
SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORT

CLARE DELDERFIELD AND BRIAN MILNES

APRIL 2019

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 cllr.delderfield@scambs.gov.uk or Brian Milnes cllr.milnes@scambs.gov.uk

BUSINESS PLAN

South Cambs approved its business plan last month which sets an ambitious and clear direction for the council with a focus on business support and protecting the environment. Equally important is the intention to secure new housing to meet the needs of all residents by making new homes as cheap to run as possible. This could involve water recycling, using renewable energy, building homes close to where people work and ensuring that you can get where you need to get without a car. These are big ambitions but only by aiming high will we really make a positive difference to the cost of living and to the environment. Copies of the summary document on the Business Plan can be made available in the Parish Council office or on request from Brian or Clare. Read or download here: <http://bit.ly/2KgtBph>

REFUGEES

South Cambs has announced that it will be working with the City Council to provide homes for up to five Syrian Refugee families.

Councillors confirmed on 3rd April a commitment to offer a genuine humanitarian response to families requiring urgent medical treatment, who are survivors of violence and torture and include women and children. This will include families who have been forced from their homes in Syria, Iran or Sudan.

It is not anticipated that the waiting time for families in the greatest need, who are already on the Council's housing waiting list, will change because of the decision. The Council will be able to decide which housing it offers to the programme. Therefore, the authority will ensure that these decisions have the least impact on existing levels of need within the district.

MOVING THE SEWAGE WORKS

An application for over £200 million to Government from South Cambs, Cambridge City and the County Council to move the existing sewage/water works from North Cambridge has been successful. Moving this facility which has a reputation for being pretty smelly will free up a significant site for some

thousands of houses. The next big decision is where will the new sewage/ water works go. It will be in South Cambs and has to be close to the river and not in the floodplain which greatly restricts the options. The plan is further complicated by the need to increase the amount of 'sludge' from outside our area which the new facility will treat. It was this which made it eligible for the funding but it will involve significant lorry movement which means that there has to be first class infrastructure to support the new site.

INVESTMENT PLAN

In common with all local Government South Cambs has had its Westminster funding largely removed. In order to keep Council Tax bill increases to a minimum it is important that we find more ways of generating income. (We already generate about £2m per year.)

The first deal of our newly adopted Investment Plan is to buy for £13m the long-term leasehold on a property on the Cambridge Science Park. This will generate returns of between around 5% up to 6.5% The building is listed as Grade A office space – which means it is among the highest quality buildings on the market. Its location is widely considered Europe's most successful research and development park. This is the first of a proposed £100m worth of Property Investment that will supplement the lost central government funding over the next 5 years.

LOCAL PLAN

You may recall that the current Local Plan (which identifies where development is to go in future years) was finally adopted in October after being in inspection for over 4 years. During this time about 4000 houses were consented in unplanned-for locations. The government inspector requires us to now embark on a new joint local plan with Cambridge City and this is now getting underway. The first piece of work is to ask landowners to come forward and tell us about any land they are prepared to offer up for future development.

The consultation is to identify potential sites that can be technically assessed for housing and economic development, to meet the needs identified for the District, for inclusion in our next local plan. Anyone can put forward sites, but it is usually landowners, developers, land promoters, businesses, local interest groups, parish councils, local property agents, neighbourhood forums (prepared or preparing neighbourhood plans).

Not all the sites that are submitted will be included in the plan – It will depend on the spatial strategy we decide on, and the assessment of the sites based on several factors including whether they are suitable, available, achievable, and viable. The selected sites will then go through the local plan process and become part of the adopted policy when the plan is found sound and adopted.

DISTRICT COUNCIL AND COMBINED AUTHORITY CEOs

The CEO of South Cambridgeshire District Council has taken early retirement. Mike Hill who was the director responsible for Environmental Services is acting up as interim while a new permanent CEO is recruited. The council is also undertaking a review of all of its operations to make it more efficient and to greatly improve the services it gives to the residents. This is a big piece of work which will take a long time to implement fully but which you should start to see the benefits of quite quickly.

The Combined Authority has also been without a CEO for quite some time and interviews took place last week for a replacement. Unfortunately no appointment was made and so 2 interim directors remain in place for the time being, one of whom is also running East Cambridgeshire District Council.

The high profile CAM Metro project which aims to run largely off road using wheeled, tram style vehicles out to the furthest reaches of South Cambridgeshire and beyond (St Neots, Haverhill) has been costed at a staggering £4 billion at today's prices. Goodness only knows what that cost will be when and if it finally gets built. The really expensive part is the tunnelling under Cambridge City and the creation of an underground station - somewhere under the historic city. Critical to this is a new Cambridge South Station to serve Addenbrookes and the Bio Medical campus both of which are growing at significant rates and which will have tens of thousands of new employees before too long. The CA agreed to spend up to £100,000 to do a feasibility study into whether there is currently capacity in the timetable to create an extra stop at Cambridge South with a view to putting a temporary station there while to finds the money - along with Government- to build the permanent station. This money is in addition to £5 million already spent on the Cambridge South Station project some of which came from the businesses currently working in that area.

Cllr Bridget Smith, managed to persuade the CA to include a project for upgrading all of the A10 junctions alongside their preferred project to dual the whole road. Business cases will now be worked on for both projects.

VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDES

It was great to see that the Sawston Village Design Guide was approved by the District Council last week. Well done to all those who worked so hard on bringing it to fruition. The officer responsible for the project, Hannah Loftus, has been commended for her excellent work. The council are working on a toolkit to help other parishes carry on with similar work.

MILL LANE - CROUDACE DEVELOPMENT

After negotiations between them and your Councillors, the Developers have provided new trees and bushes to restore the screening between the rear of Wynemares and the new development.

GRANTS SCHEMES REALIGNED FOR MAXIMUM COMMUNITY BENEFIT

At a District Council Cabinet meeting last week it was agreed to close the 'Elite Athletes' Grant scheme and use the £10k to help support other schemes promoting health and wellbeing across the district in order to positively impact on a wider number of South Cambs residents.

"MY SOUTH CAMBS" CUSTOMER PORTAL - REMINDER

A reminder that the South Cambs Council customer portal that went live on 21st January. Users will be able to sign in using e-mail, facebook, Microsoft and Google. The system allows customers to submit questions, contact the Council about planning, benefits, waste collections etc as well as to report problems. The new portal can be accessed from the South Cambs Council homepage or on <https://mysouthcambs.scambs.gov.uk>.

JOBS & EMPLOYMENT

House prices in South Cambridgeshire (averaging £439,000!) make it very difficult for many businesses, including the Councils to recruit staff. South Cambridgeshire District Council is hoping to fill quite a number of job vacancies early this year including apprenticeships. If you know someone who is thinking about a job change please do keep an eye on the website site. SCDC has a good reputation as a good employer and offers flexi-time, excellent training and many other incentives to ensure that it attracts the right people.

PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THESE, OR ANY OTHER MATTERS.

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DISTRICT COUNCILLORS FOR SAWSTON