

## **District Council Report for May 2026**

Councillor James Hobro

District Councillor for the parishes of Foxtton, Fowlmere, Heydon, Great Chishill & Little Chishill.

I am always happy to hear from residents with any questions about these or other issues relating to the District Council. Please contact me by telephone on 07768 706670 or by email at [cllr.hobro@scambbs.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.hobro@scambbs.gov.uk).

### **District and Parish Elections**

Elections were held on 7 May for the District Council and all Parish Councils within the district. I feel honoured to have been re-elected in this ward, and will do my best to serve and represent all residents. The Liberal Democrats won 43 out of 45 of the seats on the District Council. Most Parish Council elections were uncontested, but ballots were held in Foxtton and Fowlmere due to the number of nominations received. It is great to see such a strong interest in local government, and I am looking forward to working with the new Parish Councils.

### **Food waste collections**

Food waste collections have now begun in all villages in the ward, with full information available [on the council's web site](#). Please do let me know if there are any teething problems.

### **Zero Carbon Communities Grant**

The eighth round of the Council's [Zero Carbon Communities Grant](#) will launch on 25 May, offering a share of £152,000 to projects across the district that will reduce carbon emissions and foster community engagement around climate change. The scheme is open to Parish Councils and a wide range of community groups, offering grants of between £2,000 and £19,500. The [web site](#) includes detailed guidance on how to apply and examples of previous successful projects. The closing date for applications is 24 July. There will be two online workshops for potential applicants on Wednesday 20 May from 12.30–1.30pm and 6–7pm. You can sign up at the link above.

I encourage all Parish Councils and community groups to consider applying for funds to help develop sustainable facilities in our villages. Since its launch in 2019, the grant scheme has funded 82 different projects, awarding over £855,000 to initiatives across the district. Successful previous applicants include Fowlmere Parish Council (to install cycle stands around the village) and Fowlmere Village Hall (to renew its lighting to become more energy efficient).

### **Street cleaning schedule**

The [next scheduled period for street cleaning](#) in our ward is 18–29 May. If Parish Councils have specific areas that they would like dealt with by the road sweeper crew, please contact the street cleaning team [using this form](#).

## **East West Rail consultation**

The East West Rail company have announced details of their [final consultation](#) on plans for the railway, which runs until 9 June. This will be the last opportunity for our communities to have their say on the plans and help shape the final design.

## **Council Tax modernisation**

Changes will be made to allow vulnerable people to have more time and support to settle outstanding council tax bills under government reforms due next year. Under the current system, missing one payment can leave people facing financial ruin as they become liable to pay the entire outstanding sum in a single payment just two weeks later. This will change from next year with households given two months to settle their bill and a requirement for councils to work with them on a sustainable repayment plan. Billing will also be shifted to 12 monthly payments by default, rather than the current 10 months. Proportionate action will continue to be taken against those who avoid paying council tax, but the reforms are designed to provide more help and support for people in hardship.

## **English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act**

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026, which received Royal Assent on 29 April, introduces new measures to expand devolution and empower mayors.

The Act includes new national standards for taxi drivers, allowing enforcement officers to suspend licences issued by other councils where a driver is operating outside their licensed area. It reintroduces the supplementary vote for mayoral elections. It also includes new powers to enforce against dangerous pavement parking including through fixed penalty notices, and new licencing powers for rental e-bikes which will allow local authorities to set specific requirements on parking, safety, and accessibility standards.

I will keep an eye on how these new powers affect local government at district and parish level with further updates on any local policy changes. I am happy to pass on or follow up any questions from parishioners or parish councils.

## **Changes to rules about publishing councillors' home addresses**

From 29 June 2026, section 65 of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 ("2026 Act") removes the requirement for a local government member's home address to be published in council registers of interest. The newly added section 32A of the Localism Act 2011 requires that councils do not publish details of a member's home address in public registers of interest unless an individual member explicitly requests it. To aid transparency, public registers of interest will still state that an interest exists but that the address is withheld under the new section 32A. The exact address details will still need to be declared, remain available internally to councils and will continue to prevent conflicts of interest. Further, the register of member contact details maintained under section 100G of the Local Government Act 1972 must no longer include home addresses when made available for public inspection. If you have questions about these new requirements, please email: [lgstandardsandconduct@communities.gov.uk](mailto:lgstandardsandconduct@communities.gov.uk)