

Cambourne Town Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council report: Tuesday 6th September 2022

Councillor Stephen Drew
Councillor Helene Leeming

Contact details for Cllrs Drew and Leeming:

Cllr Drew
cllr.drew@scambs.gov.uk
07445380811

Cllr Leeming
cllr.leeming@scambs.gov.uk
07974219202

This is our third report to the town council since being elected as district councillors in May 2022. As this report covers July and August, it is thinner than normal, but still important. We have continued to work on various matters raised to us either by residents or by local groups, and have reported any new information that we have to the council in this report.

1) Taylor Wimpey work on roads etc. around Gladiator Road

As detailed in our report for the July meeting, we talked to Liz Watts (CEO of South Cambridgeshire District Council) about a range of issues facing Cambourne residents. One of the things we asked her to do was to contact Taylor Wimpey regarding the slow progress of the work to surface and complete roads and footpaths etc. in the south of Upper Cambourne around Gladiator Road. Sadly the response that Ms Watts received from Taylor Wimpey simply reiterated their intention to complete the work by the end of December 2022. Whilst this may fit the timeline agreed for the work, it does not reflect a strong commitment to the needs of Cambourne residents.

Therefore we sent this email back to Ms Watts outlining our ongoing concerns about the treatment of Cambourne by developers whose perceived inaction is viewed negatively by residents in our many discussions with them. This is the key part of the email:

"Thank you for chasing this up with TW. The December 2022 completion date that has been referenced here ties in with what the town council had been told.

I am afraid that whilst Taylor Wimpey may be "surprised and disappointed" that there have been complaints, that is simply symptomatic of the situation in Cambourne. Residents have no faith in the developers doing anything until the last possible minute and believe that Taylor Wimpey, and others, just seek to avoid their responsibilities for the town. Therefore complaints do not get made by residents to the developers as they do not see any point in doing so. This comes up again and again when we speak to residents in the town and frankly there is nothing that Taylor Wimpey can do to resolve it unless they decide to completely change their business model and start putting meeting the needs of residents before their pursuit of what are seen as avoiding their responsibilities in order to squeeze every last penny of profit from the town's residents. Since this is not going to happen, they will remain "surprised and disappointed" to hear there have been complaints.

I am sorry that I am once again telling you about this Liz and recognise that you have been helpful in getting this information. However, relentless disappointment with developers is simply part of life in Cambourne and as councillors we will be reflecting this to anyone who we can on a constant basis.

3) South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

Cllr Leeming has now attended meetings with the Community Safety Partnership, as well as a briefing held at South Cambridgeshire Hall for all councillors regarding their wider work. She has continued to liaise with the CSP over the summer regarding various incidents of anti-social behaviour in Cambourne and is working to keep our town at the top of their list of concerns.

4) Recycling of electrical items

South Cambs has installed eight new recycling banks (the pink ones) for small electrical items like hairdryers, toasters and phones. One of these is here in Cambourne in the Morrisons car park in Cambourne, alongside the other recycling facilities that are already there. Residents can take their small broken / unusable electrical items there instead of putting them in your black bins. There are also existing pink electrical recycling banks at Milton and Thriplow Household Recycling Centres. Small appliances can also be handed in for recycling instore at Curry's on Newmarket Road in Cambridge. Of course Cambourne residents can also take advantage of fantastic Cambourne Repair Cafe which was featured on the front of the August edition of the Cambourne Crier if they want to see if their electrical items can be mended first.

5) The cost of living crisis and Cambourne: Warm hubs

Local authorities are responding to the cost of living crisis by helping communities to set up "Warm Hubs." These are places where people can find a safe, warm and friendly environment in which to spend part of their day and whilst doing so reduce their energy bills at home. Warm Hubs can run from any publicly accessible community building, such as community centres, village halls, churches and their halls, older peoples' day centres, youth centres or community libraries. They will be run by volunteers, with support and training delivered by Cambridgeshire ACRE. It is expected that first of the community-led Warm Hubs will open their doors in October as the weather starts to get colder. The "Warm Hubs in Winter" project is being delivered in partnership by Cambridgeshire ACRE, the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Integrated Care System's South Place Partnership, South Cambridgeshire District Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council. Read more about it at <https://www.cambsacre.org.uk/introducing-warm-hubs/>

Hopefully Cambourne's organisations will be able to provide such a service and take part in the scheme. Perhaps the town council would like to get involved?

6) Cambourne High Street development plans

At the last meeting it was requested by town councillors that this be a standing item on these reports. However, at this point in time there is nothing specific to report regarding timescales. We still await the developer choosing to submit their application to the planning authority.

7) Uplands Place road crossing

Cllr Drew met with many residents of Uplands Place during August to discuss their new lives in Cambourne, and both what they enjoyed about their new town as well as their concerns. As expected the crossing was at the top of the list of matters to be discussed. Although positive comments about Greens and bus services are worth recording here as well. It was also interesting to note that residents were unaware of McCarthy Stone's role in the removal of the planning requirement to fund the pedestrian crossing.

Cllr Drew has spoken further with Liz Watts (CEO of SCDC) regarding this matter and asked her to investigate the process which led to the removal of the planning requirement to deliver the pedestrian crossing as set out in the original planning conditions. It is our view that the correct process for this may not have been followed. This may not be correct, but we are investigating further and hope this will lead to the decision being revoked

and the process of considering McCarthy Stone's request to not have to fund the crossing being reopened with correct consultation.

8) Road safety at the Vine School

Cllr Leeming has continued her work with the school, police and other agencies in order to tackle the dangers experienced by residents whose children attend The Vine School in Upper Cambourne. The police will be carrying out spot checks on parking at the school in the coming term, and posters to discourage dangerous parking have been produced. We hope to see some improvements in the coming weeks and months.

9) City Access Consultation

A 'Sustainable Travel Zone' (STZ) road user charge has been put forward by Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) for private vehicles between 7am and 7pm on weekdays. The plans are part of a package to deliver improvements to public transport, reduce congestion in the city, and to help the environment through lower emissions. The proposals follow the GCP's 'Making Connections' consultation, which the authority said showed the public was supportive of improvements to the public transport network, as well as its aims to reduce pollution and congestion.

A £5 congestion charge to drive into and around Cambridge is being considered as part of a "once in a generation" plan to shake up how people travel between 7am and 7pm on weekdays. While driving in the city could get more expensive, the GCP has revealed plans to make buses cheaper. Flat fares have been proposed to be introduced; in Cambridge a ticket could cost £1 to travel in the city, with a ticket in the wider 'travel to work' area, which includes Cambourne, proposed to cost just £2.

This would mean a significant increase in bus transport between Cambourne and Cambridge, and of course with the exciting proposals for the Cambourne to Cambridge Busway this potentially heralds the delivery of the services our residents have waited many years to see put in place.

There is to be further public consultation following the discussion and potential adoption of the plans at the GCP Assembly meeting on 8th September. The consultation will be a great opportunity for Cambourne residents to express their views in support, or opposition, to the proposals. As always we strongly encourage involvement in the process.

You can read more information here:

<https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/news/ambitious-proposals-to-deliver-world-class-transport-network-for-greater-cambridge-unveiled>