

South Cambs District Council
District Councillors' report
Update on the Business Plan March 2022

This report gives an update on the actions of SCDC in 2021/22, and plans for the next financial year under each of the council's four priorities:

1. Growing local businesses and economies
2. Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in
3. Being green to our core
4. A modern and caring council.

1. Growing local businesses and economies

We will support businesses of all sizes, including rural enterprise and farming, to help create new jobs and opportunities near to where people live and support the local economy to recover post-pandemic.

Actions and achievements of South Cambs District Council over 2021-22 in this area include:

- Increasing the reach of the *Open for Business* Newsletter to over 2,000 businesses and 'On Your Doorstep' social media campaign to promote and support local businesses throughout the pandemic
- Launched a *Visit South Cambridgeshire* brand to support and promote retail, tourism, leisure and hospitality businesses
- Our High Street Support Officer teams visited over 2,000 businesses face to face since the onset of the pandemic and worked with partners to provide support and advice to over 100 businesses
- Developed a fund that supported innovations and start-ups as we start a green post pandemic recovery phase. Over 100 businesses in South Cambs were awarded a pot of £1.383m.

Over the coming year, 2022-23, SCDC priorities include:

- Support Businesses post COVID with to help them to adapt and grow
- Develop a skills and training package to assist career enhancement, and ensure that re-skilling and up-skilling opportunities are widely known and accessible.
- Deliver support to start-ups and small businesses to help them set up and expand, create new local jobs and deal with the new requirements of post-Brexit trade
- Promote SCDC as a vibrant, attractive and commercially welcoming place in which to launch and scale businesses, focusing on Enterprise Zone development
- Continue to deliver on our Investment Strategy to ensure positive local Economic Development and growth outcomes

Ongoing objectives into 2022-23 will include:

- Working with parish councils and village-based businesses to support local economies. This will include helping to establish new local markets, and offering advice and support to local businesses
- Encouraging residents to use their local shops and food outlets so that high streets remain viable and local, independent businesses are championed.

- Maintaining and extending marketing campaigns such as *#On your Doorstep* and *Visit South Cambs - best days out and weekends away in Cambridgeshire* to support and promote local commerce
- Continue to work with the CPCA encourage Inward investment into our region
- Provide a voice and advocacy for South Cambridgeshire businesses with wider partners and networks (including through the Joint Local Plan) and ensure the District is adequately represented in key economic policy/decision-making initiatives

2. Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

We will build vibrant communities in locations where people have good access to facilities and transport links, so they can genuinely afford to lead a healthy life.

Actions and achievements of South Cambs District Council over 2021/22 include:

- Completed 47 new Council homes in 2020/21 and remain on track to deliver at least 60 homes in the current year, signing contracts to deliver over 100 new Council homes
- Invested over £1.5 million in our Council houses to make them more energy efficient
- Supported around 1,000 people on benefits who moved to Universal Credit, including providing funding for a coach to help people into work
- Played an active role in national schemes to rehouse refugees
- Agreed a Homeless Strategy to target support to those in the greatest need
- Implemented a new Resident Involvement Framework, including improved communications with DC tenants
- Published the First Proposals for the Greater Cambridge Joint Local Plan for consultation setting out where new homes and jobs will take place
- Granted outline planning permission for the first phase of a new town north of Waterbeach and detailed planning guidance for a new village at Bourn Airfield

Over the coming year, 2022-23, our priorities will include:

- Increase the number of Council homes each year to support people on lower incomes. These will include high energy standards and renewable energy.
- Work with local people to set out where and how new homes and communities will be built across the Greater Cambridge area
- Improve the energy efficiency of existing Council housing to reduce carbon impact and running costs
- Support the delivery of more affordable housing – seeking external funding wherever possible
- Promote Neighbourhood Plans
- Work with national and local partners to support the needs of refugees

3. Being green to our core

We will create a cleaner, greener and zero-carbon future for our communities.

Actions and achievements of South Cambs District Council over 2021/22 include:

- First phase of installation of LED fittings in all council owned streetlights to be completed by March 2022 and 60% reduction in energy consumption of streetlighting for Parish Councils
- Delivered a third round of funding through our Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme, awarding grants totalling £100,000 to community-based projects; strengthening the Zero Carbon Network through a programme of workshops, web-based resources and e-bulletins
- An anti-fly tipping campaign that reached over 40,000 people and resulted in significant increase in reported incidents and increased tonnages of waste collected
- Improved the way we plan our street sweeping and introduced a system so residents know when we will be coming to their area
- Introduced the first one electric bin lorry and two small electric vans into the fleet
- Installed 4 additional charge points for staff/visitors at Waterbeach depot
- Over 70 applications were received from parish councils for the 6 Free Trees scheme for 2022
- Published First Proposals Local Plan setting out ambitious targets for reduced water usage, building in climate resilience, supporting low carbon development options and highlighting opportunities for strategic scale landscape and biodiversity enrichment.
- Undertaken trials of weekly separate food waste collection

Over the coming year, 2022-23, our priorities will include:

- Working towards a zero-carbon future by 2050
- Work with partners to protect and enhance the environment with the aim of doubling nature
- Retrofit our Council Commercial Property including South Cambs Hall with renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures
- Continue to transition to electric vehicles for the waste service, including the investigation of on-site solar panel energy generation
- Support Parish Council and community group projects to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, move toward the zero-carbon target and help Double Nature through habitat enhancement, advisory support for community land acquisition, local green space designation and tree-planting
- Complete the upgrade our stock of 1,800 streetlights to LED, which will reduce energy consumption and save Parish Councils money
- Implement the new Air Quality Strategy, monitoring air pollution and reducing air quality impacts from future developments
- Improve recycling and reduce waste at community events
- Reduce the amount of non-recyclable (black bin) household waste collected

Ongoing objectives into 2022-23:

- Promote walking, cycling and public transport improvements through planning decisions and by working with local communities and partners

- Influence the planning of new major transport routes, such as the proposed East West rail line, to ensure the environment is fully considered and a net gain to natural capital is delivered where possible
- Support homeowners to upgrade the environmental performance of historic buildings
- Promote effective implementation of supplementary planning guidance supporting low carbon developments
- Work with communities and partners to deter fly-tipping, particularly at locations where it happens frequently
- Encourage the expansion of electric vehicle charging points and explore the provision of electric vehicle charging points in sheltered housing schemes

4. A modern and caring council

We will provide our customers with high-quality services, strive to reduce costs, build on what we are good at to generate our own income and make decisions in a transparent, open and inclusive way.

Actions and achievements of South Cambs District Council over 2021-22 include:

- Achieved Level 1 and 2 of the Disability confident standard
- 7 new Mobile warden schemes delivered
- Updated and published the council's Equality Scheme
- Apprenticeship Strategy reviewed and strengthened
- Launched a new toolkit to help communities take forward Community Led Plans to address the issues they feel are important to them as we recover from the pandemic
- Worked with 13 areas of the district that have been more prone to flooding to help create local flood plans

Over the coming year, 2022-23, our priorities will include:

- Generate income through delivering the Council's investment strategy
- Make it easier for customers to access and carry out transactions online
- Council and committee meetings will be run paper-free wherever possible

Ongoing objectives into 2022-23 will include:

- Expand Council commercial services
- Continue to work with public sector partners and a network of parish councils and voluntary groups to support businesses throughout the response phases of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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