ up to 4 new developments” along EWR.
2. The Government published the draft OxCam Arc document talking about ‘ opportunity areas’ for housing development across the Arc.

Updates as usual here: www.swcag.org.uk

Resignation of County Council Deputy Leader

As a result of an investigation into the tenancy awarded in 2017 and investment of £185k of funds from the County to this farm, the Deputy Leader of the County Council Cllr Hickford has resigned and left his farm. This is the statement from the Leader:

“On Tuesday February 23rd I received a long and complex report which was the culmination of the Manor Farm Audit. The subject of the report largely concerns the Deputy Leader Cllr Roger Hickford’s occupancy of Manor Farm, Girton as a tenant of Cambridgeshire County Council’s Farms Estate.

The contents of the report are confidential at present, for legal reasons in order for the Audit and Accounts committee to fully consider and discuss the matter. But having read the report I

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had two meetings with Cllr. Hickford to consider implications for the Council, outside of the remit of the committee.

Subsequent to those meetings Cllr Hickford has asked me to accept his resignation as my Deputy leader and as a member of the Council with immediate effect.

I have accepted his resignation and confirmed this to Chief Executive Gillian Beasley.

I have also thanked Cllr Hickford for his years of service in his role as a Councillor and the support he has given me over the years as my deputy leader.”

A report into the granting of the tenancy and subsequent actions will be reviewed at the March 5th Audit & Accounts Committee. The timetable is here:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/manor-farm-audit-to-be-considered-by-audit-and-accounts-committee>

Peter McDonald

March 6th 2021.