

District and County Councillors' Report – January 2023

'Making Connections' Consultation

Thank you to all those that fed their views into the Greater Cambridge Partnership's public consultation on their proposals to improve public transport in our area with the introduction of a 'sustainable travel zone' which would be funded via a congestion charge.

There were record numbers of responses to this, as hoped, as it is, in our opinion, one of the most important consultations that we'll be asked to respond to. There was in the region of 24,000 responses, which equates to around 15% of the entire population of South Cambridgeshire (this doesn't sound like a lot, but it is!).

Local Plan

The Local Plan (the District Council's process of identifying sustainable locations for housing and economic development within South Cambridgeshire & Cambridge City for the next 30 years) is moving forward. The latest update is that due to the very fast economic growth in the area (the predicted job growth has already been achieved halfway through the current Local Plan) the government-set formula for calculating housing need has had to be reassessed. Using the calculation there is now a need to find a place for a further 8000 houses on top of what has already been allocated. This is likely to mean either another new town in the District, or lots of small-medium sized developments on the edge of existing settlements/villages as well as in the Green Belt.

Another complication is that the Environment Agency is now taking quite a hard-line on water supply. They are saying that the area currently doesn't have enough water supply to fulfil the current Local Plan, let alone the emerging one. There is a plan in place to use Grafham Water's supply but this isn't currently planned to come online until 2027.

So not a straightforward predicament but do keep watching this space as the situation develops.

Cost of Living support & Community Chest

SCDC's Community Chest fund provides grants to voluntary and community sector groups, charities and public sector bodies wishing to further improve quality of life locally. Criteria have been expanded to allow bids that include contributions for any project that has a positive impact for communities related to the cost-of-living crisis. Parish Councils of any size can also now place grant bids. A ringfenced total sum of £20,000 has been made available for these new Community Chest grant applications, provided by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System, to ensure support is co-ordinated effectively and directed at those in need locally this winter -

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-safety-and-health/grants/community-chest-grants/>

South Cambs District Council also have a cost of living 'Go Fund Me' page that are taking donations that they will use to purchase items needed to assist those that need support over the winter months -

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/emergency-go-fund-me-page-will-help-residents-struggling-in-the-cost-of-living-crisis/>

POPs in WUDS

Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) are found in various Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS) such as sofas and upholstered dining chairs. Such materials should not be landfilled.

The law against landfilling of POPs was introduced in 2007, but the Environment Agency recently announced it would become more rigorous in its enforcement. The Environment Agency announced in August 2022 that it would soon expect councils to cease landfilling upholstered seating, and instead to incinerate it. It published its Final Regulatory Position Statements on this matter on Monday 19 December 2022, with implementation starting on Sunday 1 January 2023.

The short notice over Christmas has provided little time to organise incineration capacity, and the County Council is therefore seeking an extension of at least a month while it works through options and liaises with its waste contractor Thalia (formerly Amey) and with the district councils who collect Cambridgeshire's waste. This does however mean that from 1 January the Council will not be able to dispose of soft furnishings until a method of disposal acceptable to the Environment Agency has been identified and put in place.

20mph schemes

The Highways & Transport Committee at the County Council approved the changes to the Council's policy on 20MPH speed limits outlined in previous reports. The proposed timetable for applications for funding for new 20MPH speed limits is as follows.

- Go 'live' with application process on-line for new schemes (February 2023)
- Application period (February to April 2023)
- Prioritisation (May to June 2023)
- Committee report for approval (July 2023)
- Programming and delivery of schemes (August 2023 onwards)

King Charles III Coronation Street Parties

The Council has published guidance for local groups seeking to organise street parties and highways events to mark the coronation of King Charles III in May 2023. All street party applications must be received by the County Council at least eight weeks in advance (Friday 10 March 2023) via the Council's website. Highway Events applications must be submitted at least twelve weeks in advance (Friday 10 February 2023).

More information about the process can be found at

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/highway-events/coronation-events>

Linton Warm Hubs

Cambridgeshire ACRE and South Cambs District Council are working with communities all across the district to open Warm Hubs to help people struggling with fuel cost or just wanting an opportunity to get together. There are now 20 up and running with another 7 on the way. Linton has opened its first two Warm Hubs, these are:

- St Marys Church - Thursday 11am – 2pm
- Linton Free Church – Tuesday 1pm – 4pm

Ukraine – new hosts for guests needed

Cambridge City and South Cambs have between them about 500 hosts for Ukraine guests. With the war in Ukraine continuing, the six-month hosting arrangements have needed to be renewed, though not all hosts are in a position to do so. Anyone who might be able to provide a spare room for a guest from Ukraine is asked to get in touch with SCDC. We need new homes for about 200 people. For this reason the councils have launched the GOT A SPARE ROOM campaign. If you are interested all you have to do is text ROOM to 88802. <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/support-for-ukraine-it-all-starts-with-a-spare-room/>

Electric Vehicle Charging

The District Council has introduced a grant of up to £5,000 per application for electric vehicle charging points on community/public buildings within the district. It's a great opportunity for us to expand our electric charging network and make our area more accessible for those wanting to travel here via electric vehicle.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/climate-emergency-and-nature/grants-funding-and-community-support/electric-vehicle-charge-point-grant/>

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