

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Caldecote Ward

(comprises the Parishes of Caldecote, Childerley, Kingston, Bourn, Longstowe & Little Gransden)

Councillor's Monthly Report – June 2023

This report of previous month events is for all the Ward, so please be aware that some of the content may not be relevant to your particular Parish.

General

Please contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. These are housing need, housing repairs for council tenants, planning, benefits, council tax, bin collection, environmental health issues etc. Don't fight on your own. I am available to help you to get the best outcome possible for your situation.

Check out articles on my facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/itsCouncillorTumi> and my blog <http://www.TumiHawkins.org.uk>. What I post on there is my view and not LibDem or South Cambs official policy unless I state that it is.

Reminders

Parish/Cabinet Liaison Meeting

The next Parish Councils / SCDC Cabinet Liaison meeting is scheduled for 5th June 2023

Luton Airport Flight Path and Airspace Deployment (AD6) change

The Post Implementation Review (PIR) period now finishes end of September 2023. This gives opportunity for spring/summer time effects to be recorded and reported to Luton at using noise@ltn.aero or noise.enquiries@ltn.aero.

Transport

Two big pieces of news this month are on transport.

East West Rail Route Alignment Announcement

The much expected news about the preferred route alignment from Bedford to Cambridge was announced by the Government on Friday 26th May 2023. It was revealed as part of the £650million growth package that the Chancellor Jeremy Hunt announced, to use to “fire up” the economy by supporting the Life Sciences industry.

As I explained in my blog article <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/life-sciences-growth-package-announced-by-chancellor/> the Life Sci Growth Package focuses on

- (1) funds to help boost investment in trials and biomanufacture, reform regulation and drive up talent and skills in the Life Sciences industry. This is to enhance the UK resilience in case of future pandemics or health emergencies.
- (2) making changes to planning rules to free up lab space and updates a route for East West Rail (EWR), the new railway line, to improve connections between UK science powerhouses Oxford and Cambridge, bringing more investment to the region

The planning bit will be adding requirements to the NPPF for LPAs to pay regard to R&D needs, and updating the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to help LPAs take “fuller” account of commercial land needs. We will have to wait to see how that goes.

In the meantime, the preferred route selected is Alignment 1. This goes from Bedford to Cambridge via Cambourne and via the top of Highfields Caldecote to Cambridge South Station. The villages of Bourn and Kingston are spared, but not Caldecote. The announcement has not gone down well with Caldecote residents. My blog articles at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/east-west-rail-announces-preferred-route-alignment/> gives a summary of the update, and lists the relevant documents to read or reference.



Figure 16 – Approach to Cambridge

EWR will now be holding a series of its update meetings with the Local Representatives Groups (LRG) starting 13th June. After that there will be public exhibitions in July. The next formal consultation will be in 2024.

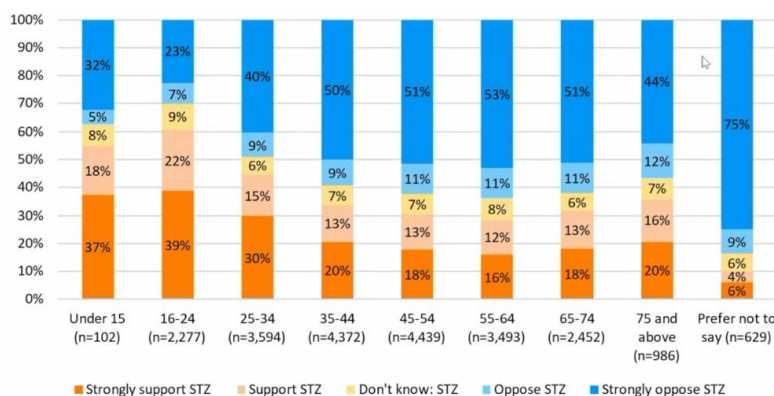
GCP “Making Connections”

The second major announcement was the report on the Making Connections consultation, also published on Friday 26th May 2023. This one has not had much attention – yet. Full details on the GCP website at <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/sustainable-transport-programme/city-access-programme/making-connections/making-connections-2022>.

There’s a 14-minute video on the page that gives the headlines of the report, worth watching. Also here on the GCP youtube channel https://youtu.be/GBKJOEC_2Mw.

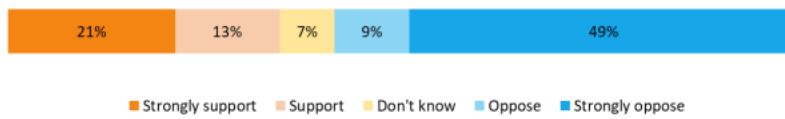
The consultation report will be discussed by the GCP Joint Assembly meeting on 8 June 2023. Some Key findings are:

- Over 70% of people in favour of the future transport network – with more buses to more locations, cheaper fares and longer operating times supported by better walking and cycling infrastructure to give people faster, cheaper and more reliable travel alternatives to the car.
- 58% of respondents opposed the proposed Sustainable Travel Zone (STZ) as the means for delivering the transport vision. Opposition increased with age from 35 to 64 with 55–64-year-olds the most likely to oppose. Those who lived outside of Cambridge were also more likely to oppose.
- 34% of people support the STZ as proposed. Support was highest among the youngest and the oldest respondents, who are more likely to find it most difficult to access education and healthcare due to the limitations of the existing bus network. Support was highest in the city centre and west of the city.



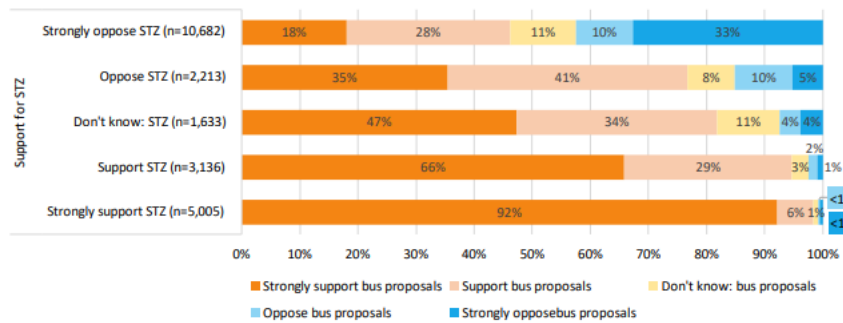
- Around half of those who oppose the STZ did support the vision for better buses.

Figure 7-2 - To what extent do you support or oppose the introduction of an STZ to fund improvements to bus services, walking and cycling? (n=23,769)



- The views from organisations such as business, healthcare and others were broadly supportive of the plans but with caveats about the impact on staff or those who were vulnerable.

Figure 6-13 - Breakdown to show relationship between support for bus improvements vs support for STZ



There is a mix in the responses as expected. Some of those who oppose the STZ indicated that some changes to it could change their minds e.g. changing charge rate, different boundaries, changes to discounts and exemptions, changing hours. I recommend everyone reads the report themselves.

Electric Buses

Stagecoach has launched 30 new electric buses. Each bus costs close to £500,000 and has been funded by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), Stagecoach East and the Department for Transport following a successful bid to the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme. [ZEBRA is a government scheme](#) designed in 2021 to help local transport authorities outside London to introduce zero-emission buses and the infrastructure to support them. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) put in a bid and was one of the first 5 selected under the fast track process. More details at <https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/news/cambridge-welcomes-30-new-electric-buses>

Life Sciences Event

The main reason for the growth in Greater Cambridge is Life Sciences. Its why we are dealing with EWR. Many residents seem unaware of this sector, and this is a reason why there is this first ever type event called the Cambridge Wide Open Day taking place on 14th June 2023. It is an opportunity for local residents from across Greater Cambridgeshire and further the opportunity to explore the world-class science and technology facilities - all in one day.

Many leading organisations across the “Cambridge ecosystem” will be taking part including Cambridge Science Park, Illumina, AstraZeneca, Cambridge Innovation Capital, Milner Therapeutics Institute, UKSPA, Judge Business School and Start Codon. Cambridge Wide Open Day is also being supported by other local organisations such as The Combined Authority and local councils, Cambridge & Form the Future.

I highly recommend registering and attending. Find out more information at <https://cambridgewideopenday.com/>

Local Government

Following the local elections in May, the Conservatives lost many seats and are no longer the largest councillor group in England. This means that the Local Government Association is now being led by a Labour Chair person. This might account for the recent worrying press about the government interfering in the LGAs council improvement work.

Resources

Four Day Week Trail

All local authorities across the country are facing huge problems in recruiting and retaining staff, which affects services provided to communities. It is impossible to compete with the private sector especially for planning and environmental officers and so councils have to offer something other than money. Also, the cost of having to use agency staff to fill unfilled posts is currently running at £2mil per year - which is a lot of money for a District Council. For this reason South Cambs District Council has been running a trail for the past months of the Four Day Week. This means that staff have to work very differently, efficiently and more intensely in order to do 100% of the work in 80% of the time to receive 100% of the pay. I have also written about this in my blog at <https://tumiawkins.org.uk/four-day-week-trial-success-at-south-cambridgeshire-district-council/>

The report of this trial has now been published and is very encouraging showing that performance has been maintained or improved, and staff who were thinking of leaving are now likely to stay. What this means for our communities is improvement in services and savings for the functions that your council tax is used for. Cabinet approved extending the trail for a further year.

Cabinet has also approved extending the 4 Day Week trial to include the refuse collection services for 3 months this summer starting in July. As I wrote in another blog post at <https://tumiawkins.org.uk/future-of-waste-collections-in-south-cambridgeshire/> we expect this to provide significant improvement in bin collection as the routes are being optimized due to increase number of homes built. But also collecting only Tuesdays to Fridays to avoid disruptions caused by bank holidays. There are many councils already doing this and we will learn from them.

Community and Wellbeing

South Cambridgeshire Summer Magazine

The latest edition of the South Cambs magazine is now being delivered to residents. Everyone should receive theirs by 3rd of June. If it does not arrive within the following week, then residents can contact the delivery company Smart Distribution, by email at scdc@smartdistribution.co.uk or by phone on 0800 6444 011. The electronic version is available at <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/23677/web-south-cambs-magazine-summer2023.pdf>

Action for Happiness

The Action for Happiness theme for June at <https://www.actionforhappiness.org/calendar> is **Joyful June**. This month's focus is "*Let's look for what is good*"

Local Issues

Caldecote:

Liaison Forum meeting:

The last meeting took place on Wednesday 17th May, attended by representatives from both Linden and Balfour Beatty. Some action points were taken away, including blocking the gap in the hedge

between the playing field and new development. A date has been fixed for a site visit on the Linden development.

Casework

Please do feel free to contact me with comments, questions, problems, reports, suggestions or complaints to do with SCDC services. I will help as best I can

You will find the current and past reports on my blog at <https://tumihawkins.org.uk/caldecote-ward/reports/monthly-reports/2022-23-monthly-reports/>. Feel free to read, share and/or download.

Tumi

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1 June 2023

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