

Cambourne Town Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council report: Tuesday 7th February 2023

Councillor Stephen Drew
Councillor Helene Leeming

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This is our eighth report to the town council since being elected as district councillors in May 2022. This report covers the short window of time between the January and February meetings.

1) Cambourne High Street development plans

At a recent meeting at SCDC to review the council's business plan for 2023-2024, Cllr Leeming raised the issue of the need for the council to focus on new high streets as part of its overall strategy.

2) Speedwatch

Cllr Leeming attended the Volunteer Fair held at The Hub in order to promote the Speedwatch plans and to recruit volunteers. As a result of this three additional residents have signed up to work with the group. The group is organising initial training for members in order to start work in the spring.

A possible source of funding for the Cambourne Speedwatch has been identified and a grant application will be made in due course.

3) West Cambourne access

An article has been written for inclusion in the February edition of the Cambourne Crier.

4) Bus services

Signatures are still being gathered for the petition that Cllrs Leeming and Drew have set up regarding the 905 bus route: <https://www.sclibdems.org.uk/campaigns/reinstate-the-905-bus-route>. There are currently over 100 signatures.

Cllr Leeming has written to Tim Bellamy, the Interim Director of Transport at CPCA about bus services in Cambourne.

"Dear Tim,

Thank you very much for your time this evening, and for your answers to all our questions!

There are two specific points that it would be better to raise in detail with you offline:

One is about the timetables for bus services in the morning running from Cambourne into Cambridge via the west villages. There are regular reports of buses driving past people at bus stops because the buses are full, often in the west villages downstream, but occasionally in Cambourne itself, at the start of the route. When asked about this, the Director of Stagecoach East was basically saying that it would not be profitable to solve this problem. The more I have thought about it, the more it seems an issue of timetabling as much as anything else. If there is such high demand in the morning, perhaps an additional bus could be added at this time, and the timetable later in the day adjusted? I am so conscious that these are people who use the bus regularly, and their experience is far from ideal. It was heartbreaking to hear young people struggling to gain further education and being thwarted by the unreliable nature of the bus service. We do not have any further education options in Cambourne and have a significant population of young people dependent on public transport, who I will always advocate for.

My main point is to express my wish to review the 905 service that was amended in the autumn Stagecoach cuts and was never restored to its former service. I appreciate the revised route was partly due to St Neots residents wishing to have a direct route into the city. This change, cutting out Cambourne and CRC has had a number of unforeseen consequences for the residents of Cambourne, (and St Neots).

This loss affects many people, most notably Cambridge Regional College (CRC) students from Cambourne, who have now been told that rather than go on a direct bus journey to CRC, they must now go into town and change buses. This transforms what was a 25-minute trip into 1hr 15mins +. Some St Neots students are also struggling because CRC has been dropped off the route in Cambridge too. There are cases of students considering dropping out of their course.

Another group affected are commuters traveling between St Neots and Cambourne to work in Cambourne Business Park. There is an alternative bus, the no 18, but it is circuitous. There are people that live in Cambourne and work in St Neots. Some used to use this bus to get to the train station in St Neots to go on to commute to London. Cambourne has strong links with St Neots that these timetable changes do not reflect.

I would like to rethink the new route and to create a compromise on the timetable which would see every other 905 bus come into Cambourne and on to CRC, as it did before, rather than all the 905 buses bypassing Cambourne. At the moment, there is a petition circulating, and I will forward the results when it is closed.

Please can we work together to look at the issues in regards to these two subjects to make the existing bus experience better for residents?

Kind regards

Helene

Cllr Helene Leeming"

5) County Lines

Cllrs Leeming and Drew attended a presentation about county lines in order to increase our understanding of the issues involved so we can provide more support for our community. We would like to encourage the town council to arrange for members to take part in a future event and then to work with us and relevant agencies on this important issue for families and young people in our town.