

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

Parish Council Report Jan 2024

South Cambs District Council

Green Business Programme

South Cambridgeshire District Council has launched the Green Business Programme, an 18-month project to help local businesses go green, working in partnership with neighbouring local authorities. Grants are available to help businesses reduce their carbon footprint, reduce energy costs and work towards Net Zero. Cost of living support The District Council is urging residents who may be in need of support through the cost of living crisis to check they are claiming all the benefits they may be entitled to. The council is also offering extensive advice on reducing energy bills and other available help, including food banks. Please do get in touch if you need any more information.

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/south-cambridgeshire-residents-urged-to-utilise-cost-of-living-support/>

‘Cambridge 2040’ update

On 19 December, the Rt Hon Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, unveiled updated plans for the Government’s ‘Cambridge 2040’ vision, with proposals for “northwards” of 150,000 new homes around Cambridge. A joint statement from our local authorities said, “We note ... that the number of new homes ... has come down from 250,000 to 150,000, but this is still substantially more than the over 50,000 homes we have identified as needed ... – a number which will already be incredibly challenging to bring forward. We are ambitious for high quality sustainable, green growth but can’t stress enough how vital it is that Government supports us to tackle the issues that will otherwise act as roadblocks to sustainable growth.” The District Council continues to stress the need to address water supply, public transport, community infrastructure and affordable housing in negotiations with the Government. We are still awaiting clarity over how they might support the development of the 50,000 homes required to follow Government policy in the Local Plan, let alone any larger number.

Four Day Week Trial Update

We are now a year into the council’s four-day working week trial, which is due to run until the end of March 2024. The trial was designed to test whether a four-day working week could improve the council’s value for money to taxpayers, primarily by reducing its reliance on temporary staff for roles that are better filled with dedicated permanent employees. So far, the results have been very promising. Since the trial began, over half of 23 key roles previously covered by temporary agency staff have been filled by permanent staff. Jobs that had previously attracted no interest when advertised are now attracting a strong pool of applicants, allowing the council to recruit the best candidates. This has saved the council hundreds of thousands of pounds and is helping to build a more talented and efficient workforce. The direct savings from filling all of these roles would be around £1million per year. The council’s performance has not suffered during the trial, and the focus on continuous improvement has been maintained. The trial still has 3 months left to run. The overall effects of the policy will be assessed at the end of the trial period, and a decision on whether or not to continue will be made by Full Council.

County Council Budget

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In December I reported that we were facing a £23m gap in funding for 2024/25 as a result of inflation and other factors. This has now been closed to c.£2m.

The revised proposals focus on sustaining social services, continuing to provide free school meal vouchers for eligible children during holidays, progressing the council's commitment to pay the real living wage to people providing adult social care, and prioritising highways and cycleways maintenance across the county. However, even with a proposed council tax rise of 4.99% – 2% of which will be dedicated to adult social care services – the combination of demand for services, inflation and the ending of some government grants will still leave a £2m gap in the 2024/5 budget.

Included in the proposals for the coming year are for the council to:

- Invest £57 million to sustain children's and adult social care services.
- Further the Council's commitment to the Real Living Wage, which has increased to £12ph outside London, to take account of the Government uplift of the legally enforceable Living Wage, being paid by adult care providers.
- Prioritise £3m to continue to provide holiday food vouchers for all children eligible for free school meals, despite the government support being likely to end in the next financial year.
- Invest £2.2m to deliver other anti-poverty initiatives – such as support to make sure that vulnerable people are claiming all the welfare benefits that they are entitled to.
- Put £1.3m into delivering more accessible libraries to support vulnerable communities.
- Prioritise investment of £23m into making highways, footpaths, and cycleways safer – on top of a recently announced government allocation of £2.3m. This will be to deliver improvements which both repair and prevent potholes, deliver improved drainage schemes, and reinstate cycleway maintenance and weed clearance.
- Put additional funding into schemes for people experiencing mental health issues to prevent them reaching crisis, particularly focussing on younger people.

The proposals include an increase of council tax by 4.99%, the maximum permitted by Government before a public referendum is needed – with a total of 2% of this increase dedicated to adult social care services across the county, and £17.6m of identified additional savings – from areas such as:

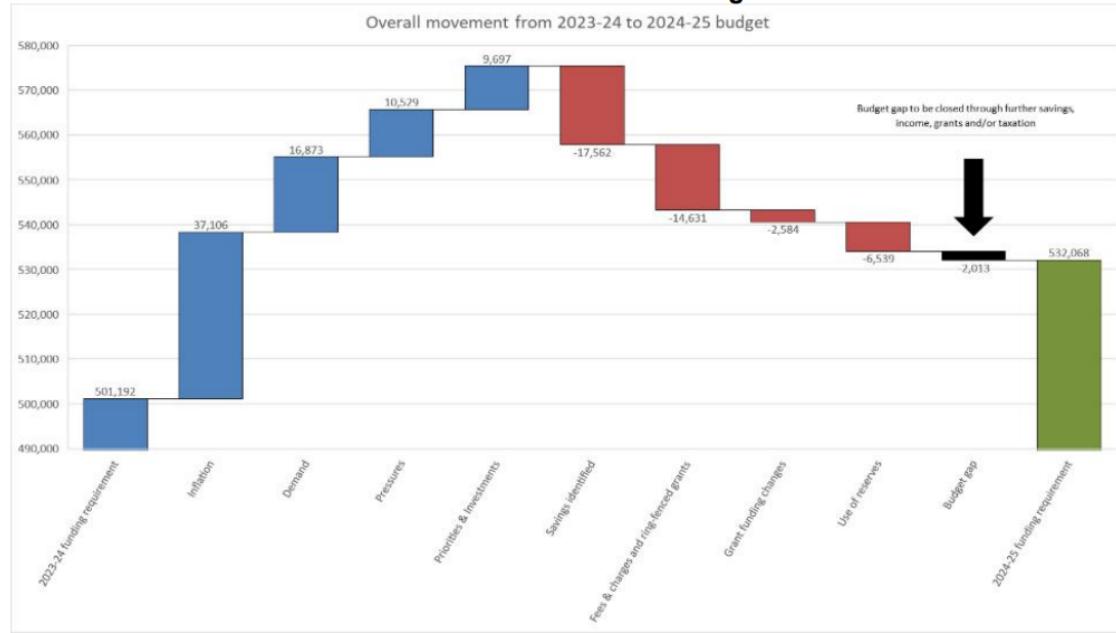
- moving to LED streetlights which are set to deliver £1m in energy savings each year.
- £1.5m across the next three years from rationalising the council's office accommodation.
- more than £2m from reviewing the highest cost children's placement costs, and home to school transport routes – to bring children closer to home and reduce travel time.
- £0.5m from driving down the amount of bad debt.
- reviews of income raised by permits and parking charges are also proposed to raise just under £1m.

Summary of Changes in Finance 2024/25

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Chart 2 – Overall Movement from 2023/24 to 2024/25 Budget



Flooding & Storm Henk

This were the incidents the county was attending to Jan 4th. It is updated daily and I will circulate every 2-3 days

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Date	Time	Location	Parish	Issues	Actions
02/01/2024		Main Street	Hamerton	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		A605 Peterborough Road	Elton	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024		New Road	Woodwalton	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		High Street	Tillbrook	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024		Bridge Street	Wistow	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		Infield Road	Glatton	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		Royal Oak Lane	Hemmingford Abbots	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024		High Street	Offord Darcy	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		Hinchinbrooke Park Road	Huntingdon	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024	15:45	B1046 Between Toft and Kingston	Toft	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024	15:45	A1198 at Arrington	Arrington	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024	16:32	Park Lane	Dry Drayton	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024	17:06	B1046 Between Toft and Kingston	Toft	Flooding	Milestone called to advise Road needs closing due to vehicles stranded
02/01/2024	17:25	Withersfield Road	Horseheath	Carriageway Pothole	Milestone to attend and make safe
02/01/2024	17:34	Berry Croft Lane/ Over Road	Willingham	Traffic Signals	Police informed there is a power cut and traffic signals not working, advised that if the power was off they would not be
02/01/2024	17:53	Long Road	Cambridge	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	17:53	Mill Way	Grancaster	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	17:53	A1307 Horseheath near lodge	Horseheath	Carriageway Pothole	Milestone to attend and make safe
02/01/2024	17:58	Orwell Road	Barrington	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	15:59	Bridge Road	Impington	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	18:10	Bridge Road	Impington	Tree down	Police informed a local had come and removed this
02/01/2024	18:08	Berry Croft Lane/ Over Road	Willingham	Traffic Signals	Police informed Power is now back on but Traffic Signals still not working - Passed to Swarco
02/01/2024	18:19	A1301 Near to Rose and Crown Pub	Stapleford	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	18:22	Babraham Road - Near to Wandlebury	Stapleford	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	18:53	Shepreth Road	Shepreth	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	18:55	Nosterfield End	Shudy Camps	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	19:26	Mill Hill	Weston Colville	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	19:43	Ickleton Road	Ickleton	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	19:54	Fishers Lane	Orwell	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	19:54	Comberton Road	Comberton	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024		Tower Road	Sutton	Flooding	Customer concerned his property may be flooded
02/01/2024	17:12	Pierce Lane	Fulbourn	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	18:29	Back Lane	Melbourn	Tree down	Police advised a part of a tree had come down and landed on a car but the recovery crew had removed this from the highway
02/01/2024	21:38	The Street	Saxon Street	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards
02/01/2024	22:30	Pampisford Road	Great Abington	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	22:28	Ashwell Road	Ashwell	Tree down	Advised this is in Hertfordshire
02/01/2024	22:20	Brinkley Road	Six Mile Bottom	Flooding	Milestone to attend and place flood boards out
02/01/2024	23:00	Nosterfield End	Shudy Camps	Tree down	Milestone called to request for BT to attend site as their cables were caught in the tree
02/01/2024	00:55	Long Lane	Fowlmere	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024	01:19	Nosterfield End	Shudy Camps	Tree down	BT called informed they have removed their cables and have now requested for UK Power Networks to attend - Called UK Power
02/01/2024		Lone Tree Avenue	Impington	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024		Branch Bank	Littleport	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024		The Doles	Over	Flooding	Milestone to provide sandbags due to garden being flooded
02/01/2024		A10 near Ely Golf Course	Ely	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024		Birch Grove	Elm	Flooding	Milestone to provide a tanker to clear away surface water risk of flooding to properties
02/01/2024		Mill Lane	Little Paxton	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		London Road	Kimbolton	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		High Street	Alconbury	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		Hamerton Road	Alconbury Weston	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		Low Road	Fenstanton	Flooding	Road Closure in place
02/01/2024		Ermine Street	Great Stukeley	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024		High Street	Bluntisham	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024		Nursery Gardens	St Ives	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
02/01/2024		South Street	Woodhurst	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
03/01/2024	09:40	B1046 Between Toft and Kingston	Toft	Flooding	Milestone to remove road closure
03/01/2024		B1040 East Delph	Whittlesey	Flooding	Flood gates have been closed
03/01/2024	09:40	High Street	Babraham	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
03/01/2024	11:39	B1046 Between Toft and Kingston	Toft	Flooding	Milestone attend to remove closure however advised to still keep it close as there is areas that are still flooded
02/01/2024	3.08pm	8 High Street	Littleport	Flooding	2 x blocked gullies causing flooding of footway and risk to terrace property. Gully crew requested on 2hr call out LA491631
03/01/2024		Brampton Road	Huntingdon	Flooding	Milestone to place flood boards out
01/01/2024		Great Grove	Yaxley	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway
03/01/2024	15:30	Tower Road	Sutton	Flooding	Milestone to send tanker/jetter out to help alleviate flooding to property
03/01/2024		Oundle Road	Chesterton	Flooding	Milestone to send tanker/jetter out to help alleviate flooding to property
04/01/2024	08:26	Earth Bridge		Flooding	Milestone to close road
04/01/2024		La Houge Road	Chippenham	Tree down	Milestone to attend and clear from carriageway

Peter McDonald Jan 7th 2024

Happy New year to all of You.

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