

SERVICE HIGHLIGHT REPORT – COVID-19 AND KEY SERVICE UPDATES

SERVICE AREAS:	Place & Economy
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LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council

Part 1 - COVID-19

NEW GUIDANCE AND IMPACT

- From the 29th of March outdoor team sports such as Football and Tennis will be allowed. The PCC and Aragon teams are working with clubs to ensure this happens and they do this in a COVID safe manner.
- The relaxations on tables and chairs licenses have been extended to promote the recovery of town and city centres.

NEW CHALLENGES AND ACTIVITY

- The Government has just announced that it is extending the time period in which developments such as markets, fairs and temporary hospitality structures can be operated without the need for planning permission.
- There has been a Covid outbreak at the Rough Sleeper Rest Centre in Peterborough, which has meant that residents, outreach team and a couple of the senior leadership team have had to self-isolate. This has now come an end and all agencies worked well together to ensure clients and staffs needs were met during the lockdown.
- In his budget of 3rd March, the Chancellor announced that the “Stamp Duty Holiday” is to be extended to the end of June 2021. This is likely to continue the extremely high levels of local land charges searches associated with property conveyances.
- Peak time traffic flows recovered to around 85-90% of pre-covid levels before the current lockdown. Peak levels are currently only 60-65% of expected with levels remaining steady or only gently increasing. Between the peak periods (10:00-16:00) flows are also around 66% of normal (pre-covid) levels. During the evening (19:00-midnight) levels have fallen dramatically to only 36%, reflecting the general closedown of the night time economy.
- In PCC, a homelessness prevention project has been established to scope the potential of the Council acquiring a number of properties in Wittering from the MOD whose tenants are at risk of homelessness after the MOD took a decision to dispose of the housing stock.

RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

- Park & Ride services in Cambridge are expected to resume for the re-opening of non-essential shops in April. Busway services continue to operate.
- CCC and PCC highway teams continue to work closely with colleagues to ensure testing and vaccination sites work smoothly.
- In CCC, the re-opening of schools means work on 7 additional school streets resume (bringing the total to 13), with a view to training volunteers ready for after Easter, and School Crossing Patrols return on Monday 8th March.
- Four “proof of concept” Covid-19 safe pods and outdoor seating areas will be opened in Peterborough - Cathedral Square, St John’s Square, Bridge Street and Westgate throughout April and May. The pods were created in collaboration with Peterborough Positive - the city’s new business improvement district.
- The first café culture project at Bean Around Café, Peterborough has just been implemented
- Collection and disposal arrangements for Lateral Flow Tests have been agreed and are operating for mass testing sites. A change in guidance means that LFT waste from registered healthcare facilities and dedicated mass testing locations should be coded as non-hazardous offensive healthcare waste. Waste from schools, workplaces and other settings can be placed in residual “black bins”.

DECISIONS MADE SINCE LAST REPORTING PERIOD

- Completion date of 11th March has been set to take on a new office to residential conversion at 88 Lincoln Road, Peterborough for 22 units of accommodation for former rough sleepers.

NEW COVID-19 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS SINCE LAST REPORTING PERIOD

- Business cases for low carbon heating programmes for schools and CCC buildings are being impacted by low oil prices resulting from global reduction for oil resulting from lockdowns.
- Supply chain challenges for low carbon projects in Cambridgeshire have increased project costs. These have resulted from global demand for green recovery products whilst supply is constrained by lockdowns

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

- Aragon Direct Services has now implemented lateral flow testing for all its staff twice per week, during the first round, two members of staff tested positive and have self-isolated. Long term it is hoped this will both reassure the staff and help to keep services running.
- In Peterborough, one of Skanska's SMART crews are isolating after a team member tested positive for Covid-19. This is likely to have an impact on some response times for the next 2 weeks.
- Staff wellbeing remains an issue during the lockdown and managers are working closely with staff and using available resources and flexibility to manage this.
- Temporary backfilling arrangements will be in place in the Peterborough planning service by 15/03/21 to address the backlog of applications.

COMMUNICATIONS

- No specific Covid communications since the last report.

Part 2 – BUSINESS AS USUAL ACTIVITY

KEY SERVICE UPDATES – INTERNAL / EXTERNAL

CCC	PCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kings Parade anti-terrorism Traffic Regulation Order is out for consultation. The passenger Transport service will transfer to the Combined Authority on the 1st April and the Real Time Passenger Information service will transfer on the 1st June The A428 Development Consent Order has been submitted by Highways England E and S Committee considered three projects on 11th March - the Babraham Smart Energy Grid for £6million investment as a phase 1 for commercialising the park and ride, two school low carbon heating projects and the Alconbury Solar car port scheme A further £1.12m capital grant was secured for Swaffham Prior from HNIP The Special Purpose Vehicle for the Swaffham Prior project is to be set up during March on approval by GCP C&I Committee will consider on 19th March a Private wire to supply clean electricity from North Angle Solar Farm to Swaffham Prior Community Heat project Demand is increasing for HRCs at weekends, with some queueing at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The passenger Transport service will transfer to the Combined Authority on the 1st April and the Real Time Passenger Information service will transfer on the 1st June The building contract for the main University works was finalised on March 3rd 2021 via the PropCo1 board and awarded to Bowne + Kirkland (B+K). Total project cost £30M. Practical completion is scheduled for July 2022. A portion of the regional pool car park will be used by B+K for their cabins and welfare set up over the P1 programme. A full planning application was submitted by CPCoA for phase 2 on February 22nd, 2021 with a decision expected at Planning Committee in June 2021 The University application for phase 2 has been received Two large scale applications have been received: 130 dwellings at East of England Showground and a new primary school at Hampton Water

<p>Witchford at weekends exacerbated by roadworks. Highways are hoping to be able to take the 4 way lights down for the Easter weekend. There may be a requirement to leave a temporary pedestrian crossing in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on options for Milton HRC redevelopment is underway with Amey • Additional resource for the Floods team to develop community flood resilience is in next year's budget. Flood reports for Dec/Jan 2021 now stand at nearly 800, approaching 300 reports of internal flooding. The investigations work is now underway and we have increased the teams capacity to undertake these. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project team has been established to progress the Housing Revenue Account work. • Homelessness presentations remain at expected levels and approaches to join the housing register are consistent. • North West Gate - the purchase of property interests is proceeding, with remaining properties and interests to be finalised. Discussion and engagement with owners and occupiers are continuing. There are challenges regarding Japanese knotweed that has been identified on the site.
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FINANCIAL ISSUES

CCC	PCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DfT have finally announced the capital funding for 2021/22. It is a one year only deal with funding to be reviewed within government during the year. The level of funding is a reduction from 2020/21 but greater than 2019/20. The full CCC programme can still be delivered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DfT have finally announced the capital funding for 2021/22. It is a one year only deal with funding to be reviewed within government during the year. The level of funding is a reduction from 2020/21 but greater than 2019/20. • The Incentive Fund return has been completed with Peterborough Highway Services rated as a Band 3 authority. • The continuation of Rough Sleeper Rest Centres in the new financial year will bring a financial pressure. Uplift of RSI funding has been received - £200k, which will support this.

PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES AND CHALLENGES

CCC	PCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly monitoring report on energy programmes has been delayed but will be delivered next month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Management continues to meet Government set performance targets but the team are significantly reliant on applicants agreeing to extensions of time • The enforcement service request backlog has been reduced by 60 in the last two months.

UPCOMING ISSUES & HORIZON SCANNING AREAS

CCC	PCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extinction Rebellion protest planned in Cambridge 27th March • Boat Race going ahead on the Easter weekend in Ely as classed as elite sport • Local area energy planning to get to net zero by 2050 • Communications plan for COP26 to highlight the work of the Council to be developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An application is expected for large scale employment development at Horsey Toll Stanground in a location contrary to the local plan • There is the potential for a surge in homelessness once lockdown measures are eased and evictions from rented accommodation return to normal as well as the potential of increases in homelessness

	from owner-occupiers who are currently on furlough, but at risk of job loss after lockdown support
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POSITIVE NEWS STORIES

CCC	PCC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Digital Technology Grants for Business Scheme launched on 15th Feb. It has proved extremely popular and quickly became oversubscribed. The scheme is now paused to new applications whilst existing applications are assessed with the first grant awards expecting to be confirmed by the end of the first week of March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The opening of 88 Lincoln Road - 22 units of one bedroom accommodation for former rough sleepers. Letters of thanks to Building control and Development Management Teams have been received for helping deliver a covid vaccine facility