

Cllrs Lorna Dupré and Mark Inskip

MONTHLY REPORT NOVEMBER 2022

Parking enforcement stretches into the distance

A presentation by Superintendent James Sutherland of Cambridgeshire Police to last month's district council's Full Council meeting suggests that parking enforcement in East Cambridgeshire is as far away as ever.

Supt Sutherland informed councillors that he had now concluded that there were powers available to enable the police to use volunteers to enforce on-street parking. However, these volunteers would need to be recruited and checked, and this would be a low priority compared to the recruitment of additional police officers and PCSOs.

They would be issued with a uniform, though not handcuffs or tasers (we were relieved to hear), and would be trained. However, all this could well take a year, and would result in only six recruits for the whole district, concentrating on Ely.

No other district in the country is doing this, and no other district is likely to do so in future, as East Cambridgeshire is almost the only authority left which has not either already moved to civil parking enforcement or started the process of doing so.

Council tax freeze—or thaw?

The Leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council altered her own motion to council last month, in the light of the uncertainty about the national financial situation and the Chancellor's forthcoming statement.

The motion had said "Therefore, this Council resolves to freeze its share of Council Tax for 2023/24 for a tenth consecutive year". This was altered to read "is minded to freeze its share of Council Tax for 2023/24 for a tenth consecutive year, subject to final decision following the Government budget on 31st October".

The Chancellor's statement, due on Hallowe'en, was subsequently moved to Thursday 17 November. Early drafts of the statement are understood to contain plans for up to £35bn of spending cuts and up to £25bn of tax rises.

The scale of the measures has been made greater by the Bank of England's dire forecasts last week, when it predicted that higher interest rates would push the economy into the longest recession since the 1930s.

Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Last month we reported on the district council's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme which sets the minimum council tax to be paid by people in even the most straitened circumstances at 8.5 per cent of the full amount. Lorna's proposal at the last Finance & Assets Committee meeting that in view of the current cost of living crisis, this ought to be reduced to zero was defeated, but we proposed it again at the October Full Council meeting where again it was defeated.

Planning application updates

Mepal crematorium 21/01216/F3M

The district council's Planning Committee approved this application on Wednesday 12 October. However, the full Business Case has not yet been presented to the council for approval.

Garden Close Sutton 22/00057/RMM

We are advised that the applicant is currently working up amended plans for consideration, which will prompt a further (and likely final) round of consultation and a further request for extension of time. It is unlikely that this application will be considered by the Planning Committee until January 2023 at the earliest.

Elean Business Park 22/00580/RMM

The case officer for this application is currently in the process of finalising soft landscaping details, following the recent submission of the Arboricultural Impact Assessment. It is likely that there will need to be a request for a further extension of time, but it is expected that a decision will be issued before the end of November.

Local Heritage List

Earlier this month Lorna attended the launch of Cambridgeshire's Local Heritage List, funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities) as one of twenty-two pilot projects to improve the provision and standard of Local Lists across England.

Heritage officer Chris Partrick from East Cambs District Council spoke very knowledgeably and passionately about the many structures across the district that could be suitable candidates for adding to the list. He mentioned the lively debates that had taken place about whether some items were 'heritage' and suitable for listing. The Harley motorbike statue in Littleport? Yes, eventually. The Alice in Wonderland mug attached to the High Flyer pub in Ely? Perhaps someone should nominate it and see.

The current list for East Cambridgeshire consists of 85 assets, including a number in Sutton ward. The council's Operational Services Committee is being asked to delegate to district council officers the power to add to the list.
<https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire/list>

Meet your councillors

- Monday 5 December, 6:30-7:30PM
- Monday 9 January, 6:30-7:30PM
- Monday 6 February, 6:30-7:30PM

All in the Community Room at Sutton School. Between surgeries, residents can continue to contact us by email, Facebook, or phone.

Cllr Lorna Dupré

Cllr Mark Inskip

District Councillors for the Sutton ward