

District Councillors' Report to Parish Councils – April 2022

Waterbeach Neighbourhood Plan

On 22 March the Council agreed to note that the referendum for the Waterbeach Neighbourhood Plan took place on 3 March 2022, and as it was a successful referendum, to 'make' (adopt) the Waterbeach Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been in the making for the past 7 years. Those of us who have been working on it greeted the referendum result with a mixture of relief and delight. It's an important milestone for Waterbeach.

Developing a Neighbourhood Plan is a significant undertaking for volunteers with no experience of the development of planning policy and little knowledge of the planning process. The steering group was fortunate to be guided by Rachel Hogger of Modicum Planning during the consultations, the development of policies and in the response to the consultations and the Examiner.

Parish Councillors Brian Williams, Jane Williams and Jane Williamson have all been involved throughout the process. Brian led the steering group keeping up the momentum during the ups and downs. Jane Williams kept the community engaged right up until the referendum when she encouraged residents to vote by explaining what they were voting for. Jane Williamson's deep local knowledge of Waterbeach's history and heritage was invaluable throughout for informing the plan. Paul Bearpark was the fourth member of the group. Belinda Westwood provided the group with tireless admin support for the last few years. Significant contributions were made by others, such as Ian Bracey, along the way.

The views of Waterbeach residents will now have a greater role in guiding the development of Waterbeach, both New Town and village, going forwards.

Council passes motion to support Ukrainians seeking refuge

SCDC agreed to pledge support to all those seeking refuge as a result of the conflict in Ukraine. The Council agreed to work with Government but more is needed by the Government to establish accessible, swift and safe routes to the UK for all of those fleeing Ukraine and to assist local Councils in their work welcoming and supporting refugees from Ukraine. This includes clarity on safeguarding measures, ongoing support once the initial period has passed and assistance for people seeking refuge to find work as soon as they wish after arrival.

Council passes motion seeking redress from National Highways for trees that have died

National Highways, in the construction of the A14, have failed to adequately maintain and nurture the newly planted trees, shrubs and bushes. According to a 2020 survey, 94% of the trees planted had died. These were intended to replace thousands of established trees, bushes and hedgerows which were removed along the route which we were assured would be replaced twofold (Environment – National Highways (nationalhighways.co.uk)). National Highways has therefore failed to deliver the large tree planting initiative that was intended to be an important part of the environmental legacy of the project. The Council noted the following statement from National Highways issued in the last few days, in response to a County Council motion adopted last week:

“A tree/land survey (conducted by specialists) is set to take place early to mid-April (weather dependant) to assess whether there are any underlying issues with tree planting in the area. The results will help it determine which species of tree are best suited to the ground conditions. The area will be maintained for the next 6 months before replanting takes place in early October. We’ll be able to inform nearby residents of our plans once we have the results of the tree\land survey in the next 4-6 weeks.

In its motion the Council condemned the inadequate provision of replacement trees, shrubs and hedgerows along the A14 and will write to National Highways demanding replacement plants are provided, planted, watered and cared for until they are established It also stated that it will be monitoring the progress of these remedial actions, will hold National Highways to account in order to deliver on the environmental legacy promised, and to ensure that the same problems do not arise on the similar and imminent A428 project. This mirrored a motion at the County Council also seeking to ensure that the trees originally felled to build the A14 are replaced and that any new replacement trees are nurtured to ensure they survive and thrive.

New members parental leave policy

On 22 March the Council agreed to adopt the Member Parental Leave Policy. The South Cambridgeshire District Council Member Parental Leave policy gives all councillors the right to take extended leave from their normal duties for the reasons of maternity, paternity, adoption, or shared parental leave. This policy makes parental leave an approved reason in relation to Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 1972 without the need for further approval of the Council. This is a significant change as failure to attend a qualifying Council meeting means a Member automatically vacates their elected office after 6 months have elapsed.

The other key provisions of the policy are that Members will continue to receive their allowances, they are responsible for identifying an appropriate Member to cover their work and that they must keep the residents of their ward and external partner organisations informed about the duration of their leave.

This policy supports the Council’s Equality Scheme as SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings. This will have a significant impact as it advances equality of opportunity and demonstrates commitment to the public sector equality duty to create positive impacts for protected groups.

This could also encourage people from a wider variety of backgrounds to become Members by removing a potential barrier to standing for election.

Zero Carbon Communities Grants

SCDC’s popular Zero Carbon Communities Grant opened for a fourth round of funding on Wednesday 23 March. This year, groups can apply for up to £15,000, from a £120,544 pot, to one of two categories. These categories include projects which reduce carbon emissions and those which engage communities on climate change. Those interested in applying are encouraged to sign-up for an upcoming webinar, run by the Council, which will share information on eligible projects, and how to apply. This will take place on Tuesday 26 April 2022. You can [sign-up to attend this session](#). Please visit the [website](#) for more information and guidance on the application process. If anyone / any group is thinking of applying and has questions after reading the guidance, they are encouraged to contact the ZCC team via zcc@scambs.gov.uk

The money for Zero Carbon Communities grants comes from business rates from renewable energy sites, like solar farms, in South Cambridgeshire that the Council retains and earmarks for use in green initiatives like this.

The scheme, now in its fourth year, has so far provided £310,000 to 51 grassroots projects that work to tackle climate change in South Cambridgeshire. The deadline to apply for the latest round of grants is Wednesday 1 June 2022.

Cllrs Paul Bearpark, Anna Bradnam and Judith Rippeth

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
Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant relocation	Nationally significant infrastructure project	Anglian Water	Phase 3 Consultation 24 Feb to 27 April 2022	Link – Anglian Water project page Link to Consultation
Water Resources East Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP)	Water Resources Management Plan updated every five years	Water Resources East Ltd	Closed	Link to Water Resources East website Link to Consultation
Parking Issues in Cambridge		GCP	Closed	Link to Consultation
Cambridge North	Hybrid planning application	Chesterton Partnerships	28 th March until 11 April 2022	Link to consultation
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 above)	Link to Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website
East West Rail	Nationally significant infrastructure project	East West Railway Company (Created by	Latest consultation closed in June 2021. A statutory consultation is expected next year	Link – East West Rail company

		Department for Transport in 2018)	when communities will be asked to give their comments on detailed proposals.	
Cambourne to Cambridge	Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Environmental Impact Assessment consultation due to take place during 2022	Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website
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 in 2022	Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website
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	Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website
Cambridge Eastern Access	Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Consultation was held in late 2021. The results of this consultation will be taken back to the GCP Executive Board - alongside further technical work – in 2022 to decide on next steps on the preferred options.	Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website
Greenways	12 x local greenways feeding into Cambridge	Greater Cambridge Partnership	Outline business case being prepared. Consultation expected Oct 22.	Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website
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 delayed	Link to Greater Cambridge Partnership website