

Councillor Peter McDonald Duxford Division & Ward:
District Councillor for Parishes of Duxford, Hinxton, Ickleton, Babraham, Pampisford.
County Councillor also for Foxton, Fowlmere, Shepreth, Thriplow, Heathfield, Heydon, Chishills,
Whittlesford

Report for Parish Councils – July 2023.

South Cambs District Council

Public recycling bin trial

The District Council is running a trial deployment of recycling bins for village public spaces, which will begin later this year. These will be blue bins for mixed recycling, following the same rules and colour as our domestic blue bins. The aim of the trial is to assess demand and whether or not the bins are used correctly before adapting collection vehicles for fullscale deployment if the trial is successful.

During the trial there will be a limit of two recycling bins per parish. Parish Councils that would like to take part in the trial are invited to contact Sarah Phillips at sarah.phillips@scams.gov.uk.

Mobile Food Hub

A new Mobile Food Hub, funded by the District Council and run by not-for-profit organisation, Hope CIC, is being launched to further support communities during the cost of living crisis. Fresh produce and essential items, some of which will be free and others at below retail price, will be brought directly to villages around South Cambridgeshire to help people with rising food prices. It is the first service of its kind in the district. The initiative was launched amid figures from the Consumer Prices Index in April which showed food shopping bills have risen by almost 20% in the last year.

The Mobile Food Hub will visit Papworth, Orchard Park and Duxford weekly, with further locations to be confirmed. It will be open in Duxford every Thursday from 11am to 12noon. The villages have been selected based on Census deprivation data, mapped against where current foodbanks and food hubs operate from.

Any resident struggling with increasing costs, including those who live outside of these villages, can access this Mobile Food Hub by turning up on the day. No vouchers or referrals are needed. There will be a mix of fresh and long-life food on offer. Food is coming from both donations and purchasing from local suppliers. Residents will also be able to buy essential affordable items.

Review of achievements in 2022/23

The council has produced two videos summarising its achievements during 2022/23 to give an overview to taxpayers of how their money is being used to deliver and improve services. These can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlB6auWFVk8>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a2zup0xTGc>

Cost of Living support

The District Council's Communities Team have created a new leaflet advising residents of support available during the cost-of-living crisis. There is a push this year to encourage more people to apply for Council Tax support as many who are eligible for this scheme are unaware it exists. If you are able to assist with distributing this leaflet within your parish, please email chris.riches@scams.gov.uk who will arrange for leaflets to be printed.

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service survey

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service have asked the council to share details of their

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latest public survey to help improve their service in preparation for their next five-year plan. The survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete. There are three £50 shopping vouchers which you can have a chance of winning by completing it.

Four-day working week update

Last month I reported that the four-day working week trial at the District Council had been extended by a year, following the success of the initial three-month pilot. In those three months, the scheme had generated direct savings of £300,000 thanks to an improvement in recruitment and retention. Further savings on the £2 million annual bill for agency staff are anticipated as the trial continues. Additional indirect savings are also expected as we see the broader benefits of moving away from a high turnover of temporary staff. The independent assessment of the trial reported significant improvement in most of the Key Performance Indicators assessed, with no serious outliers of concern.

The council was therefore surprised to receive a letter on 1 July from Lee Rowley MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Local Government and Building Safety, requesting a halt to the trial. This letter generated significant media attention.

The District Council Leader, Bridget Smith, has requested a meeting immediately to understand the reasons behind this request in light of the range of benefits for taxpayers that the trial has demonstrated.

The four-day working week is an example of modern working practice that has demonstrated productivity benefits in the private sector. South Cambridgeshire District Council is the first council to assess its effectiveness in the public sector. The extended trial will determine whether this change in working practice can continue to deliver significant service quality improvements while reducing costs for the council and taxpayer

Planning Delegations

Recent meetings here:

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/planning-applications/step-by-step-guide-to-permissions/delegated-planning-decisions/#A2>

Cambridgeshire County Report

This summer, the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme is offering free spaces for children in Cambridgeshire who are eligible for free school meals, to enjoy enriching experiences and nutritious food.

This continuing initiative offers primary and secondary school children in Cambridgeshire the chance to enjoy a range of exciting experiences. With a focus on providing healthy meals alongside engaging activities, this programme is ideal for children who want to stay healthy and active this summer.

Each session will include a nutritious meal, a variety of exciting activities or sports and the opportunity to socialise with other children.

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Subject to availability of places, any child receiving income-related free school meals is eligible for the programme. The programme will run from 20 July to 31 August, with the exception of bank holidays. Eligible children can attend a holiday scheme for free for up to 64 hours.

Funded by the Department for Education (DfE), the HAF scheme enables local authorities to coordinate free holiday childcare and enriching experiences locally.

As part of the programme, eligible children will be able to access:

- Fun and entertaining play opportunities or new experiences that help children to develop their skills and knowledge.
- At least one meal a day.
- Guidance on increasing awareness of healthy eating, lifestyles, and positive behaviours.
- Parents will be supported with information and signposting to other services and support which might be helpful to families.

Further information can be found at Cambridgeshire Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme 2023 - Cambridgeshire County Council.

LHI Scoring

The LHI scoring for complex & non-complex schemes was published in the July 4th Highways Committee:

<https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/2105/Committee/62/Default.aspx>

Additionally there are safety programmes including the A505 crossing between Duxford & Whittlesford:

https://cambridgeshire.cmis.uk.com/CCC_live/Document.ashx?czJKcaeAi5tUFL1DTL2UE4zNRBcoShgo=17px2YotiRuRtu6KKTdZYIFAHsHWj8%2fSWrBqvCad%2bMrH6U4ouCVF3Q%3d%3d&rUzwRPf%2bZ3zd4E7Ikn8Lyw%3d%3d=pwRE6AGJFLDNlh225F5QMaQWCtPHwdhUfCZ%2fLUQzgA2uL5jNRG4jdQ%3d%3d&mCTIbCubSFfXsDGW9IXnl%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&kCx1AnS9%2fpWZQ40DXFvdEw%3d%3d=hFflUdN3100%3d&uJovDxwdjMPoYv%2bAJvYtyA%3d%3d=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&FgPIIEJYlotS%2bYGoBi5oIA%3d%3d=NHdURQburHA%3d&d9Qjj0ag1Pd993jsyOJqFvmyB7X0CSQK=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNR9xqBux0r1Q8Za60lavYmz=ctNJFf55vVA%3d&WGewmoAfeNQ16B2MHuCPMRKZMwaG1PaO=ctNJFf55vVA%3d

The 20 mph scheme scores will be published later.

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Peter McDonald

July 8th 2023