

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 – June 2021.

South Cambs District Council

1. Grants

As of Friday we had paid out 12,050,994 since November 2020 grants opened (LRSG and ARG/hardship).

£4,576,979 out of our £4,594,889 Additional Restrictions (discretionary - hardship), 99.6% of fund paid to 1,653 businesses.

Restart grants, we have paid out £4,270,018 out of our £5,814,090 allocation to 453 businesses (73%).

2. Growth Fund: The South Cambridgeshire Growth fund is opening for applications on 1st July 2021. It is for micro and small businesses operating in/from South Cambridgeshire. Priority applicants will include those who have not previously received government backed (covid related) funding. A one-off grant of between £1,000 to a maximum of £50,000 will be awarded to eligible applicants.

Applicants must:

- Be South Cambridgeshire based start-ups since/during the pandemic who are looking to scale and grow quickly in our region

Or

- Be established South Cambridgeshire based companies who can demonstrate evidence of ambitious expansion/growth plans in our District specifically

- Eligible businesses are sole traders, partnerships and SMEs located in South Cambridgeshire.

South Cambs Investment Partnership (SCIP)

The new South Cambridgeshire Investment Partnership (SCIP) has agreed to purchase land in Cambourne to bring forward new homes – while South Cambridgeshire District Council is also making a major investment in the future of Cambourne Business Park.

The land on the southern edge of Cambourne Business Park being purchased for £12.9 million by SCIP is expected to lead to around 275 new homes. 40% of these will be much needed affordable housing. This will include social housing, such as rented accommodation managed by the Council or a Housing Association. SCIP is a 50:50 partnership between South Cambridgeshire District Council and top 20 housebuilder, Hill Group.

Additional land is also being made available to enable SCIP to improve vehicle and pedestrian access to the adjoining development scheme to the west, including the planned new schools and community facilities. Plans for this site are still being worked on and both Hill and the Council are keen to carry out extensive engagement with the local community before finalising proposals and submitting a planning application.

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Additionally, South Cambridgeshire District Council is purchasing a currently empty plot of land at Cambourne Business Park, which is identified for commercial activity, with a view to completing this part of the Business Park. Key parts of the infrastructure of the Business Park are also being purchased by the Council. The total cost of these two transactions is £1.4 million. This acquisition also gives the Council wider control of, and the ability to initiate, carefully considered further development at the Business Park as part of a proactive approach to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first, and largest of the sites, comprises 19.2 acres of brownfield residential land to the south of the access road. It has been purchased by SCIP and is allocated in the District Council's current adopted Local Plan for residential and employment use. It has the potential to deliver around 275 new homes, with 40% affordable.

The residential site marks the maiden land acquisition for SCIP, an innovative joint venture partnership formed in 2020 to generate brand new, long term revenue streams, investment opportunities and assets for the Council, without drawing on any existing landbanks or Council assets. Over the next four years, the Council is actively looking to invest up to £170 million with its investment partners in the acquisition and development of land in South Cambridgeshire and the wider travel to work area, as determined by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER).

The second site, being purchased just by South Cambridgeshire District Council, comprises 2.77 acres adjacent to South Cambridgeshire Hall, with detailed planning consent for 48,000 sq ft of office space, set within the Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zone area. The Council has also purchased 3 acres of associated infrastructure land around the access road, including a car park, the marketing office and two electric car charging points. These two smaller parcels of land were purchased solely by, and will be retained by, the Council.

The Council and SCIP will speak with neighbouring residents and businesses, along with the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, to bring forward detailed planning applications, with a focus on sustainable design in line with the Council's aspirations towards net zero carbon.

Cambourne Business Park is located nine miles west of Cambridge, set in 55 acres of picturesque parkland with lakes, cycleways and footpaths. Part of the park was awarded Enterprise Zone status in 2016.

To find out more about the South Cambridgeshire Investment Partnership and its plans for the site in Cambourne. info@SC-IP.co.uk

East West Rail: South Cambs Response

The plans for this national infrastructure project are being drawn up by the East West Rail Company, which was set up by the Department for Transport in 2018. East West Rail's preferred option would see the railway, if it goes ahead, pass through parts of South

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Cambridgeshire such as Cambourne, Highfields Caldecote, the Eversdens, Harlton, Haslingfield, Hauxton and the Shelfords before eventually entering Cambridge from the south of the city.

The officer report highlights the need for further details on a range of technical issues such as noise and landscape impacts and the local impacts need to be explored and addressed.

The response from South Cambridgeshire District Council to East West Rail's consultation was agreed at a Cabinet meeting yesterday (Monday 24 May). It will now be finalised by the officer and Lead Member, considering members' comments during the Cabinet meeting, before it is submitted to East West Rail.

East West Rail's consultation runs from 31 March, until 9 June and covers a range of topics including the overall customer experience of the future railway, and a range of infrastructure proposals - such as the route, new stations and level crossings. South Cambridgeshire District Council is a statutory consultee and will submit a response as part of the consultation and through the planning process. Members of the public can view the consultation and submit their own comments via the East West Rail website.

'Wild Minds': free outdoor activities to support young people's wellbeing

Wild Minds is our free programme of wellbeing activities to support 14- to 17-year-olds who are suffering mental-health issues such as anxiety and low mood, and/or to build self-esteem and confidence. The programme was set up over the last two years in response to the current context around the mental health of young people within the UK; NHS mental health services have experienced greatly increased referrals over the last 10 years with increased waiting times for specialist support and increasing thresholds to gain access. It offers:

- Free outdoor activities at Milton Country Park (all equipment will be provided free too)
- Group based activities including bush craft, survival skills, paddle boarding, yoga and mindfulness – no experience is necessary for any activities
- Sessions are an hour and a half long, and held each weekend for eight weeks
- Support from both skilled instructors and youth workers.

The course has been developed by South Cambridgeshire District Council together with Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust and is supported by a Clinical Psychologist. The next eight-week course begins on Sunday 6 June and you may wish to share the opportunity within your community – teenagers can register (free) now.

Cambridgeshire County Report

Vaccination

You can see the daily data here:

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

New County Council Joint Administration of Lib Dems/Labour/Independents

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I sent you all the new administration document with plans & aspirations. Cambridgeshire County Council's Annual General Meeting (Tuesday, 18 May) has agreed a new Joint Administration to lead the work of the council, following a Joint Agreement signed by the leaders of the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Independent groups on Friday.

And as a first step in its new agreement Joint Administration today confirmed an immediate annual saving of £72,000 in Member allowances as a result of changes it has made to the county's committee structure.

At May 18th AGM, held at Duxford to ensure COVID security, Cllr Lucy Nethsingha became Leader of the Council, having been confirmed as chair of a new Strategy and Resources Committee (SRC) responsible for the overarching co-ordination of the council's corporate services, with Cllr Elisa Meschini appointed as vice chair of Strategy and Resources, and Deputy Leader of the Council.

The joint agreement sees the reduction from seven to five of the service and policy committees, with the work of the previous Commercial and Investment Committee now largely within the remit of Strategy and Resources, and that of the Health Committee forming part of the remit of the new Adults and Health Committee – reflecting a new integrated care role for the council working with the NHS.

“Among the commitments from our agreement that we had already honoured by the time today's meeting was over include.

- A saving of £20,000 a year to four 'community champions' by deleting those posts from the membership of the Communities, Social Mobility & Inclusion Committee.
- Saving an extra £52,000 a year in total in special responsibility allowances for two Chairs and two Vice Chairs of the Commercial and Investment and Health Committee
- Setting up an immediate appraisal of the county's current arrangements on fighting the pandemic, as a first step towards setting up a Covid recovery plan

You can read full details of the Joint Administrations agreement here

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/cambridgelibdems/pages/5179/attachments/original/1620984611/County_agreement_2021_FINAL.pdf?1620984611

Roles confirmed at the AGM are as follows:

- Chair of the Council Cllr Derek Giles (Ind) / Vice-Chair Cllr Sebastian Kindersley (LD)
- Strategy and Resources – Chair Cllr Lucy Nethsingha (LD) and Vice-Chair Cllr Elisa Meschini (Lab)
- Service and Policy Committees – which will now meet quarterly
- Adults and Health – Chair Cllr Richard Howitt (Lab) and Vice-Chair Cllr Susan van de Ven (LD)
- Children and Young People – Chair Cllr Bryony Goodliffe (Lab) and Vice-Chair Cllr Maria King (LD)

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- Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion – Chair Cllr Tom Sanderson (Ind) and Vice-Chair Cllr Hilary Cox Condron (Lab)
- Environment and Green Investment – Chair Cllr Lorna Dupré (LD) and Vice-Chair Cllr Nick Gay (Lab)
- Highways and Transport - Chair Cllr Peter McDonald (LD) and Vice Chair Gerri Bird (Lab).

Summer Holiday Childcare & Activities

A scheme to provide holiday childcare, activities and food for children in Cambridgeshire is about to start taking bookings for the summer holidays.

Any child receiving free school meals, because of an income-based benefit, is eligible for the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme, which ran successfully throughout the Easter holidays and has now been extended into the summer.

Funded by the Department for Education (DfE), it enables local authorities to coordinate free holiday childcare, which includes healthy food and enriching activities for children who receive benefits-related free school meals.

The programme will be delivered by approved holiday scheme providers and childminders, co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Up to four weeks of activities will be offered during the school summer holidays. Parents can book places directly with participating holiday schemes from Monday, 7th June. Information about how to book with participating providers can be found at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/haf.

As part of the HAF programme, eligible children will be able to access:

- Fun and enriching play opportunities that provide children with new skills and knowledge or allow them to try out new experiences.
- At least one meal a day.
- Sessions on healthy eating such as getting children involved in food preparation and cooking, growing fruit and vegetables.
- Support for parents, carers or other family members with guidance on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food.
- Information and signposting to other services and support which might be helpful.
- Each eligible child will be entitled to up to 64 hours of free holiday childcare throughout the school summer holiday period.

Cambridgeshire County Council is working with local schools, voluntary and community organisations, and childcare providers to deliver the HAF programme.

Covid Rapid Testing vans

There are now even more ways for people to take a rapid Covid test in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough following the launch of three new mobile testing vans.

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The vans will be stationed at popular public venues giving people the chance to take a rapid test or collect a testing kit for home use.

Fully trained staff will be on hand to discuss issues around testing and answer any questions residents may have.

The vans will initially be stationed at the following locations on a rota basis, subject to change: 1. Sidney Street in Cambridge 2. Scotsdales garden centre, Cambridge Rd, Great Shelford, Cambridge.

For more information, including the opening dates/times, plus any changes to site locations, visit our rapid testing webpage.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-rapid-community-testing>

Consultation: Cambridgeshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure

This is an important opportunity to contribute views – please note closing July 6th.

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/ccc-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-consultation-2021>

Foxton Travel Hub

We are meeting officers on June 15th.

East West Rail

Consultation finished June 9th. The County Council will agree a response at its June 22nd Committee.

Thakeham

Thakeham has to date not lodged a submission to the South Cambs Call for Sites.

SWCAG has invited Thakeham to a public meeting to answer questions from the public, but Thakeham has yet to agree a date.

The recent SWCAG meeting for parish council representatives with Stephen Kelly, Head of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, focused on the OxCam Arc and juxtapositions of local authority and central government planning powers. This was an excellent session and we'll be looking to replicate it at a forthcoming public meeting.

A response has been received on an appeal to a Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government's Freedom of Information Act refusal. This will be posted on the SWCAG website.

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

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June 6th 2021