

South Cambridgeshire District Council – Harston and Comberton ward report to South Trumpington Parish Meeting

We would like to take the opportunity to introduce ourselves as the new district councillors for South Trumpington as part of the new, larger Harston and Comberton ward. Turnout in the ward was high for a local election, a very respectable 48.3%. The new ward includes the villages of Haslingfield, Harlton, Harston, Hauxton, South Trumpington, Comberton, Barton, Coton and Grantchester. The overall political balance of the council has been completely reversed. Previously, the Conservative group had a large majority but now the Liberal Democrat group has 30 of the 45 seats.

One of our first actions upon taking over control of SCDC has been to establish two new committees and one new working group. The Climate and Environment Committee will be looking at all the ways in which the Council can positively influence matters in both its own and its partners' operations to reduce damage to the climate and improve our environment.

The new Grants Committee is reviewing all the grants currently administered by the Council to make sure that they are providing maximum benefit where it is most needed. Money is very short these days and so no council can be as generous as it was 10 years ago. We are spending your money and so need to be able to be confident that we are spending it well and to best effect.

The Brexit Working Group is investigating ways in which the Council can help businesses in and around South Cambridgeshire to cope with any anticipated or actual consequences of Brexit. The working group is liaising in particular with a similar working group in the Local Government Association.

Public Questions at Full Council

Another change in approach was discussed at the first meeting of the new Civic Affairs Committee last month: how to make Full Council more open for the public to ask questions. There was a suggestion to allow any member of the public to ask verbal questions in the meeting but there were some legal concerns so the proposal is for written questions submitted up to 15 minutes before the meeting. Currently questions need to be submitted by midday seven days before the date of the meeting, meaning public questions cannot be tabled in response to the agenda for the meeting, which is published after this deadline.

Economic Commission Report

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Commission has published its interim report, available at www.cpier.org.uk. It recognises the

inequality and the housing crisis that recent rapid growth has brought. It also says that the Greater Cambridge area is a separate economic sub-region from the rest of the county and that growth here cannot easily be spread to other areas.

Greenways

Proposals for Cambridge Greenways (cycleways from surrounding villages into Cambridge) are being brought forward by the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Haslingfield and Barton Greenways are the first two to be consulted on over the summer. Consultations have begun and are open until 20th August. The Greenways team are holding a consultation event at Grantchester Village Hall on 17th July from 5pm to 7pm – see the GCP website for details: www.greatercambridge.org.uk/transport/transport-projects/greenways/. Each route has different options and the final preferred option will be chosen based on the results of the consultation.

Harston Bypass

We are working with the Mayor on a possible bypass for Harston, an issue we campaigned on in the recent election. A well-attended public meeting was held in Harston last month with the Mayor to discuss the possibility. A majority of those attending seemed in favour, though there were many valid points made on each side of the argument. The Mayor has committed to delivering a feasibility study within the next six months and Tony and the Chair of Harston Parish Council discussed the scope in a follow-up meeting with the Mayor.

Our mission

We feel very privileged to have been elected and we are looking forward to serving South Trumpington and its residents for the next four years. Our mission is to serve the residents to the very best of our ability. Please do not hesitate to contact us on any matter that you need help with or you want us to be aware of.

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