

Business Plan 2020-25

(Revision 2021-22)

What we're about

Putting the heart into South Cambridgeshire by:

- Helping business to grow
- Building homes that are truly affordable to live in
- Being green to our core
- Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do

Context

The Business Plan for South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) 2020-25 was agreed and published in 2020, before the Coronavirus Pandemic reached the UK and the first lockdown was introduced. The Plan identified four priority areas for the Council to focus on over the next five years, and these priorities remain the same in this annual update.

This plan outlines the actions that will be undertaken during 2021-22 to deliver on the Council's priorities. It also reflects on some of the achievements from the last year and the context within which the Council is currently operating. The plan should be read alongside some other key documents for the Council:

- The Investment Strategy
- The Recovery Plan (to be agreed spring 2021)
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Recovery Plan
- SCDC Local Plan 2018
- Zero Carbon Strategy
- Doubling Nature Strategy
- Housing Strategy

And alongside some on-going areas of activity:

- Work to develop the Joint Local Plan and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan
- The Ox-Cam Arc Ambitions

Currently, the Council, like the rest of the Country, is working within the context of a global pandemic and the deal agreed with the EU to leave the Union. These are unprecedented times and so it is likely that some of the timescales for activity within this plan may be affected over the coming months. The resources of the Council, including large numbers of staff, are still very much engaged with activity related to our response to Covid-19. It is likely that this will be the case for a significant part of 2021.



The strength of partnerships that have been reinforced throughout the pandemic will be key to the delivery of many of South Cambridgeshire's ambitions over the coming year. The need to support our communities, vulnerable individuals, and businesses in recovering from the impact of the virus will continue to shape delivery over the coming year.

South Cambridgeshire is committed to promoting a Green Recovery, and this is a key theme throughout the Business Plan, not just in the 'Green to our Core' section. The Green Economy offers considerable opportunities to support new and existing businesses, create jobs and use our natural environment to promote healthy living, reduce social isolation and support good mental health.

In 2020/21 SCDC established two new Cabinet Posts: Cabinet Member for Community Resilience, Health and Wellbeing and Cabinet Member for Business Recovery and Skills, ensuring that the Council can respond to, and proactively work with, our local communities and businesses to survive, recover and grow coming out of the pandemic.

Our Priority Areas

A) Growing local businesses and economies – We will support businesses of all sizes, including rural enterprise and farming, to help create new jobs and opportunities near to where people live and support the local economy to recover post-pandemic.

B) Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in – We will build vibrant communities in locations where people have good access to facilities and transport links, so they can genuinely afford to lead a happy and healthy life.

C) Being green to our core – We will create a cleaner, greener and zero-carbon future for our communities.

D) A modern and caring Council – We will provide our customers with high-quality services, strive to reduce costs, build on what we are good at to generate our own income and make decisions in a transparent, open and inclusive way.

A) Growing local businesses and economies

2021-22 priorities:

| Action | Measure |
|---|--|
| A1) Support Businesses through COVID with help, advice and support for a green recovery that enables them to survive, adapt and grow, and to respond flexibly as the national and local situation develops. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase our Open for Business Newsletter reach to over 2,000 businesses (Quarter 4 - currently 900). • Implement a Customer Relationship Management system for better management/engagement with local businesses (Quarter 4). • Launch a Visit South Cambridgeshire brand alongside wider collaboration with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough partners (Quarter 1) • Continue to support the local hospitality sector including pubs and restaurants |
| A2) Help start-ups, home-based businesses and those moving into South Cambridgeshire to find workspace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a feasibility study looking at how South Cambs Hall can be used to provide workspace for businesses, including start-ups (Quarter 3) • Provide a new space for up to 5 growing small businesses (Quarter 4) • Establish an up-to-date list of Business Premises for start-ups (Quarter 2) |
| A3) Deliver support to start-ups and small businesses that is not available elsewhere to help them grow, create new local jobs and deal with the impacts of Brexit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold 8 business support workshops (Quarter 4), including Retrofit training from ENE project • Working with partners, provide business support advice to 100 businesses (Quarter 4) |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a fund that supports innovations and start-ups as we start a green post pandemic recovery phase (Quarter 3) |
| A4) Promote the area and Enterprise Zones to retain businesses and attract new ones which will protect and create local jobs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 additional jobs created on Enterprise Zones by end of 2024/25 financial year • Complete strategy for Northstowe and begin actively promoting the Enterprise Zone to secure new businesses locating there (Quarter 3) • Business Team to engage businesses for the Enterprise Zones (Quarter 4) |
| A5) Identify gaps in the land and premises available for businesses as an input to our new Local Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the Statutory Housing and employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) as part of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (Quarter 2) |

Ongoing objectives:

- Support major employers to help homes and jobs be closer together or linked through high quality public transport, walking and cycling routes
- Work with parish councils and village-based businesses to support local economies and communities throughout the pandemic and beyond
- Work with the Police through the Community Safety Partnership to tackle crime impacting rural businesses
- Encourage local people to use their shops and food outlets so that high streets are retained and expanded wherever possible and business survive post-pandemic
- Provide information and advice to help businesses to understand the benefits of generating their own energy, improving their energy efficiency, increasing water and waste recycling
- Work with major employers to design and support increased housing for Essential and Key Workers



- Work with the new CPCA Inward Investment (Growth) Service to ensure Inward investment into our region remains a priority
- Continue to be the voice and advocate for South Cambridgeshire businesses with wider partners and networks (including our Joint Local Plan) and ensure we are adequately represented in key economic policy/decision-making initiatives
- Support Green Council initiatives, ensuring our business community is able, willing and geared up to delivering 2021-2050 net zero objectives. This includes helping with apprenticeship, skills and training support as appropriate.

Actions and achievements completed from the 2020-21 Business Plan

- Ongoing provision of monthly webinars/training serving the needs and wants of our local business community (e.g. how to work with the council, mental health for small business owners, diversifying your business model, navigating planning, becoming a green business etc.)
- Providing business support to 100 businesses (+)
- Generated almost £2.5 million from investments and agreed an investment strategy to do even more
- Distribution of £30 Million in government grants to support businesses through the Pandemic
- Over £2 million in grants paid out to support local Public Houses

B) Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

2021-22 priorities:

| Action | Measure |
|---|--|
| B1) Increase the number of Council homes each year to support people on lower incomes. These will include high energy standards and renewable energy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 New Homes Completed (acquired or built) this year (part of a plan to double delivery to 350 over a five-year period). |
| B2) Work with local people to set out where and how new homes and communities will be built across the Greater Cambridge area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a report assessing feedback provided by local people from the first Local Plan consultation. This will inform the next steps in the Local Plan process (Quarter 1) • Complete and publish a North East Cambridge draft Area Action Plan for consultation (Quarter 2) |
| B3) Create and continue to run liaison meetings and forums where significant new developments are being planned to minimise disruption and help new residents settle in | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support the liaison meetings in Cottenham, Sawston, Hardwick, Caldecote, Swavesey and Barrington and community forums in Northstowe, Waterbeach, North-West Cambridge, Cambridge East and North-East Cambridge (Quarter 4) • Establish new community forums covering Bourn and Cambourne West (Quarter 2) |
| B4) Improve the energy efficiency of existing Council housing to reduce carbon impact and running costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission a Stock Condition Survey including an audit of energy efficiency of existing housing stock relative to zero carbon target (Quarter 2) |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve a work programme for insulation measures over the next four years to narrow the gap on the zero-carbon target (Quarter 3) • Produce an Asset Management Plan (Quarter 1) |
| <p>B5) Deliver a new sports pavilion, community centre and civic hub (containing health, library and community facilities) at Northstowe</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit planning permission for the new sports pavilion (Quarter 1) • Complete local engagement to understand what the community wants in the new community centre (Quarter 2) • Submit planning permission for new Civic Hub (Quarter 4) |

Ongoing objectives:

- Support the delivery of more affordable housing – including through Combined Authority funding
- Promote Neighbourhood Plans and encourage our communities to develop them
- Support self-builders to build high quality homes
- Focus on the health and wellbeing of our communities through everything we do, in line with our Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Provide advice and support to prevent homelessness and help vulnerable people in line with our Homelessness Action Plan
- Provide dedicated support to people in receipt of Universal Credit and other welfare support
- Work with national, regional and local partners to support the needs of refugees and asylum seekers
- Support the self-build community to identify and develop sites across the District.



Actions and achievements completed from the 2020-21 Business Plan

- Completed 43 new Council houses and remain on track to double the number of homes we will build each year by 2024
- Signed contracts to deliver over 150 new Council houses
- Targeted people who are normally underrepresented in consultations to make sure their voice is heard by going to where they are to talk to them, rather than expect them to come to us
- Invested over £1.5 million in our Council houses to make them more energy efficient
- Supported around 1,000 people on benefits who moved to Universal Credit, including providing funding for a coach to help people into work
- Identified housing for five refugee families
- Agreed a Homeless Strategy to target support to those in the greatest need
- Granted outline planning permission for the first phase of a new town north of Waterbeach
- Completed detailed planning guidance for how the new town north of Waterbeach and new village at Bourn Airfield will develop
- Ensured vulnerable tenants were given the support they needed, and linked into other services available, to help them cope during the pandemic

C) Being green to our core

2021-22 priorities:

| Action | Measure |
|--|---|
| C1) In response to the global climate crisis we will continue to work towards a zero-carbon future by 2050 | <p>In line with our Zero Carbon Strategy, we will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and deliver further opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from our estate and operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ review community rooms and other small sites to identify and deliver opportunities for carbon reduction ○ investigate options to reduce carbon emissions from business mileage including salary sacrifice electric car scheme for staff (end of Quarter 2 for an assessment of options) • develop planning policies consistent with zero carbon by 2050 for adoption in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, in partnership with Cambridge City Council • identify and deliver opportunities to install publicly accessible electric vehicle charge points in priority locations in the district, working with partners (Quarter 4) • continue to pursue opportunities to invest in green energy schemes |
| C2) Work with partners to protect and enhance the environment with the aim of doubling nature | <p>As outlined in our Doubling Nature Strategy, we will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and deliver new opportunities to plant trees, establish wildflower strips and in other ways enhance nature on our own estate, in consultation with residents |



| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work to ensure that development in South Cambridgeshire contributes to the goal of doubling nature by developing planning policies for adoption in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, and by adopting a new Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document in partnership with Cambridge City Council (Biodiversity SPD Quarter 3) • work with partners to develop landscape-scale habitat creation projects • Complete a survey of all trees on council owned open spaces (Quarter 3) • Deliver '6 Free Trees' initiative (Quarter 3) |
| <p>C3) Retrofit our Council Commercial Property including South Cambs Hall with renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete retrofit of Cambourne office (Quarter 3) • Reduce mains gas and electricity demands from our Cambourne office by over 50% per year (from March 2021 onwards compared to baseline in 2019). • Reduce carbon emissions from our Cambourne office by 47% compared to the baseline in 2019 (Quarter 4) • Undertake energy efficiency and generation audits of other Council owned commercial properties (Quarter 4) |
| <p>C4) Continue to transition to Electric recycling and waste vehicles, including the investigation of on-site solar panel energy generation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement depot changes to prepare for electric refuse collection vehicle (eRCV) charging (Quarter 4) • Procure 5 eRCVs to replace diesel version (Ongoing) • Develop outline business case for on-site solar panel energy generation with partners (Quarter 4) |
| <p>C5) Support Parish Council and community group projects to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, move toward the zero-carbon target and help Double Nature through habitat enhancement,</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a third round of funding through our Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme, awarding grants totalling £100,000 to community-based projects (Quarter 4) |



| | |
|---|--|
| advisory support for community land acquisition, local green space designation and tree-planting | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to strengthen the Zero Carbon Parish and Community Network through our programme of workshops, web-based resources and e-bulletins for community-based zero carbon and nature recovery initiatives (Quarter 4) |
| C6) Upgrade our stock of 1,800 streetlights to LED, which will reduce energy consumption and save Parish Councils money | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Install energy saving LED fittings in all council owned streetlights (Quarter 4) |
| C7) Agree and deliver our strategy and actions needed to protect and improve the air quality of our district | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy and action plan revised (Quarter 1)• Air quality monitor in place to gather data at one new location (Quarter 1)• Complete a review of how and where we monitor air quality (Quarter 2) |
| C8) Improve recycling and reduce waste at community events | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publish a resource toolkit for community groups and parish councils (Quarter 1)• Equipment and information kit to minimise and separate recycling at community events available (Quarter 1) |
| C9) Run an information campaign to help reduce the amount of food waste in the black bin | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue with extended weekly separate food waste collection trial (Quarter 3)• Develop feasible plan for wider role out of separate food waste collection in line with Environment Bill and National Waste Strategy (Quarter 3)• Undertake waste compositional analysis to identify food waste in bins (Quarter4) |
| C10) Reduce the amount of non-recyclable household waste collected | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waste prevention and reduction campaign |

Ongoing objectives:

- Promote walking, cycling and public transport improvements through planning decisions and by working with local communities and partners
- Influence the planning of new major transport routes, such as the proposed East West rail line, to ensure the environment is fully considered and a net gain to natural capital is delivered
- Support home owners to upgrade historic building environmental performance through planning advice and guidance
- Promote effective implementation of supplementary planning guidance supporting low carbon developments
- Strengthen the ability for local communities to deliver on local environmental ambitions and priorities included in the Zero Carbon and Doubling Nature Strategies
- Work with communities and partners to combat environmental crimes, such as fly-tipping
- Reduce waste and raise awareness by promoting recycling
- Deter fly-tipping at locations where it happens frequently
- Encourage the expansion of electric vehicle charging points across our sub-contractors and partners
- Explore the expansion of electric vehicle charging points in sheltered housing schemes

Actions and achievements completed from the 2020-21 Business Plan

- Held a local Climate Summit
- Provide £100,000 to community and voluntary groups through the Zero Carbon Communities grant and support programme.
- Completion of all non-HRA street lights upgrade to LED
- Achieve 60% reduction in energy consumption of streetlighting for Parish Councils (quarter 4)
- Awarded around £300,000 of funding to help local communities – including launching our new zero carbon grant scheme
- Ran an anti-flytipping campaign that reached over 40,000 people
- Expanded our commercial waste to deliver an extra £50,000 income



- Improved the way we plan our street sweeping and introduced a system so residents know when we will be coming to their area
- Created a new planning document that encourages development to be more environmentally friendly
- One electric bin lorry and two small vans operating on fleet
- We have also installed 4 additional charge points for staff/visitors at Waterbeach depot

D) A modern and caring Council

2021-22 priorities:

| Action | Measure |
|--|--|
| D1) Make sure that the Council is structured and appropriately resourced to deliver the ambitions of our communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete 3 service reviews as part of a plan to complete reviews of all services by 2023• Review employment policies relating to recruitment and retention (Quarter 3) |
| D2) Review recruitment processes to attract and retain the best talent and ensure that we are an employer of choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete and analyse an annual staff satisfaction survey and review our benefits package (Quarter 4)• Increase the number of job applications from people from under-represented groups from 2019-20 levels (Quarter 4)• Achieve Level 2 of the Disability confident standard (Quarter 4)• Review Apprenticeship Strategy for existing staff and new staff to include under-represented groups and care leavers (Quarter 2) |



| | |
|--|---|
| D3) Generate income through delivering the Council's investment strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Income from investments and other commercial activity to be at least 25% of our Taxation and Central Government Grant income by 2023/24. |
| D4) Make it easier for customers to access and carry out transactions online | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make an additional 10 services available for customers to self-serve online (Quarter 3)• Provide a portal for businesses to access SCDC online services (Quarter 3) |
| D5) Council and committee meetings will be run paper-free wherever possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillors to be provided with an option for paper-free Council and committee meetings (Quarter 2) |
| D6) Work with communities to tackle issues that are affecting them locally | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a resourced Council support package to help communities identify the issues they want to address and how they could do it (Quarter 1)• Co-create and agree flood plans with communities in the 13 most impacted areas of the district to help minimise the impact in future (Quarter 2)• Support 150 new clients through the housing departments visiting support service (Quarter 4)• Provide the lifeline service to 100 new users during the year• To spend £500,000 in total in the form of disabled facilities grant and repairs grant to allow people to live independently and safely in their homes (Quarter 4)• Prevent homelessness for at least 50% of the people who approach us who are at risk of becoming homeless throughout the year |



| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue the proactive working relationship with the job centre in delivering mentoring circles plus upskilling and cross training initiatives throughout the year |
| D7) - Ensuring that our homes are safe places for our tenants and their families. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% compliance with landlord safety checks to council housing including, electrical safety, gas installations and where appropriate fire risk assessments and water safety tests |

Ongoing objectives:

- Expand and grow our commercial services
- Provide grants to community and voluntary groups to help them carry out projects to benefit local people and the environment
- Develop and support Councillors and officers to ensure that they can best serve our communities
- Create an organisational culture to deliver continuous improvement
- Recognise the potential implications for those struggling with 'Long Covid' in our communities, and offer support working with our parish councils and community groups, wherever required

Actions and achievements completed from the 2020-21 Business Plan

- Worked with public sector partners and a network of parish councils and voluntary groups to support the most vulnerable people in the district and our businesses throughout the response phases of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Successfully filled at least 70% of jobs advertised through first round of recruitment
- Completed and analysed an annual staff satisfaction survey and reviewed our benefits package (Updated and published the council's Equality Scheme
- Achieved Level 1 of the Disability confident standard



- Paper free cabinet meetings were held in Quarter 4 2020 2021 – Cabinet mtg 18 Jan 2021 and 3 February 2021
- 7 new Mobile warden schemes delivered
- Raised awareness of key events and weeks throughout the year to help promote equality and deliver on our business plan objectives – these include Holocaust memorial day, LGBTQ+ History Month, Climate fortnight and Black History Month

Note: All Measures include a completion date by quarter of the financial year.

Quarter 1 – April to June

Quarter 2 – July to September

Quarter 3 – October to December

Quarter 4 – January to March