
SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT

CLARE DELDERFIELD AND BRIAN MILNES

APRIL 2021

YOU CAN FOLLOW YOUR COUNCILLORS ON FACEBOOK: [BRIANANDCLARE4SAWSTON](#)

Your Councillors are always ready to help. If you have any questions about these - or indeed any other - matters, please do not hesitate to contact Clare Delderfield cldr.delderfield@scambs.gov.uk or Brian Milnes cldr.milnes@scambs.gov.uk

CORONAVIRUS BUSINESS ADVICE AND SUPPORT

(For most up to date information please go to <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/business/coronavirus-information-for-businesses/>.)

The District Council has paid out a total of £10.6m in Government business grants to 4,447 businesses since November.

We have also paid £3.6m out of our £4.6m discretionary/hardship allocation and we are will be going live with a further £5.8m of re-start grants on Monday 19th.

We have been consistently one of the fastest Councils in the country to distribute these grants to eligible businesses while keeping fraud to a minimum. (Zero, as far as we're aware.)

BUSINESS RATES RELIEF

On 25 March, the Government announced £1.5 billion further funding for councils to provide additional targeted support to those businesses that have not already received business rates relief. The funding will be allocated to councils based on the stock of properties in the area whose sectors have been affected by the coronavirus outbreak and they will use their knowledge to make awards to local businesses. The Government will work with and support local government to enable ratepayers to apply as soon as possible this year.

WORKPLACE TESTING PROGRAMME EXPANDS TO OFFER FREE RAPID HOME TESTING

On 28 March the Government announced that, from 6 April, the workplace testing programme will supply home test kits to companies with over ten workers where it is not possible to set up testing on-site. This could be due to a lack of space or because a company operates across multiple sites. Over 60,000 businesses across the country have already registered their interest to provide rapid tests to key workers. Businesses are encouraged to register before 12 April in order to access free tests until the end of June, even if they're not yet open or are not able to start using the tests straight away.

COVID RECOVERY GRANTS FOR VILLAGES:

SCDC has just launched an additional Community Chest grant programme specifically for Covid Recovery and has put £30,000 in the pot. The aim is to help local community groups and parish councils resume activities that might have been stopped due to Covid or which have tailed off in recent months.

The Council's Grants Advisory Committee temporarily amended the rules around the eligibility criteria for its Community Chest Grant scheme for the next two months to allow applications for these grants of up to £2,000.

Previously, few parish councils could apply to the scheme as the criteria stipulated they had to have fewer than 160 registered electors. **But for the next eight weeks, it will be open to all parish councils** and community groups – including new ones that are now setting up. Applications are being accepted until 10 May 2021, with submissions being reviewed at the May 28 Grants Advisory Committee meeting.

Meanwhile, the normal Community Chest Grant scheme continues to run for community groups for a maximum grant of £1,000.

Applying for a Covid Recovery Community Chest Grant is the same as applying for a standard Community Chest Grant. The applicant simply selects which type of grant they are applying for at the start of the process with all other criteria being the same. See <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/community-development/grants/community-chest-grants/>

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW COUNCIL HOUSING

We have a policy of increasing the number of council properties available for people on lower incomes and are really pleased to have built 66 new council homes in the last 12 months (the target was 50). These are built to a high specification and most of the properties have solar panels and air-source heat-pumps.

Sawston will benefit from this policy as some of the new homes on the site north of Babraham Road will be council owned.

ZERO CARBON STRATEGY

Our Zero Carbon Strategy was adopted by the Council last year. It outlines how we are supporting the district to halve carbon emissions by 2030 and reduce them to zero by 2050, including delivering a reduction in our own carbon footprint of at least 45% by 2025, (on a 2019 baseline), and at least 75% by 2030. Find out more at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/council-adopts-zero-carbon-strategy-for-south-cambridgeshire/>

We will be continuing the Zero Carbon grant scheme and are looking for Parishes to submit further bids.

LED STREET LIGHTING

All SCDC street lighting is being replaced by low energy LED lights. This is nearing completion and should give a reduction of 60% of energy usage and a commensurate saving in parish councils' street-lighting energy bills.

BRIAN MILNES AND CLARE DELDERFIELD, DISTRICT COUNCILLORS FOR SAWSTON