

Clrs Lorna Dupré and Mark Inskip

MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2024

WASTE SERVICE CHANGES

At its meeting on Monday 23 September the District Council's Operational Services Committee agreed a number of sweeping changes to its waste collection arrangements, to comply with incoming Government legislation.

The following changes will take effect by early 2026.

- Weekly food waste collection in a separate container.
- Black sacks to be replaced by a 180 litre wheeled bin collected fortnightly
- Ending the annual subscription charge for a second green bin.
- Removing the one-off charge for an extra blue bin.

The Council will keep its current free fortnightly garden waste collection service, suspended for six weeks during winter and Christmas catch up period.

The revised service is currently estimated to cost an extra £820,729, but more information will be available nearer the time, about the 'new burdens' funding the council may receive from Government, and the financing of the proposed Extended Producer Responsibility scheme. This will transfer to the producer of waste packaging the responsibility for managing the waste throughout its life.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council that it should continue to procure waste collection and street cleaning services from its wholly-owned company ECSS.

Meanwhile, 152 fly tips were reported in the first quarter of 2024/25. Only 78 per cent were removed within two working days, against a target of 98 per cent.

CREMATORIUM COSTS ESCALATE

Council officers now predict an 'overall increase in costs' for the planned crematorium at Mepal, according to reports presented to the Finance & Assets Committee on 26 September. Councillors were asked just to 'note' the predicted rise, and an attempt by Lorna and colleagues to refer the issue to the Full Council meeting on 17 October was rejected by the Conservative group.

The detail of the increased costs was kept in a confidential report, but published papers state that the rise is 'largely made up of a gap in the projects contingency budget and an increase in build costs'.

The escalating costs for the crematorium, already predicted to cost over £9 million, have substantial implications for the project, and Lorna and Cllr Alison Whelan therefore proposed a motion to refer the matter to all twenty-eight councillors at their next full meeting on 17 October. The proposal was defeated by five Lib Dem votes to six Conservative ones.

NET ZERO VILLAGES GRANTS

The Council has received £167,737 from the Combined Authority under its Net Zero Villages programme. The money will be distributed in the form of grants to local communities in East Cambridgeshire, for projects which

- Tackle energy use and/or support energy efficiency or generation retrofit to a community building; or
- Enable access to public transport or access to local services through low carbon transport; or
- Offer nature based solutions to tackle overheating of community buildings.

The minimum single grant award is £5,000, and the maximum is £30,000.

Applications will open as soon as the fund is launched, and the decision will be made in three phases.

1. Applications by 31 December 2024 will be considered and funds set aside for successful projects by 31 January 2025.
2. Applications received in January 2025 will be considered in February 2025.
3. Applications received in February 2025 will be considered in March 2025.

However, if funds have been fully allocated by the end of the first or second phases, then applications received in the subsequent phase will still be considered but only for placing on a reserve list should an already agreed project no longer be taken forward. Applicants are therefore advised to get their project in early (by 31 December if possible) in order to have the greatest chance of receiving funding.

Funding will be distributed from March 2025. Funding might be distributed on a phased basis, linked to progress with a project. Funding in advance of spend is possible, subject to safeguards for return of any unspent funds. No spend can occur after 28 February 2026.

The fund will be formally launched in the near future, with the full criteria and other requirements. Queries about the scheme can be sent to the Council at netzerovillages@eastcambs.gov.uk

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The following meetings are scheduled for October.

- Full Council, Thursday 17 October

The Planning Committee meeting on 2 October and the Licensing Committee on 9 October have both been cancelled.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

Our next surgeries will take place on

- Monday 7 October, 6:30-7:30PM
- Monday 4 November, 6:30-7:30PM
- Monday 2 December, 6:30-7:30PM

in the Community Room at Sutton School. Between surgeries, residents can continue to contact us by email, Facebook, or phone.

Lorna also hopes to be at the Sutton Timebank coffee morning on Tuesday 8 October.

Cllr Lorna Dupré

Cllr Mark Inskip

District Councillors for the Sutton ward