

County Councillor report - Sawston & Shelford Division

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November 2021

Covid-19: Enhanced response area status for Cambridgeshire

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is now an Enhanced Response Area for tackling the Covid pandemic.

Infections across the area are rising, especially in the 60+ age group. Rates are currently higher in most areas than in January's peak.

The new status took effect from Monday 1 November, and will last for at least five weeks. It allows the Council to push for additional support to:

- Accelerate and target 12-15 vaccination roll out to key areas and schools where infections are highest.
- Accelerate booster vaccinations for eligible groups who have had their second vaccination more than six months ago.
- Increase vaccination rate in areas with the lowest uptake.

The Councils will also enter into further discussions with the Department for Education about additional measures it can use in schools. In the meantime they will continue to:

- Encourage secondary school teachers or pupils who are household contacts of positive cases to take daily lateral flow tests.
- Advise schools that face coverings should be worn in secondary school communal areas, and that meetings should happen virtually where possible.
- Encourage anyone who is a household contact of a positive case to take daily rapid tests, until a negative PCR test is received.
- For the general public government funded additional communications will also begin from next week. These will:
 - Recommend wearing face coverings in crowded and enclosed areas where you come into contact with people you do not usually meet.
 - Remind people to get their vaccinations, test regularly and particularly before attending events, meet with others outside their households in well ventilated spaces and wash hands regularly and well.

County Council budget preparation

County Council committees are now considering options to address the Council's budget shortfall. The financial situation the new Joint Administration inherited included a gap of £22.2M between spending plans for 2022/23 and the resources available. We have already reduced this gap to £19.5M, and are developing proposals to enable a balanced budget to be presented to the Full Council in February.

The overarching themes for the Council's Business Plan are

- Economic recovery
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Decentralisation
- Environment & climate emergency
- Social Value
- Efficiency and effectiveness of Council services

There will be some Government support for different areas like roads and support to children with special needs, announced through the recent Budget. Cambridgeshire share of these grants will be revealed on 6 December.

Update on 20 mph

The Council's Highways and Transport Committee is working towards making application and approval of 20mph zones more straightforward and streamlined. A key decision to remove some current barriers for approval of maximum speed reduction from 30mph to 20mph will be put to vote to the Committee in December 2021. We hope to bring positive news soon after.

Shelford and Stapleford Youth Initiative - venue opening

It was fantastic to attend the opening of a new, freshly decorated and fitted out venue for the Shelford and Stapleford Youth Initiative, which is being supported by the County and District Councils as well as several of our Parishes. The initiative is vital to support young people's mental health, provide informal coaching and support. Having a friendly centrally positioned venue (top floor of Gt Shelford Memorial Hall) will hopefully be a step change in the centre and its team expanding their brilliant work. www.ssyi.club Please share their information via your websites and networks if the activities are local to your Parishes.

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