

## **District Councillors' Report to Parish Councils – January 2022**

### **6th Annual Cambridgeshire Local Councils' Conference (Friday 14 January 2022, 10am-4pm)**

This event takes place virtually and will be particularly useful to Councillors and Clerks from local Town and Parish councils. District and County Councillors and representatives from organisations that work with, and support, local councils across Cambridgeshire are also encouraged to attend. Along with talks from keynote speakers including Dr Nik Johnson, Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, attendees will have the opportunity to join in with learning sessions on topics identified in Local Council Chair and Clerks surveys.

The link to register is:

<https://cambsparishes.online-event.co/registration/cambridgeshire-acres-2>

### **Grant funding for home improvements for low-income households**

SCDC has been awarded funding from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) as part of the government's Sustainable Warmth Scheme. The Sustainable Warmth Scheme brings together Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery, Phase 3 (LAD3) and the slightly more generous, off-gas-only Home Upgrade Grant, Phase 1 (HUG1) to support low-income households living in hard-to-heat private-sector homes by installing energy efficiency measures and low carbon heating. The award is as a result of a consortium bid from the Cambridgeshire local authorities led by Cambridge City Council and is for a total of £6,464,998 to support improvements to 398 properties in Cambridgeshire. Approximately £1,300,000 has been allocated for 81 properties in South Cambs, of which 20 will be on-gas and 61 off gas.

The scheme will be delivered by the Cambridgeshire consortium working in partnership with contractors from April 2022 through to March 2023. To be eligible, households will be required to have a maximum household income of £30,000, and the property will need to have an EPC rating of E, F or G. We will be adopting a whole house, fabric first approach with the aim of increasing EPC ratings to C where feasible, drawing in additional funding from other sources (e.g. ECO) where possible. SCDC will issue a press release on behalf of all the Cambridgeshire LAs via the county council in the new year along with details of how households can register their interest.

### **Business Grants: Hospitality and Leisure Grant and Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) top-up**

On Wednesday 21 December the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak announced £1 billion in support for businesses most impacted by Omicron across the UK. Amongst other support, businesses in the hospitality and leisure sectors in England will be eligible for one-off grants of between £2,700-£6,000 depending on premises rateable value. Additional discretionary funding will be made available for Councils to support other businesses affected.

As soon as SCDC receives further detail on eligibility criteria and total allocation, the website and comms channels will be updated with policy and application details/process. It is expected that businesses will be able to start applying during the latter part of January / early February for the reasons mentioned above. We are in the process of updating our website to reflect this information.

## Business Grants: Coronavirus Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

Back in March of this year, the Government announced funding for a new business rates relief to help those business that had been impacted by Covid in 2020/21 but had been ineligible for the other business rates reliefs. The announcement was made in response to a number of businesses submitting appeals to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), as they believed the pandemic constituted a “material change of circumstances” in relation to their premises’ rateable value. Before the relief would be made available, Government first wanted to pass legislation to prevent Covid from being a reason for an appeal to the VOA. This legislation received royal assent on Wednesday 15 December.

Central Government has now provided guidance on a new rates relief scheme – the Coronavirus Additional Relief Fund (CARF), along with a funding allocation of up to £6.3m for South Cambridgeshire District Council. The guidance sets out that SCDC should design a new local relief scheme to distribute the funding, which is available to reduce the 2021/22 business rates bill. The guidance states that the scheme should:

- Not award relief to ratepayers that are, or would have been, eligible for the Extended Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Discount, or the Nursery Discount
- Not award relief in respect of a property when it is unoccupied
- Direct support towards ratepayers who have been adversely affected by the pandemic and have been unable to adequately adapt to that impact.

SCDC is currently exploring options for scheme design to ensure support is targeted to those impacted, and will then need to turn our attention to the administrative details. This is a considerable piece of work and it may take some weeks before the scheme is launched. Details of the relief announcement are on the SCDC website from Friday 17 December, advising businesses that we are working on scheme design and that the website will be updated as the scheme details become available.

Cllr Judith Rippeth  
Cllr Paul Bearpark  
Cllr Anna Bradnam

## Noteworthy schemes/strategies and projects to be consulted on in future / consultations recently closed

Scheme name	Type of scheme	Main consultation contact	Status of consultation	Website link
North East Cambridge Area Action Plan	Area Action Plan	South Cambridgeshire District Council & Cambridge City Council	Approval to progress to consultation Spring 22. Formal engagement phase (Reg 19) to follow conclusion of Development Consent Order process for Cambridge Wastewater Treatment plant relocation (see below)	<a href="#">Link to Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website</a>
Cambridge Wastewater Treatment	Nationally significant	Anglian Water	Second phase of consultation closed in August. Development	<a href="#">Link – Anglian Water project page</a>

Plant relocation	infrastructure project		Consent Order to be submitted by Anglian Water	
Water Resources East Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)	Water Resources Management Plan updated every five years	Water Resources East Ltd	Consultation expected in spring 2022	<a href="#">Link to Water Resources East website</a>
East West Rail	Nationally significant infrastructure project	East West Railway Company (Created by Department for Transport in 2018)	Latest consultation closed in June. A statutory consultation is expected next year when communities will be asked to give their comments on detailed proposals.	<a href="#">Link – East West Rail company</a>
Cambourne to Cambridge	Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Environmental Impact Assessment consultation due to take place during 2022	<a href="#">Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website</a>
Waterbeach to Cambridge	Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Aim is to undertake a public consultation on the preferred route for the Waterbeach to Cambridge project later next year	<a href="#">Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website</a>
Cambridge South East Transport	Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Application to Government for TWAO to build busway and active travel route in 2022	<a href="#">Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website</a>
Cambridge Eastern Access	Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Consultation to take place in late 2021	<a href="#">Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website</a>
Greenways	12 x local greenways feeding into Cambridge	Greater Cambridge Partnership	GCP holding further workshops with local residents and other interested parties to explain the designs and listen to feedback	<a href="#">Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website</a>
Cambridge South West Travel Hub	Local - A new Travel Hub site at Junction 11 of the M11	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Application currently with Cambridgeshire County Council – determination expected Spring 2022	<a href="#">Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website</a>