

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caxton and Papworth Ward

District Councillor’s Monthly Report – April 2024

Local Elections

Local elections are scheduled to take place across the country on Thursday 2nd May. In South Cambridgeshire, there are no council elections, but there is a ballot for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). For this reason, the council entered a pre-election period on Tuesday 26th March and this runs until the close of polls on 2nd May. For the most part, it will be “business as usual” at the council but there may be a few activities deemed political that staff will not be able to address until May.

Polling cards and postal votes will be mailed out over the next few weeks. If you are planning to vote in person for the PCC election, you **MUST** present an acceptable form of picture ID. A list of acceptable ID documents is on the South Cambs web site here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/elections/voter-id>

A428 Upgrade

Most of you will have noticed the A428 upgrade between Black Cat Roundabout and Caxton Gibbet has started in earnest. National Highways is making progress on the new Roxton Road bridge and the free flowing link between the A421 eastbound carriageway and the A1 northbound carriageway. Early work to build the new 10-mile A421 dual carriageway will start in April, followed by work at Eltisley and Caxton Gibbet around May. The famous Black Cat statue was removed from the roundabout and stored safely in a new temporary home (one of National Highways site offices). It will be replaced once all work is complete.

East-West Rail (EWR)

EWR is holding another series of drop-in events to explain the Development Consent Order (DCO) and consultation processes and how residents can get involved. It is not part of the formal consultation process, which begins in June. The nearest event to us is on 10th May 2024 14:00-19:00 at South Cambridgeshire Hall (SCDC offices), Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, CB23 6EA. More information: <https://eastwestrail.co.uk/news/latest-stories/community-conversation-events>

Rural England Prosperity Fund grants

In September 2022, the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) launched the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) prospectus as part of the Levelling Up agenda, to support rural areas across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This funding is in addition to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). REPF sits within the UKSPF investment priorities for Supporting Local Businesses and Community and Place for capital interventions only. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is the lead authority for delivery of the REPF in our area. South Cambs DC is responsible for grant scheme delivery and allocation. All interventions, outputs and outcomes have been determined by DLUHC. The scheme is open for CAPITAL projects only.

Before you read the detail below, be aware the application window is very narrow and only feasible if you have a well-developed project ready to submit. South Cambs has pointed out the time constraints and DLUHC has said additional rounds of funding **MAY** be opened later in the year. Don’t be put off if you cannot complete your application in time for the closing of the first round!

How much funding is available and until when?

South Cambs DC has an allocation of £876,101.00 to spend between 2024 and 2025. This will be split 50/50 between business and community interventions. Applicants can apply for between £10,000 to £100,000 of funding. South Cambs' Economic Development and Investments Team and the Communities Team is planning to launch this grant scheme from 8th April 2024, with the following milestones.

- Scheme opens for applications: 8th April 2024
- Scheme closes for applications: 28th April 2024
- Application checking & Scoring & paper write up: 4th June 2024
- Grants Advisory Committee considers applications: 27th June 2024
- Applicants notified: Early July

What types of projects does the fund support?

The fund will support Business Interventions such as:

- Funding for small scale micro and small enterprises for diversification.
- Start up or scale up and for growing the local social economy.
- Supporting innovation.

The fund will support Community Interventions such as:

- Digital infrastructure.
- Capacity buildings and infrastructure.
- Local rural green spaces.
- Cultural, historic and heritage institutions.
- Active travel enhancements.
- Rural circular economy projects.
- Volunteering and social action projects.

The above lists are not exhaustive but demonstrate examples of some of the activities that the fund will support. For further information, see:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101590/Rural_England_Prosperty_Fund_interventions__objectives__outputs_and_outcomes_list.pdf

Match Funding is encouraged and apportioned according to the figures below.

Business	Less than £25,000	No match funding requirement		
	£25,001-£50,000	25%		
	£50,001-£100,000	50%		
Community	Less than £25,000	No match funding requirement		
	£25,001-£50,000	10%		
	£50,001-£100,000	20%		

The first application window for the fund will be open through the month of April 2024 and will run each quarter until all of the grant funds have been successfully allocated.

What is the eligibility criteria for the grant?

Any organisation with legal status can apply for funding. The list below provides examples but is not exhaustive:

- Micro, small and medium sized registered businesses.
- Social Enterprises.
- Sole Traders.
- Registered Charities.
- Farmers, landowners, tenants with landlord permission.
- Rural Community groups.
- Local Authorities.
- Higher and Further education institutions and arms-length bodies of government.

Which areas are eligible to apply for the grant?

Eligible areas can be checked on the “Magic Map”: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/home.htm>

Click on ‘administrative geographies’ in the table of contents, then ‘other administrative boundaries’ and then select ‘Rural England Prosperity Fund’ as a layer.

How will the projects be measured?

Successful applications will demonstrate how projects will achieve some or all of the following outcomes:

Businesses:

- Number of jobs created or safeguarded.
- Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes.
- Number of businesses with improved productivity.

- Number of businesses experiencing growth.

Community Organisations:

- Increased users of facilities or amenities.
- Improved perception of facilities or amenities.
- Volunteering numbers as a result of support.
- Improved perception of events.

The full intervention list can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101590/Rural_England_Prosperty_Fund_interventions__objectives__outputs_and_outcomes_list.pdf

How will the applications be assessed?

Once the first application window has closed, the information will be reviewed for suitability and applicants that meet the criteria of the grant scheme will be assessed by a scoring panel using a matrix system to evaluate. The applications will then be brought to the Grants Advisory Committee with recommendations for sign off by the Lead Cabinet Member (grants under £25k) or Lead Cabinet Member and Lead Finance Member (grants between £25k-£100k).

The matrix includes scoring on;:

- Project aims and objectives design and delivery model and how it aligns with interventions, outputs and outcomes measurements.
- Financial/business case.
- Risks and mitigations.
- Social values, steps the project takes towards achieving net carbon zero and what steps the project is as inclusive as possible.

Due diligence will be carried out on all applications and will include a range of fraud checks, for example, ensuring businesses are registered on Companies House, and are registered and operate in South Cambridgeshire. South Cambs officers have worked with colleagues from the internal audit and fraud teams to ensure that all due diligence is carried out on both business and community group applications.

How do I apply for the grant?

The scheme will go live on the South Cambs website from 8th April 2024 and will be open for applications for a month. If you have questions or require support, email Katherine Southwood and Carly Freed at Sharedprosperityfund@scams.gov.uk

Peer Review Recommendations – Action Plan

Last year, the operations of South Cambs DC were reviewed by a team from the Local Government Association (LGA), which included both elected councillors and salaried officers from other councils. The council undertook to devise an action plan based on their recommendations and a draft plan is now available here: <https://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s134940/Appendix%20A%20-%20Peer%20Review%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

White Ribbon

South Cambs DC has now signed up with the White Ribbon organisation. White Ribbon's mission is to end male violence against women once and for all. They work with men and boys to challenge those male cultures that lead to harassment. For more information about White Ribbon and their work, visit <https://www.whiteribbon.org.uk/>.

Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme

The popular Zero Carbon Communities (ZCC) grant scheme enters its sixth year and reopens for applications on Tuesday 2nd April. Last year, the total grants given through the scheme since it began topped more than half a million pounds. The scheme underscores the Council's commitment to being green to its core and encourages residents, community groups and parish councils to find ways to reduce carbon emissions and raise awareness to meet the climate challenge.

Applications are invited under two themes:

- Reducing carbon emissions or locking up carbon.
- Community engagement around climate change.

Grants of between £2,000 and £15,000 are available to community groups and parish councils in the District, with a total pot of £125,000 available. Previously funded projects have included community building retrofits, solar panel installation, food waste reduction, climate-friendly cooking education, and e-bike rental schemes.

Anyone interested in applying can attend an online workshop on Wednesday 24th April from 7 to 8:30pm. Sign up via Eventbrite here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/zero-carbon-communities-grant-application-workshop-tickets-853545175597?aff=oddtcreator>

Applications can be made via the eform on the South Cambridgeshire District Council website: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/climate-emergency-and-nature/zero-carbon-communities/zero-carbon-communities-grant/>

If you have questions, please email zcc@scambs.gov.uk

"Unlocking the Potential of Your Parish: How the Planning Team Can Support You as a Parish Clerk."

Parish clerks should have received an invitation to an event designed to provide essential tools and information to navigate the intricacies of planning requirements effectively, thereby enhancing their ability to serve the community.

Date: Wednesday, 17 April 2024

Venue: South Cambridgeshire Council Chamber, Cambourne

Time: 11:00 am - 4:30 pm

Lunch Included

“As a Parish Clerk, you play a crucial role in the development and prosperity of your parish. Understanding planning regulations and procedures is vital for fulfilling your responsibilities effectively. This event aims to address this need by providing valuable insights, resources, and support from the Greater Cambridge planning team.”

Event Objectives:

- Educate: Gain insights into the latest planning regulations and guidelines relevant to your role.
- Empower: Receive practical tools and strategies to navigate planning processes efficiently.
- Clarify Responsibilities: Understand your duties as a Parish Clerk in relation to planning matters.
- Facilitate Communication: Engage in open dialogue and networking with fellow Parish Clerks and our planning team.

Please RSVP by Friday 5 April to secure your place. Lunch will be provided, so please inform Planning of any dietary restrictions you may have. RSVP using this form:

<https://forms.office.com/e/9RNZRF8jg2>

Should you have any questions or require further information, please email Simon Leher, Communications and Engagement Lead at simon.leher@greatercambridgeplanning.org.

Statement of Community Involvement for Planning

South Cambs DC, together with Cambridge City Council has formally adopted a new key planning document which sets out how they will help residents have their say on a wide range of planning matters during the next five years. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is intended to increase public participation in the planning system and, in doing so, empowering residents to play an active role in shaping the future of Greater Cambridge. This goes much further than previous SCIs in ensuring that residents’ views are better reflected in the emerging Local Plan.

More detail can be found here: <https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/about-us/statement-of-community-involvement/>

Cambridge 2050

The government continues to promote its Cambridge development plans. It is worth noting that the original Cambridge 2040 title has now been changed to Cambridge 2050. The proposals to introduce a development corporation continue to be developed with discussion taking place involving a range of stakeholders as to the form this will take. Local councils have expressed concerns that there will be a loss of democratic accountability as the government seeks to progress its plans without providing for the ability of councils to influence decisions made. A detailed analysis of the proposals from the perspective of the building industry is here:

<https://www.building.co.uk/focus/a-vision-for-150000-homes-but-no-water-to-supply-them-does-goves-cambridge-plan-stand-a-chance/5128479.article>

‘Find a Grant’ digital service – free trial offer for local government

In March 2023, the Cabinet Office launched a ‘Find a Grant’ digital service (<https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/>), a single place for eligible individuals and organisations to find and apply for government grants. The Cabinet Office is offering councils and grant administrators in any local government organisation, access to use ‘Find a Grant’ on a free trial basis until at least March 2025. To give councils a flavour of ‘Find a Grant’, the Cabinet Office has created a short video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUrUq1ChioA>

Council agrees funding to protect cash machines

South Cambs DC has allocated up to £100,000 to better protect the district’s cash machines from ram-raids, using funding from the Government’s UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Heavy-duty planters are to be installed in front of some cash machines to prevent, or slow down the activity of the thieves,. Not all cash machine locations will be suitable for the planters due to a lack of available space around them. The initial approved location (the Co-op store in Cambourne) will be the first to have the planters. The police are advising on priorities and will monitor the success of the installation.

50th Anniversary of South Cambs

SCDC recently celebrated its 50th Anniversary. A civic ceremony was held at South Cambridgeshire Hall in Cambourne. Current and former councillors from across the last five decades attended the event, where they heard from the current chair of the council, Councillor Peter Fane, who explained the history of the council. We also heard from three of the longest serving members and officers of the council, who had over one hundred years of combined service to the community between them. The event was rounded off with Indian dancing from a group of Cambourne’s young people, as well as singing from the youngest councillor, Ariel Cahn, who is 25. You can find out all about what happened, as well as some of the history of the district council over the years here: <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/your-council-and-democracy/50-years-of-south-cambridgeshire-district-council/>

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