

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston & Comberton Ward

Report to Hauxton Parish Council October 2018

September Full Council

Undoubtedly the most significant part of September's Full Council meeting was the adoption of the Local Plan. Though this was not the Local Plan that the Liberal Democrats would have put forward had we been in power four years ago, considering that until very recently there was no 5-year housing land supply which, combined with the lack of a Local Plan, has resulted a free for all for developers all over South Cambs, it was the right thing to do to adopt it at this point. (There are now 5,000 houses in the district with planning permission that are not in any local plan.)

As a reminder, key housing sites in the two Local Plans (Cambridge City and South Cambs submitted their plans together) that have been found sound by the Inspector are:

- A new town north of Waterbeach – approximately 8,000–9,000 homes
- A new village at Bourn Airfield – approximately 3,500 homes
- An expansion to Cambourne to the west – since the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was submitted, planning permission has been granted for 2,350 homes
- Homes on land north of Cherry Hinton and west of Teversham – 1,200 homes
- Around 900 homes in the better served South Cambridgeshire villages (mainly Sawston and Melbourn)
- Continued development of Northstowe – around 10,000 homes
- Continued building in existing growth sites on the edge of Cambridge (Southern Fringe, Cambridge East, Darwin Green and Eddington)
- Worts Causeway – 430 homes
- Extension to Cambridge Biomedical Campus to support the growth of this cluster
- Extension to the Peterhouse Technology Park on Fulbourn Road

As part of signing up to the City Deal agreement (since rebranded as the Greater Cambridge Partnership, GCP), both South Cambs District and Cambridge City Councils agreed to an early review of the Local Plans. The review will start next year, with submission for examination by the inspectors in 2022.

Of the other motions before the council, it is worth highlighting the motion calling for East West Rail (the company leading on the railway line between Oxford and Cambridge) to ensure the environment is given full and thorough consideration when selecting the route and that the route assessment is also be based on how it can support the housing and employment growth that is already planned in South Cambs. This motion was well supported and will encourage East West Rail to look more broadly than possibly they have been doing so far.

Also passed was a motion calling for a People's Vote on the terms of Britain leaving the EU. With a large number of non-UK EU nationals living in the district, a significant number of local businesses affected by loss of staff and the need to prepare for the still highly uncertain outcome of the negotiations (including the stockpiling of medicines), this has been a concern for residents that the council wanted to recognise through the motion. South Cambs's MP has since backed a People's Vote in the event of no deal, though we can't reasonably claim that the two events are definitely related!

Combined Authority Under Scrutiny

The workings of the Combined Authority remain under scrutiny, with the focus at last week's CA Board and CA Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings being on the revolving door of continuing temporary officer appointments at the Combined Authority already 18 months into the CA's operations; the details still sought around the sudden departure of the CEO in August and his large financial settlement; the CA's attempt to change the rules on business rates retention; and the housing strategy that seeks to prioritise a first-come-first-served approach over targeted house-building in areas of genuine need. The CA O&S Committee's Mass Rapid Transport Task and Finish Group also met last week to continue scrutiny into the Mayor's proposed CAM metro plans and their alignment with the GCP's plans. This month they will meet to seek to appoint an independent transport expert to help the committee in its scrutiny.

Cambourne to Cambridge

Further bad news relating to Mayor James Palmer reached us late last week. Having assured Coton Parish Councillors as recently as August that an off-road route through Coton would not happen, he is now insisting that the route for CAM metro must go through the village. We have called for the Mayor to show his working on this and release the report on routes by his consultants (Arup) immediately for scrutiny.

A10 Bypass

Finally some progress on this, with the CA passing an outline feasibility study scope for review by Harston and Hauxton PC at the beginning of September. Tony is arranging a follow up with the officers to finalise and we hope this will then take place over the next 6 months with feedback at the beginning of Q2 next year.

M11 J11 P&R Capacity

More information on the timeline for a decision came from the recent GCP event in Comberton. There will be a public consultation on options towards the end of this year and the final option recommendation will be made to the GCP Executive Board sometime next summer. The focus is clearly on the Hauxton site for developing the business case though nothing has been formally agreed yet. We have been in touch with the project manager, Tim Watkins, to arrange a meeting with both Harston & Hauxton PCs.

Hauxton Minerals and Waste Management Site

Earlier in the year there was a consultation on the Joint Minerals and Waste Preliminary Draft Plan. As part of the consultation there was a call for sites and one of the respondents has proposed a sand and gravel extraction and processing site off the A10 (on land between Hauxton and Haslingfield). We feel strongly that this would be inappropriate on many grounds, not least that it is in greenbelt land well used for recreation by our residents, it is in the flood plain of the river and it will have a significant impact on traffic on the A10. We have written to the planning authorities to urge them not to include it in their next draft which will come out for consultation in the spring.

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