

Joint District Councillors' Report May 2018

District councillors' monthly report for the communities of Histon & Impington, Orchard Park and King's Meadow.

News from South Cambs District Council

All Change at the South Cambs District Council

We will try to keep our reports non-political. However, on this occasion, it is important to let you know about the huge changes that have followed the results of the local election in May. The Lib Dems now have control of South Cambridgeshire District Council. The make-up of the Council is as follows: 30 Lib Dems (20 of whom are new Councillors and 13 of whom are women); 11 Conservatives (2 new); 2 Labour (1 new); and 2 Independents.

The new Leader of the Council, Cllr Bridget Smith, announced that there would be a new way of working that is collaborative, inclusive and transparent. This was immediately demonstrated by the choice of Cllr Douglas de Lacey, an Independent member, as the new Chairman of the Council; and Cllr Granville Chamberlain, a Conservative member, as the Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. Being in control of the Council means that the Lib Dems decide the Cabinet positions and it is exciting to see them take charge of Strategy, Housing, Planning and Environmental Services. Meanwhile, we are delighted that Cllr Sue Ellington, a Conservative member, accepted the offer to continue in her role as Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder.

In her inaugural speech at the first full Council meeting, the Leader of the Council, Cllr Bridget Smith, laid out the three Day One priorities for the new Council: affordable housing, environment and business growth. You can read her speech here: <https://wp.me/p9Xyh5-13>

Your new District Councillors

Martin Cahn, Pippa Heylings and Steve Hunt were elected as your new District Councillors. Whichever way people voted, we look forward to working with you as individuals, with our parish councils and with the officers at South Cambs - on your behalf. During our campaign, we stressed the importance of teamwork and joined-up thinking between District and County Councils. We said we would be active, available and accountable. Together with your County Councillor, David Jenkins, we intend to both do this and keep you informed about how we are doing it. Please follow our new joint hiopcouncillors webpage where we will regularly provide you with updates and locally relevant information. Our monthly reports will be stored here for easy access and you will find all our contact details there, too. Follow the (interim) webpage here: www.hiopcouncillors.org

In order to be informed, understand and influence policy and decision-making that affects our area, it is important to be active members of key Council Committees. Here are the positions of your Councillors:

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Committee	Role	Councillor
Planning	Vice-Chair	Pippa Heylings
Planning	Member	Martin Cahn
Scrutiny and Overview	Member	Martin Cahn
Scrutiny and Overview	Substitute	Steve Hunt
Climate and Environment (new)	Chair	Pippa Heylings
Climate and Environment (new)	Vice-Chair	Martin Cahn
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny	Substitute	Pippa Heylings
Cambridge Fringes Joint Development Control	Member	Steve Hunt
Licensing	Member	Steve Hunt
Civic Affairs	Member	Martin Cahn
Civic Affairs	Substitute	Steve Hunt
Grants Advisory	Substitute	Martin Cahn
Brexit Advisory	Member	Martin Cahn

5 year housing land supply achieved

South Cambs has confirmed that there is sufficient "readily available land" to meet the five-year housing land supply, thus putting an end to rampant speculative development on the edges of villages, in the green belt and on flood-prone land. Since 2014 and up until now, South Cambridgeshire has been unable to confirm housing land supply to meet government demands and the Local Plan had not been approved, both of which factors led to many homes being granted permission in unsuitable areas (often on appeal to government inspectors). Stephen Kelly, South Cambridgeshire District Council's Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development, said: "A wide range of high quality and well-connected new homes are in great demand locally, but making sure these are built in the right places is really important to us. From today we expect all our local policies to be given appropriate weight in all our decisions, which will give communities more protection from speculative planning applications." Of course, we all want affordable housing. What this means is that applications for affordable housing can be considered whilst respecting fully the local and neighbourhood plans, and national policies. Read more here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/news/council-confirms-greater-protection-for-villages-from-speculative-development>

Creation of a new Climate and Environment Committee

Pippa and Martin are leading this brand-new Committee which aims to make sure that the Council really is "green to the core in everything it does". See here for details about the Committee <http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=1095> and watch this space for news about its first priorities for action. We welcome views on what the scope of the committee should cover from all those interested.

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A green approach to the CAMKOX Corridor?

On 18th May, Pippa represented the Council at a workshop in Bedford to launch the Natural Capital Investment Plan for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Growth Corridor” (known as the CaMKOx Corridor). This “Growth Corridor” has been approved by national government and includes major road and rail links. Just as we calculate financial and human capital, we also have natural capital: such as the value of floodplains and the value of trees for mitigating noise and air pollution. Bedford Local Nature Partnership led a “federation of 4 LNPs”, including Cambridgeshire LNP, to present the results of a government-funded analysis of how natural assets can be both protected and harnessed during construction - in order to create greater opportunities for wellbeing and investment. Currently there are plans for the construction of more than a million homes and additional East-West transport links along the corridor. Can there be a greener approach to the construction of the “Brain Belt” than just overall degradation and pouring of tarmac? South Cambs thinks so.

Brexit Advisory Committee

A new committee is being established to assess the impact of Brexit on our area and consider how the local authority should respond. Key issues will include how to minimise any economic and social impact on our region which depends greatly on its openness to an international workforce and international exchange. The possibility of cooperating with other local authorities in the area is being explored. Martin is a member of this committee.

More Local Matters

A14 Widening at the Histon J32 Roundabout

Your councillors have been active in interacting with the A14 Action Committee and trying to minimise the disturbance both to wildlife and greenery and to minimise the environmental impact of the works currently being carried out in terms of noise and pollution in cooperation with other local activists. This has involved repeated interaction with the local Highways England team to ensure that temporary sound barriers are in place at night since the noise impact has proved very significant. A large H&I A14 Action Group has been very active in raising awareness, logging multiple formal complaints, identifying breaches in the constructors’ code of practice and the DCO, the equivalent of planning permission for a large infrastructure project. There is now a weekly meeting of senior Planning and Environmental Health Officers at South Cambs with your District Councillor – to ensure there is an adequate monitoring and enforcement regime by the District Council on the works being carried out. Problems of ultra fine particulates, such as pm2.5 are potentially very serious. Highways England was required to install two air quality monitors to measure pm2.5 among other pollutants. These monitors were not installed prior to works. This is serious. Measurements taken by an activist in Orchard Park have shown high levels of pm2.5, particularly near the Orchard Park Primary School, which is of great concern; as are the potentially dangerous longer-term impacts on health for the wider community in H&I and OP. This is one of the key issues being followed up in the weekly South Cambs meetings, and agreement has been reached to request additional air quality monitors for ongoing monitoring of pollution levels on both

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sides of the A14. The recent introduction of 40 speed limits has produced a noticeable improvement. Reports of excessive noise during night diversions involved contact being made with Cambridgeshire County Council. They have promised clearer signing of the recommended alternative route via the M11/A505/A11 for HGVs and, following our suggestions, the possibility of introducing temporary reminder flashing speed signs on the diversions is being examined. Much still needs to be done and there are plans for a regular working group between residents, HE and South Cambs to make sure there are changes to the way things are happening.

Planning Issues

Several significant planning applications have come forward for consideration. Since two of your councillors are actually on Planning Committee, there are limits to views that they can express prior to Committee in order to prevent “pre-determination of a decision”. However, having two votes on the Committee is important. Meanwhile, your councillors are always available to listen to the issues around particular proposals and, where relevant, to communicate residents’ concerns to the relevant planning case officer. The station house application has now been approved and we are talking with planning officers to help expedite the other two applications in the station area. Additionally, as a result of concerns expressed by local residents and the Parish Council, a request was made by Martin for the proposal for the development of four houses at 93 Impington Lane to be considered by Planning Committee rather than using delegated powers. Significant concern has also been expressed to councillors about the environmental and highways impact of the development of 26 houses proposed off Impington Lane currently being considered by council officers. The consultation period finished on the 4th June.

Diary

Next Month's Scheduled Meetings

Date	Time	Meeting	Venue	Councillor
1 st June	10.00 – 13.00	Induction & Meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Combined Authority	Fenland District Council, March	Pippa
5 th June	19.00	A14 Core working group	PC Office, Rec	Pippa
6 th June	9.00	Planning Committee	Cambourne	Martin
11 th June		IVC Meet the Trustees	IVC	Martin
12 th June	13.30-14.30	Weekly A14 meeting with South Cambs senior officers to review progress on resolving problems at J32	Cambourne	Pippa
13 th June	19.30	Orchard Park Community Council	Orchard Park	Martin, Pippa, Steve

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18 th June	19.30	H&I Parish Council	PC Offices, Rec	Martin, Pippa, Steve
19 th June	13.30- 14.30	Weekly A14 meeting with South Cambs senior officers to review progress on resolving problems at J32	Cambourne	Pippa
20 th June	10.30- 12.30	Joint Development Control Committee	Guildhall, Cambridge	Steve
20 th June	9.00 - 12.30	Cambridgeshire Air Quality Learning and Networking event, CCC	Huntingdon	Pippa
21 st June	18.00	Scrutiny and Overview Committee	Cambourne	Martin
24 th June		Thanksgiving meeting for St Andrew's Centre		Martin, Pippa, Steve
25 th June	11.00	Licensing Committee	Cambourne	Steve
26 th June	10.00	Civic Affairs Committee	Cambourne	Martin
26 th June	13.30- 14.30	Weekly A14 meeting with South Cambs senior officers to review progress on resolving problems at J32	Cambourne	Pippa

The dates for the meetings of the Climate and Environment Committee are being confirmed.