

## **District Councillor report to Parish Council February 2025**

### **Increased electric vehicle charger funding**

Funding for electric vehicle chargers has increased from £5,000 to up to £12,000 per project. The grant is open to parish councils, community groups and charities for public EV chargers in car parks associated with community buildings and village halls. I am pleased to see increased funding for these projects. We understand funding is unfortunately not guaranteed to be available into the next financial year, so we would encourage all interested local organisations to apply as soon as they can on the council's website.

### **Grants for community groups and Parish Councils**

If you are from a local community group or Parish Council you might be able to make use of some of the available grant schemes at the Council. The Grant Grabber service helps you search for available grants – all in one place. For further information on receiving a grant for a community project from the council, please visit the grants webpage. [Grants and funding - South Cambs District Council](#)

### **Cambridgeshire Police: Milton Police Station updates/eCops**

Police have requested that Councillors and Residents consider signing up for eCops updates, as this is where progress reports on the Milton Police Station will be documented. It also has a host of other updates that you may find useful. You can sign up to receive updates here: [Home Page - eCops](#)

### **Local Government reorganisation**

I will do my best to keep an eye on the government's local government reorganisation plans. It is my understanding that May elections will not be affected for South Cambridgeshire. However, the government is aiming for all two-tier areas (for example, district and county council areas) to become one unitary authority for their area alongside a combined authority Mayor. These authorities would be responsible for transport, skills, housing and planning, economic development, climate change, health and wellbeing, and public safety. All councils will receive an invite to submit proposals by spring and autumn 2025, ready for the first wave of new unitaries to be set up in line with the 2027 target. I will continue to work with council officers to ensure everyone is up to speed on new updates.

### **4-day week consultation**

The council has recently opened its 4-day week consultation to the public. This will run for 8 weeks, so will close at midnight on Sunday 23 March. I encourage all residents to participate in the consultation to tell the council how you feel about the 4-day week. I strongly believe that increasing council tax whilst forcing residents to pay for this council not to work is deeply unfair. The opposition has fought hard for all residents and all councillors to have a say in this – and two years after the 4-day week began, the time has finally come to tell the council your views on its 4 days' work for 5 days' pay scheme. The consultation was scrutinised in a council meeting on 16 January, where councillors on both sides raised concerns, including regarding the length of the consultation. Even if none of the initial questions about your experience with council services apply to you, we are strongly encouraging residents to fill out the 4-day week specific questions. This is your one big chance to tell the council if you are unhappy with the 4-day week – so it is absolutely vital that you take it.

### **4-day week referendum**

In my group's alternative budget proposals, we have called for a referendum on the 4-day working week at the council. We believe the public consultation document is inadequate, as it does not even ask residents if they agree with the 4-day week – or if they are happy to pay for it. That is why we are calling for a referendum for South Cambridgeshire's residents to decide once and for all if they want to continue paying their council to be paid 5 days per week but only work 4 days.

*Thank you for taking the time to read my report; if you have any questions or want to discuss any of the issues raised email me on [graham.cone@councillor.online](mailto:graham.cone@councillor.online) or ring 07595 361 285 (please leave a voicemail if I am unavailable) **Councillor Graham Cone***