

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

Report to Haslingfield Parish Council December 2018

Cambourne to Cambridge

The Local Liaison Forum (LLF) and Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Joint Assembly met in November with discussion of the Cambourne to Cambridge project on the agenda following its unpauing by the Mayor. The LLF submitted many detailed questions, which the GCP has provided written responses to. Overall, the LLF was disappointed with the report prepared by GCP officers for the meetings but there are some positive signs.

At the Joint Assembly meeting, officers agreed to provide a review of the evidence that led to a northern alternative along the A428 being discarded. We believe this is the first step in providing a proper comparison route now that the scheme needs to be CAM compliant (and therefore off road). Officers also agreed to examine interim measures that could be taken on-road within the confines of the existing carriageway. These measures could well be needed if the scheme is delayed because of question marks of the CAM proposals or other strategic infrastructure such as East West Rail.

The GCP has also undertaken to re-engage with the LLF technical group on a regular basis leading up to another LLF meeting in mid-2019.

The executive board of the GCP meets last week and noted progress but took no formal decision on the route at this stage. The final decision will be taken in autumn 2019.

Proposals for off-street car parking in Cambridge

Cambridge City Council is consulting on proposals to change the council's car parking charges next year, as the council aims to balance providing high-quality services that offer value for money with improving air quality and reducing congestion. Proposals include formally adopting the weekday Peak Time Congestion Tariff which has been trialled and introducing a 12-month trial of a Weekend Peak Time Congestion Tariff between 11am and 1pm on Saturdays and Sundays. More details can be found at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/news/2018/11/30/proposals-to-change-car-park-charges-to-tackle-congestion-and-improve-air-quality> and comments on the proposals should be sent to carparkconsultations@cambridge.gov.uk by 21st December.

November Full Council

I proposed and Ian seconded a motion to full council last week welcoming some of the progress outlined above on Cambourne to Cambridge. The motion was passed and nearly had cross-party support: the Conservative group (who had been very supportive of most of the motion) had concerns about interim on-road measures and the effect on commuting from Cambourne during construction, so decided not to back it.

There was cross-party support for the Zero Carbon by 2050 motion. The motion proposed that South Cambs supports the transition to Zero Carbon by 2050 in the next Local Plan, enabling planners, developers, businesses and residents to maximize the opportunities of green technology. This brings the district into line with Cambridge City Council, with which we will continue to have a joint local plan, and is more ambitious than the government's target of 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

The other significant decision taken at full council was the approval of additional loan funding to enable the completion of the new ice rink arena being built off Newmarket Road. The District Council agreed in September 2016 to provide a £1.85 million loan for the new venue. However, though building work began in November 2017, progress was halted following the discovery of World War Two munitions and the delay resulted in further costs.

Approval of the additional loan funding means a high-quality community sporting venue and up to 25 associated jobs will be delivered.

Business Plan Consultation

The Council's administration has published the areas we believe are priorities for our communities. The four priority areas the Council has put forward are: economic development; housing that is affordable for everyone to live in; climate and environment; and a 21st century council. More details about what these mean and the focus of work under each area is included in the draft plan. A public consultation and online survey has been launched which will run until Monday 7th January, and the feedback given to the consultation will be used to draft a full business plan for 2019/20, including actions and measures. The plans can be viewed and commented upon here:

www.scambs.gov.uk/businessplan

More concern about the Combined Authority

Sad to report more worries at the Combined Authority (CA), with the Mayor apologising for the eye-watering overspend to the Overview and Scrutiny committee. The authority is set to have operational costs of £7.6million this year, £5.6million of which is on staff salaries alone. (Getting close to a factor of 10 higher than the £850,000 per year promised the Mayoral election campaign.)

The CA was further rocked last week by the dismissal of the Chief Financial Officer – the fourth to have left in 18 months! Calls are growing for an independent review and audit of the CA with such dysfunction apparent.

Ongoing Consultations

A quick reminder that the consultations on Park and Ride capacity at Junction 11 (<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/m11junction11>) and Comberton Greenways (<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/greenways>) are ongoing and will close on 21st and 17th December respectively.

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