

Cambourne Town Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council report: Tuesday 7th November 2023

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Councillor Helene Leeming

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This is the sixth report to the town council in our second year as district councillors since being elected in May 2022.

1. Wellbeing Walks

Councillor Drew is working with various partners in the district council and Cambourne with the aim of getting wellbeing walks introduced to the town from early 2024. Wellbeing walks are an opportunity for people to enjoy time outdoors in their town in the company of other people in an organised setting. They already take place in various places across South Cambridgeshire. The Wildlife Trusts have expressed interest in facilitating the walks, and they are in discussion with the relevant officer at SCDC. Discussions will also happen with Monkfield Medical Practice regarding the referring of people to the walks. There will also be a bid for initial funding from SCDC.

2. 18 Bus Service

A public meeting was held on Monday 30th October at the Belfry Hotel. This was organised by parents of students at Comberton Village College as well as the sixth form providers in Cambridge. There were also residents who use the service for work in attendance. The meeting was prompted by the very poor service being provided by Whippet with the 18 bus often cancelled and regularly late. Councillor Leeming arranged for Mayor Nik Johnson from the Combined Authority to attend, and the mayor organised for Ed Cameron, Commercial Director of Whippet, to attend. Also in attendance were councillors Leeming, Drew, Bhattacharya, Howell, Thompson and Patel.

The meeting lasted for two and a half hours where all the issues with the bus services were aired by parents. We also heard from the mayor and from Whippet's commercial director about why the service was struggling and what actions Whippet will be taking to improve the service. At the end of the meeting it was agreed that Whippet would pledge to do three things:

- prioritise the delivery of the morning and afternoon buses from Cambourne to Cambridge every day
- improve customer service and communication with bus users
- Improve the signage and bus stops on the 18 route

A follow up meeting to review progress will be held in three months time.

The meeting has been reported on the BBC News website: [Cambridgeshire parents' frustration over number 18 bus delays - BBC News](#)

3. Cambourne 25

Councillors Leeming and Drew have been working over the last year to get the district and county councils to recognise the needs of Cambourne in a much larger way. As our town reaches its twenty-fifth year in 2024, there remain a number of key issues that need to be resolved in order for residents to be able to fully benefit from so many of the good things that exist in our town. In May 2023 we arranged for the transport summit that was held in the council chamber of the district council, bringing together councillors and officers of the town, district and county councils to consider the key needs of Cambourne.

Building on this initial work a new group will be established to coordinate actions that will be taken to improve Cambourne through work by the district and town councils. The remit of the group will be related to all matters for which the two councils have responsibility. Membership of the group will be the three district councillors, the county councillor and two town councillors. In addition officers from the district and county council who can be tasked with delivery of specific projects will be involved. The chair of the town council, Councillor Joe O'Dwyer, has agreed to chair the group.

4. Parliamentary youth engagement project

On Sunday 29th October Councillor Drew attended an event organised by a Hindu community group working to engage young people with the British parliamentary process. The event was held at Caxton Village Hall and was attended by around 75 people, mainly from Cambourne. We heard from three young people who had been on a visit to the Houses of Parliament organised by the group. The young people were then divided into three teams, each representing a fictitious political party. They then worked with one of the councillors present to develop a manifesto which they presented to the whole meeting. The three Cambourne councillors present were councillors Bhattacharya, Patel and Drew. We then held a mock parliament election to choose the winning party. It was a great event to be part of and the young people were a credit to themselves and their community.

5. South Cambs Hall Ground Floor Project

The Economic Development Team at SCDC have been progressing a project to convert an area of the ground floor space at South Cambridgeshire Hall into an attractive space for hire for use by individuals, businesses, business advisory and community groups who are looking for meanwhile desk, collaborative and meeting space. In addition to standard desk and meeting room space provision, we will also be offering additional facilities such as a podcast room.

A large proportion of the space will be a dedicated Business Engagement and Promotional Area where we can provide business support and promote the services of the Council to businesses. We will also be able to invite in external business/community support providers on an ad-hoc/rota/pop-up basis to promote different kinds of business support to attending businesses and community groups. The aim is to make this space into a hive of entrepreneurial activity which has support, collaboration and idea sharing at its heart. The work is well underway, and we expect the space to be open April 2024.

6. Groundwork East growing programmes

Cllr Leeming is working with SCDC's Physical Activity Locality Coordinator to set up Groundwork East Growing Programmes for residents of Cambourne. Groundwork East are a charitable organisation that offers various adult, family and children programmes that are orientated around healthy eating, cooking, growing,

and supporting the environment. Initial discussions are taking place with Monkfield Medical Practice's Social Prescriber to ensure take up reaches people who will benefit most from this programme

7. SCIP

On the 11 th October, the South Cambridgeshire Investment Partnership development was deferred by the Planning Committee following a recommendation by the Principal Planner, (SCIP and CIP sites) who informed the Committee that the officer's recommendation had been updated to read as follows: "To DEFER planning application reference 23/00123/FUL to enable the Local Planning

Authority to fully review the additional technical information in respect of noise, vibration and electromagnetic radiation submitted by third parties and by the applicants after the publication of the Agenda. Having regards to Policies SC/10 and SC/14 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and the requirements of Paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy framework, officers consider that the review of this technical information and officers conclusions upon issues raised in the respect of noise, vibration and electromagnetic radiation is necessary prior to a decision being taken on the application." In accordance with the updated officer's recommendation, the Committee deferred the application by unanimous vote.

8. Promoting exercise for Fun

Cllr Leeming and the social prescriber at Monkfield Medical Practice have worked to promote the following SCDC programme in Cambourne, which has had high take up Exercise4Fun is a 12-week free active lifestyle programme taking place at Sawston, Melbourn, Cambourne and Linton leisure centres.

Exercise4Fun will have 3 formats:

Adult (age 18 and over) programmes at all 4 leisure centres

1 adult (age 18 and over) disability programme, at Sawston only

1 family programme for children aged 11 to 16 and accompanying parent or guardian, at Sawston only.

The adult programme is for participants with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 or above (in ethnic minority groups it is lower at 23.5 or above) and inactive. Both the adult disability and the family programme is for participants who are inactive and concerned about their weight.

Anyone who takes part will be currently inactive (doing less than 30 minutes of activity per week), and not an existing member of a leisure centre.

9. Speedwatch

On the evening 25 th of Oct, we ran a Speedwatch event on Back Lane which was met with the usual variety of responses from the public. Any volunteers are welcome to join us.

10. Save the date – 10 December, CVC, South Cambs Christmas Market

11. Community Safety Partnership

Cllr Leeming has worked with the Community Safety Partnership to write an article about County Lines in our district to be included in the Cambourne Crier. Public awareness is key part of combatting this crime.

12. Sixth Windrush Day Grant Scheme is now open

On 1st November, DLUHC announced the opening of the sixth Windrush Day Grant Scheme 2024. Councils, community groups and charities can bid for a share of up to £500,000 for educational, arts and sporting projects in the run up to Windrush Day on 22 June 2024. Grants will fund commemorative and celebratory events and activities in recognition of the contributions the Windrush generation and their descendants have made to UK society. Some previous examples of events funded by the grant include celebratory parades, art exhibitions, and choir groups. Near Neighbours, a charity that brings people together in communities that are religiously and ethnically diverse, are administering the grant scheme on DLUHC's behalf. Near Neighbours is holding four workshops in November where they will give an overview of the scheme and an opportunity for bidders to ask questions.

Applications must be completed using this form by 17 December 2023.

13. Local Climate Action Conference

South Cambridgeshire District Council is holding its first Local Climate Action Conference on Tuesday November 28 to tie in with COP28. It is free to attend and everyone is welcome. We have speakers from parish, district and county councils as well as from local nature action groups. We hope as many local people as possible are able to attend to see how we can work together to help the district become net zero by 2050.

14. UK government support for citizens impacted by the conflict in Israel and Palestine

Emergency legislation to ensure UK nationals and other eligible groups impacted by the conflict in Israel and Gaza are eligible for benefits, social housing and homelessness assistance

On 26 October, the government laid emergency legislation to ensure British citizens and those eligible for support fleeing the violence in Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) – including the Gaza Strip – and Lebanon will be exempt from the habitual residence test. This emergency legislation will come into force tomorrow to ensure those fleeing the conflict are eligible for benefits, social housing and homelessness assistance, where needed, without delay. DLUHC has updated the Homelessness Code of Guidance and Social Housing Allocations Guidance to reflect these changes

15. Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill becomes law

On 26 October new laws came into force on the planning system, holding developers to account, and encouraging plans to enable the building of new homes. These measures have become law after the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill received Royal Assent.