

District and County Councillors' Report – February 2023

'Making Connections' Consultation

Thank you to all those that fed their views into the Greater Cambridge Partnership's public consultation, which is more commonly known as the 'congestion charge consultation'.

There were 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!).

A1307 Update

The upgrades to the A1307 are moving forward at some pace now. The Greater Cambridge Partnership (the body implementing these schemes) are now in the final phases of making the changes to 'our' section of the road, between Haverhill and the A11. The next phases that are being constructed are:

1. Completing the improved footpath between Pilgrims (previously Dalehead Foods) and Hildersham. This work includes the removal of the eastbound layby as that is needed to accommodate the widened path. This work has started now and will take a few months to complete.
2. The installation of a new roundabout at the Bartlow Road, Linton junction of the A1307. This is a relatively major piece of infrastructure and will take at least 9 months to complete. There will be minimal disruption whilst the work is happening as the plan is to construct a temporary carriageway around the construction site so that the A1307 will very rarely need to fully close. There may be some road closures of Bartlow Road, Linton and Linton Road, Bartlow – but luckily the diversion routes for these closures are very short. The GCP are also planning on holding one, possibly two, public meetings in Linton in February and March to display the full detail of these plans to anyone that has an interest or concern.

Budgets & Council Tax

February is always budget setting time for local authorities. This is where they set out the areas of the council that they will be spending/allocating their budgets. It is also when they can choose to raise council tax to help pay for the services that they have to provide.

County Council – the County Council will be implementing a 4.99% increase on council tax. This is split as such - 2% increase on Adult Social Care and 2.99% on the Basic Council Tax rate. This equates to £73 per year for a band D rated property.

District Council – SCDC will be implementing an additional £5 per year on band D properties, which equates to circa a 3.5% rise.

There are also other precept setting authorities in Cambridgeshire. They are, at time of writing, proposing the following increases:

Fire Authority - £4.95 per annum increase for band D properties

Police & Crime Commissioner – 5.8% increase which equates to 29p per week on a band D property.

Combined Authority – This is a brand new tax that is being introduced which will exclusively help to support bus services in Cambridgeshire. The proposal is £12 per year for band D properties.

Councillors Henry Batchelor and Geoff Harvey

Business Rates

It is looking very likely that there will be hikes in business rates over the coming years. These rates are set nationally but are collected by the District Council. It seems quite counterproductive, to us at least, to offer a lot of financial support to keep businesses going during the pandemic and then to clobber them with increased business rates to help pay for said financial support. Please do make any local business owners aware of what looks likely to be coming!

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)

Weston Colville Warm Hub

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. Weston Colville has opened its first Warm Hub, which is open:

- Reading Room - Monday - Friday - 11am – 5pm

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/>

Water Resources Consultation Response

SCDC Cabinet has approved the Council's response to Water Resources East consultation on a Draft Regional Water Resources Plan for Eastern England. The response underlines the need for certainty about future water supplies as a key prerequisite of the emerging Local Plan.

Councillors Henry Batchelor and Geoff Harvey

Refugees

The District Council has received Government funding to buy an additional 30 houses, that are to be used to house Ukrainian and Afghan refugees. It is hoped to have them in place by the end of the year. In the longer run, when no longer required for this purpose, the houses will become part of the social housing stock.

Contact Information

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