

District and County Councillor's Report – January 2025

Kingsway Solar Farm

The proposal by Downing Renewables/Kingsway Solar for a very large new solar farm on parcels of land between Balsham, West Wrattling and West Colville, has completed the 'informal consultation' stage at the back end of 2024 and thank you to everyone that has engaged with this process.

Shortly before the Christmas break, Kingsway Solar released their 'Environmental Impact Assessment' (EIA) document, which outlines what the applicants' environmental consultants see the environmental challenges and concerns to be. You can see this, plus all the other documents currently in the public domain, on their website - <https://kingswaysolarfarm.co.uk/>

The next stage of the process, once Kingsway Solar have digested all of the initial feedback, will be that they will hold a 'formal consultation' which will be asking for much of the same responses to the proposals, should they be more detailed, that they will present at this point. Again, we encourage everyone to engage with this process, as the scheme will impact everyone in this area, directly or indirectly.

It's worth reiterating that, given the size and scale of this scheme, the ultimate decision to approve, or not, will be made by a central government planning inspector, rather than any of the local planning authorities. This will be a major development covering a very large part of our countryside, if it does go ahead, so please do engage if you have any views on this proposal.

4 Day Week Consultation

The District Council has been trialling a 4-day work week for their staff since January 2023. The trial was supposed to last for a shorter period of time but the previous government had indicated that they would be levying financial penalties to the Council for running this trial, but wouldn't say how much this would be, therefore the Council couldn't make a decision on whether to make the trial permanent. However, the new government has said they won't be applying any financial penalties on the Council, so SCDC are now in a position to come to a decision on this. This will likely include a formal consultation where people can give their views on the scheme since its inception.

Local Government Reorganisation

Before the Christmas break there was an announcement by central government that there would be a reorganisation of local government in the coming years with the thrust on there being much larger councils, run by elected Mayors, and doing away with smaller councils, such as District and possibly County councils.

It's unlikely that there will be anything happening in Cambridgeshire for some years, if at all, as we already have a directly elected Mayor in our county and have been designated as a 'non-priority' area for reorganisation.

Councillors Henry Batchelor and Geoff Harvey

Greenway progress

The 'greenway' that runs between Linton and Abington has made some progress over the past few months. The foot/cycle/horse path between Granta Park and runs down the side of Newmarket Road in Little Abington has been completed. This is the latest stage of upgrades to the stretch of the road. Future phases include a new Travel Hub at Babraham and an upgraded bridge crossing of the A11 to access this.

Average Speed Camera & Accident Data

We have recently been sent the traffic data for the stretch of the A1307 between Linton and Cardinals Green – this shows the accident data as well as the number of tickets issued for people exceeding the speed limit. We're happy to provide these to people that are interested.

Happy New Year

As this is our first report of the 2025, we'd like to wish you all a Happy New Year and we look forward to working with you all throughout the next 12 months.

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