

District Councillor's Report Apr 25th 2023 - Cllr Tom Bygott

Bin collections change due to bank holidays

As usual the bin collections will be changing due to the Easter bank holidays - Good Friday and Easter Monday. This year there are also two bank holidays in May, the second being on the Monday following His Majesty's Coronation.

Please check the website or the South Cambs magazine so you know when to put your bin out. Below, I have copied a table with the usual collections and the revised collections.

| Northstowe collection | Usual collection dates | Revised collection dates |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Black bin | Thursday 13 April | Saturday 15 April |
| Blue and green bins | Thursday 20 April | Friday 21 April |
| Black bin | Thursday 27 April | Thursday 27 April |
| Blue and green bins | Thursday 4 May | Friday 5 May |
| Black bin | Thursday 11 May | Friday 12 May |
| Blue and green bins | Thursday 18 May | Thursday 18 May |
| Black bin | Thursday 25 May | Thursday 25 May |
| Blue and green bins | Thursday 1 June | Friday 2 June |

Thirty new electric buses

The zero-emission, double decker buses, which are due to come into service in May 2023, will see the Cambridge Park and Ride network and Citi 2 service become fully electrified and carbon-free.

All 30 buses will be in operation in May 2023, signifying a major milestone in the commitment to a rolling bus replacement programme, to replace 30 vehicles a year across the Combined Authority area. There is an ambition to convert the entire bus fleet from diesel buses to zero emission vehicles within the region by 2030 to hit carbon emission targets and help tackle climate change.

The announcement represents a significant investment in green travel for the region, with the new vehicles costing close to £500,000 each. The new fleet is being funded by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), Department for Transport and Stagecoach East.

The new buses will take Stagecoach East's total zero-emission fleet up to 32, joining their current two electric vehicles which have been in service since February 2020 as part of a jointly funded partnership with the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Since their launch three years ago, the two ULEB (Ultra Low Emission Buses) vehicles have covered over 124,000 miles between them, saving over 215 tonnes of CO2 and have carried over 200,000 passengers in 2022 alone.

Consultation on the Infrastructure Levy launched

On 17 March DLUHC published a consultation on the design of a new infrastructure levy to be paid by developers to fund affordable housing and local infrastructure such as GP surgeries, transport links and schools. The levy is a reform to the existing system of developer contributions – Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy – in England. The consultation will inform the design of the levy and of regulations that will set out its operation in detail. A further consultation on the drafting of those regulations will be published in due course. Alongside this publication is a report on an earlier design of the levy, commissioned by DLUHC.

The announcement can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/news/new-levy-to-make-sure-developers-pay-fair-share-for-affordable-housing-and-local-infrastructure

There is a consultation that can be completed at: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/technical-consultation-on-the-infrastructure-levy. It closes at 11.45pm on 9th June 2023.

For questions, please contact: InfrastructureLevyConsultation@levellingup.gov.uk

Motion for a referendum before introducing a congestion charge

I have been campaigning consistently against a congestion charge being introduced in Cambridge for more than 14 years, having first proposed a motion at the District Council against it in February 2009. That motion was successful, but the policy was reversed in July 2018 after the Liberal Democrat group took control of the Council in May of that year, and supporting a Congestion Charge has been District Council policy since then.

A petition, since closed, on the Cambridgeshire County Council website to hold a referendum before introducing a Congestion Charge attracted 15,241 signatures, more than enough to trigger a debate at the County Council. However the Labour, Liberal Democrat and Independent groups who have a majority at the County Council voted not to hold a referendum at the local elections this May.

At the District Council meeting on March 30th, I was pleased to support the following motion put forward by my colleague Cllr Heather Williams:

This council notes the outcome of the County Council's vote on Tuesday 21st March 2023 in regard to a referendum on Congestion Charging. While disappointed by the outcome it does not alter our view that there still should indeed be a referendum. This council will write to the Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council expressing this Council's support for a referendum on the introduction of a "sustainable travel charge" otherwise known as the "Cambridge Congestion Charge".

Many people feel that they were not made aware that congestion charging was on the table at the last local elections. There was a robust debate on this in the chamber at SCDC and this motion was voted down by the Liberal Democrat group who have a clear majority.

Launch of life-saving public emergency alerts

In the early evening of Sunday 23 April, a siren-like alert is scheduled be sent to smartphone users across the UK to test a new government public warning system. A message will appear on the home screens of 4G and 5G compatible smartphone devices during the test, with vibration and a loud warning sound that will ring for about 10 seconds, even if the phone is set to silent.

Please be aware and ready for this test when it happens, as the alert can be quite startling the first time you hear it.

Working with mobile broadcasting technology, the Emergency Alerts system will help improve the UK's public warning capability, providing a means to get urgent messages quickly to nearly 90 percent of mobile phones in a defined area, with clear instructions about how best to respond.

The system is now ready to be tested across the country following successful tests in East Suffolk and Reading, as the Government continues to strengthen its resilience capability, making sure it offers the best possible protection against an ever-evolving range of threats.

Messages would only ever come from the government or emergency services and will initially focus on the most serious weather-related events. They will only be sent where there is an immediate risk to life, and many people may not receive an alert for months or years. Terror alerts could be added at some point in the future to the list of potential events that would trigger a notification.

The system is being modelled on similar ones used in the US, Canada, Japan and The Netherlands.

More information can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/news/launch-of-life-saving-public-emergency-alerts

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