

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

Report to Barton Parish Council September 2018

Local Plan

Reports from the inspector are expected to be published any day now (if they haven't already been), with briefings to follow through September. We are told that formal adoption will fit with the council's autumn meetings calendar, but not much more information than that at the time of writing.

July Full Council

The motions debated at July's Full Council included reducing / minimising the council's use of single-use plastics and improving employment opportunities at the council for people with disabilities, which were passed unanimously. More hotly debated were a motion to write to the government minister responsible to request that the roll-out of Universal Credit in South Cambridgeshire is paused in the light of recent National Audit Office report (which was passed) and a motion that the council continue to oppose congestion charging in Cambridge (which was defeated). Of course, the latter does not mean that the council now supports congestion charging for Cambridge, but will remain open minded about future proposals, in particular, those with dynamic demand response pricing. We continue to be mindful that a blanket, congestion charge zone (similar to the scheme in London) could be unreasonably punitive on our residents in South Cambs.

Also agreed was the proposal to allow any member of the public to ask questions in the meeting submitted in writing 15 mins before the meeting, and so is active for the next full council meeting on 27th September. Up to now, questions needed to be submitted by midday 7 days before the date of the meeting.

Combined Authority Transport Strategy

The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) ended the pause on major transport projects that had been requested by the Mayor and Combined Authority (CA), with one notable exception. The CA considers that it is sufficiently aligned with the GCP on most projects that were paused for work to begin again (e.g. A1307). Some changes demanded by the CA include that new P&R sites should be 'temporary' in nature – involving less tarmac, more loose surfacing and no permanent structures – in order that they can be more quickly returned to nature when they are no longer required (e.g. when public transport has sufficiently well-connected South Cambridgeshire to the city). This could have a significant impact on the design of any proposals for a P&R at Hauxton.

The A428 corridor / Cambourne to Cambridge (the Coton Busway proposals) is the project that continues to be a source of difficulty for the CA and GCP. The CA and GCP have committed to resolve this by mid-September, in time for the next GCP board meeting at the beginning of October. However, it seems clear that the Mayor is now effectively calling the shots on this project.

M11 J11 Engagement Meeting

With new P&R capacity at J11 of the M11 effectively having been given the go-ahead by the CA, public engagement on the proposals can begin again. There is an engagement meeting planned for Monday 17 September, 5.30-6.30pm in the Large Performance Hall at Comberton Village College, which will include a project update and a Q&A session. This is a good opportunity to find out more about what ‘temporary’ means and the implications for the plans.

Harston Bypass

As previously reported, the Mayor committed to delivering a feasibility study by the end of the year at a well-attended public meeting in Harston Village Hall in June. Tony and the Chair of Harston PC discussed the scope in a follow up meeting with the Mayor at the end of June, but we are still awaiting a more formal terms of reference / articulation of scope from the Mayor’s office despite several reminders. Possibly this has been affected by the apparent staffing turmoil at the CA.

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